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Dear Mr Drakeford

I write on behalf of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg's Learners' Committee to draw your attention to the continued and increasing popularity of the Welsh language course on Duolingo, which currently has 760,000 active learners[1]. Over 3 million people have started the course since 2016[2].

The course was developed by a team of Welsh language lecturers and teachers on an entirely voluntary basis between 2015 and 2021. As a unique and highly innovative resource, the Welsh language course on Duolingo has transformed the experience of learning the language for a range of audiences, including:

- a) school pupils [3] [4]
- b) adults who are learning Welsh [5]
- c) international learners [6]
- d) people who are learning Welsh in the workplace [7]
- e) the Welsh-speaking diaspora [8]

Unfortunately, the continued development of Duolingo's Welsh language course was paused at the end of 2023, among tens of other minority language courses, as Duolingo sought to focus on its main courses. At the time, only content equivalent to levels A1, A2 and some elements of B1 according to the CEFR scale had been added to the Welsh language course on Duolingo. Our aim was to create a course that would echo the Welsh Government's primary objective, namely for basic fluency or level B2.

It now appears that Duolingo has recommenced development of some minority language courses; for example, the Norwegian course has been upgraded to include speaking exercises and more comprehensive notes on grammar.

Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg's Learners' Committee, and hundreds of thousands of other learners, would be very grateful if the Welsh Government were able to use its current links with Duolingo (mentioned by Jeremy Miles in November 2023 [9]) to urge Duolingo to allow the original contributors to complete the Welsh course.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Richard Morse

Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg's Learners' Officer

Copy sent to: Dona Lewis, Chief Executive of the National Centre for Learning Welsh

References

1. Duolingo; courses for English speakers
2. Duolingo; the number of individuals registered for the Welsh language course reaches 3 million
3. Duolingo; Welsh in schools 1
4. Duolingo; Welsh in schools 2
5. Duolingo; Adults learning Welsh
6. Duolingo; international learners
7. Duolingo; Staff learning Welsh
8. Duolingo; The Welsh-speaking diaspora – Siân Phillips
9. Duolingo; letter from Jeremy Miles