

06 October 2023

Annwyl Equality and Social Justice Committee,

RE: Response to Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan inquiry

We are pleased to have the opportunity to respond and present our feedback on the **Equality and Social Justice Committee's Inquiry into an Anti-racist Wales**.

ColegauCymru is an education charity which promotes the public benefit of further education (FE) in Wales. We convene the ColegauCymru Equality and Diversity Network, which brings together EDI leads and representatives from across the FE sector in Wales, to monitor, oversee and progress issues surrounding the nine protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010 - but expanded to include the Welsh language and neurodiversity in its widest sense.

This is in addition to our partnership with Black Leadership Group (BLG), with whom we have undertaken joint work on behalf of Welsh Government to help understand the current picture across the FE sector and specific actions that we can take together, to build a Wales that is anti-racist and help meet the ambitions of an Anti-Racist Wales by 2030.

All thirteen FE colleges in Wales are committed to collaborating on a shared vision to eradicate racism in the FE sector and further the interests and diversity of our learners, colleagues and leaders. Each institution has agreed their own Anti-Racism Action Plans to take this work forward locally and they are collaborating across the sector to develop shared resources for learners and staff. This has led to the delivery of bespoke training and development of anti-racist action plans specific to each college (e.g. see examples from Pembrokeshire College and Cardiff and Vale College, included here as an Appendix - provided as an example to inform Committee members understanding). The FE sector in Wales is showing real leadership in its journey towards anti-racism, and we have a chance to make a real impact, building on the Welsh Government's strong focus on creating an anti-racist Wales. We are not complacent about scale of the challenge or that strategies alone can prevent the experience of racism that learners and staff face, but there is a genuine and meaningful commitment to change and to creating environments that are inclusive and responsive to the needs of all learners.

Cardiff and Vale College is leading on the development of anti-racism resources and playing a key role in developing curriculum materials for the FE sector. In doing so, they are sharing best practice to support FE in taking an all-encompassing approach to managing and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion across the sector. This work includes a vast, accessible and immersive 3D metaverse environment consisting of four different themed areas [find out more [here](#)] which has been developed by subject specialist teams from Cardiff and Vale College working in partnership with other institutions.

In March 2023, Cardiff and Vale College in partnership with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, organised an event in the Senedd to launch their joint project, 'Perthyn', or 'Belonging', which enabled learners aged between 16 and 24 (with lived experience of racism and who speak Welsh) the opportunity to hear about



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the Welsh Government's plans to build an anti-racist nation. They heard from Welsh speaking Black, Asian and minority ethnic role models such as Jason Mohammad, Emily Pemberton and Sage Todz on their lived experiences of racism as a Welsh speaker. As part of the event, the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Mentoring Programme was launched, a project to offer support to young learners from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds through a mentor.

Colleges in Wales are committed to driving forward the priorities of the Anti-racist Wales Action plan. However, given the challenging economic times on the horizon, it is critical that we identify a sustainable support package to enable colleges to continue their journey, contributing towards an anti-racist Wales.

The FE sector has been demonstrating its commitment towards anti-racism, and colleges have invested significant time and resources into this work. The Welsh Government has provided some discreet pots of funding to date to support this work and, looking forward there needs to be a focussed and dedicated stream of funding to support the journey towards an anti-racist Wales. The Welsh Government has range of plans – both published and in development, across a range of the protected characteristics, and it is vital that these plans are cohesive, resourced appropriately and are actionable. As a sector we also recognise the importance of intersectionality and that learners and staff facing racism may also face other forms of discrimination.

In terms of what is being done by Welsh Government to lead by example, we welcome the recognition that the membership of the new Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER) board is not representative and that a further recruitment process will be undertaken in due course. The initial composition of the CTER board was a significant missed opportunity to ensure the strategic leadership of the new organisation is more reflective of the communities it will serve. Given the Welsh Government's stated commitment to ensuring greater diversity of representation of public appointments we hope the Committee will scrutinise the further steps that have now been promised.

Colegau Cymru would welcome further consideration how actions towards anti-racism are embedded into other areas of policy development, for example, the development of the Welsh Education Bill White Paper. Enabling the intersection of the anti-racist agenda across public policy development must be a priority for the Welsh Government and organisations involved in policy development moving forward.

With best wishes,



David Hagedyk
Chief Executive, Colegau Cymru