

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-938
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/00012/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

14 January 2020

Dear Janet Finch-Saunders AM,

Thank you for your letter regarding petition P-05-938, which asks for Welsh universities to accept the Welsh Baccalaureate as an A Level for all courses.

The Welsh Government policy is that we want all learners to benefit from the Welsh Baccalaureate, and achieve the Skills Challenge Certificate, which is one of the qualifications that forms the Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate. By adding essential personal development and employability skills to academic study or vocational qualifications, the Welsh Baccalaureate helps young people to be better prepared for further/higher education, employment and life. It provides an opportunity for our learners to develop the wider skills and knowledge that align with, and build upon, the four purposes of the new curriculum.

In 2018, Qualifications Wales published a review of the Skills Challenge Certificate. In addition, in 2019, the Children, Young People and Education Committee published their inquiry into the Welsh Bacc. The recommendations of both reports are now in the process of being implemented.

In particular, one of the recommendations of the Children, Young People and Education Committee was:

Recommendation 3. That the Welsh Government undertake work to provide a comprehensive list of those universities that accept the Welsh Bacc in their offers. This list should include details of exactly how each university treats the Welsh Bacc, and whether:

- it is accepted as an equivalent A-level;

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

- it is used to enable an alternative offer to be made by lowering the grade requirements in other subjects;
- it is considered only as part of a candidate's personal statement.


Welsh Government is working with consortia, WJEC, Qualifications Wales and Colegau Cymru to improve how we communicate the Welsh Bacc to all stakeholders, including universities. In addition, Qualifications Wales has a designated member of staff assigned to raising awareness of Welsh qualifications amongst universities. They have prepared an analysis showing the increased inclusion of the Welsh Baccalaureate in offers from all types of universities.

Many universities now include the Advanced Challenge Certificate in offers and the individual project frequently provides good, relevant evidence in supporting statements and interviews even if it isn't accepted as part of the grade offer. The Certificate is recognised as comparable in challenge to an A level and receives the same number of UCAS points. Welsh universities, and a number of Russell Group universities, are clear that they value the Certificate and are taking an increasingly flexible approach to recognising it in their offers. With regard to the specific example provided in the petition, Cardiff Met accept the Welsh Baccalaureate for entry to the Speech and Language Therapy degree – the website states:

Welsh Baccalaureate – Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate, minimum grade B accepted along with three A levels in three clearly separate subject areas, with grades BBB. It is desirable, but not essential, that one or more of these is a science (i.e. biology, chemistry, physics or maths) and that they are academic subjects.

Welsh Government will continue to work with WJEC, Qualifications Wales, UCAS and other stakeholders to ensure that information about which universities accept the Welsh Baccalaureate as part of their offers is systematically collected and continually updated and is made accessible to learners, parents/guardians and schools.

Yours sincerely,



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