

Ben Lewis,
Director,
Open University Wales

12 March 2025

Request for information

Dear Mr Lewis,

We have been following developments in the higher education sector in Wales, in particular the financial challenges, and how this is resulting in some institutions reducing staff numbers and courses.

Following the announcement by Cardiff University on 28 January, we invited the Vice-Chancellor to give evidence to the Committee at a future meeting. This session will be happening on 3 July.

We also asked for some information in writing ahead of these session. We have now decided to seek similar information from all Welsh universities so that we can better understand the challenges facing the whole sector.

Please can you provide us with:

- an overview of your assessment of the financial challenges facing Open University in Wales, with reference to key data that underpins this assessment (e.g. current and projected student numbers, take-up rates, levels of reserves, etc) for both the coming financial year and the longer term picture;
- details of any specific policies at Welsh- or UK-government level that have significantly impacted on Open University in Wales's ability to operate sustainably; and
- the changes that have already been made in recent years by you or your predecessors to mitigate the impact of the financial challenges facing Open University in Wales.



We would be grateful if you could respond in writing to the questions set out no later than 9 April.

If you have any questions about our request, please contact the Committee Clerk on
seneddchildren@senedd.wales

Yours sincerely,



Buffy Williams MS
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.