

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i ymchwiliad y [Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg](#) i egwyddorion cyffredinol y [Bil Addysg Drydyddol ac Ymchwil \(Cymru\)](#)

This response was submitted to the [Children, Young People and Education Committee](#) inquiry into the general principles of the [Tertiary Education and Research \(Wales\) Bill](#)

**TER 30**

**Ymateb gan: Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol**

**Response from: Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol**

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## **The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol**

The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol was established in 2011. The Coleg leads the development of Welsh-medium and bilingual education and training in the post-compulsory sector in Wales. The Coleg achieves this by working in partnership with universities, further education institutions and apprenticeship providers to build a world-class and inclusive Welsh-medium education and training system. To find out more about the Coleg visit: [www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk](http://www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk).

The decision to establish the Coleg was made by the then Welsh Government in 2007 as a result of the need for an independent planning body in the higher education sector to focus specifically on Welsh-medium and bilingual provision. The decision to extend its responsibilities to further education and apprenticeships in 2017/18 was a further recognition of the need for a separate body with expertise in the field to have strategic responsibility in relation to the Welsh language, and that bodies with a host of other broad and important duties cannot fulfil this role or have the expertise and experience to do so. The need for such a body in higher education continues and our work in further education and apprenticeships is still at a very early stage.

The Coleg is an independent organisation and a registered charity. It has a strong governance structure, and has a board consisting of a chair and up to twelve members appointed through a process of open advertising.

## **Summary of the Coleg's position on the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Bill**

### **In general:**

The Coleg supports the establishment of a Tertiary Education and Research Commission and looks forward to supporting the establishment and embedding of the new body in a way that will have a positive impact on Welsh-medium and bilingual provision in the post-compulsory sector.

Whilst recognising that some disruption is inevitable in dissolving an existing body and moving other duties that currently lie with the Government to a new body, every effort should be made to avoid an indefinite period of uncertainty that could hinder progress in the areas concerned.

### **Responsibilities relating to the Welsh language and the Commission's relationship with the Coleg:**

We note that responsibilities have been placed in the Bill on the Commission in relation to the Welsh language and that further details are outlined in the Welsh [Language Impact Assessment](#) including the fact that the Commission, in conjunction with the Coleg, will be responsible for Welsh-medium developments in tertiary education. We believe consideration should be given to including some of the points made in the impact assessment on the face of the bill in order to emphasise the expectation that the Commission acts proactively in relation to Welsh medium provision, rather than passively, in order to realise the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy, and that it works at a strategic level with the Coleg to achieve this.

Pages 126-29 of the [Explanatory Memorandum](#) outline the Commission's full responsibilities in relation to the Welsh language. Whilst welcoming the unambiguous inclusion of these responsibilities, most of these duties are already part of the Coleg's remit, and increasingly so since the Coleg's responsibilities were extended to include the post-16 sector. The need for a specific body with the necessary expertise to act for the Welsh language and bilingualism in higher education, further education and apprenticeships remains as vital as ever and therefore careful

consideration should be given to the extent to which the Bill and associated documentation reflect that.

The Coleg works effectively with a range of bodies with statutory duties, including HEIW, Qualifications Wales and Estyn, as well as the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW). In the case of HEFCW, an MoU has been agreed with the Coleg to facilitate effective collaboration. We trust that the effective ways of working already in place will provide a strong basis for building strong and effective relationships with the new Commission, but in developing the new working relationship it would be beneficial to ensure greater direct involvement by the Coleg in planning processes, and to ensure that relevant funding responsibilities are delegated to the Coleg, in line with the current arrangements for higher education and the evolving model for further education and apprenticeships.

The Coleg is receiving advice at the moment regarding the way in which its relationship with the Commission could be defined either within the Bill and/or within associated documentation. We will be in a position to provide further detail on the advice in the new year.

**Coleg funding arrangements:**

We note that the Bill recognises that the Coleg should continue to be funded by the Welsh Government and we very much welcome this commitment. Receiving a budget directly from the Government underlines the importance of the post-compulsory sector to the long-term language strategy and this should not be undermined in any way. It is unclear at this point why a short to medium term period has been identified for this model of funding in the Accompanying Memorandum given the long-term nature of the Government's language strategy to create a million speakers and double the daily use of Welsh by 2050.

**Research and the Welsh Language:**

We welcome the expectation that the Commission would have to comply with the Welsh Language Standards, and would therefore have to consider the Welsh language in all its activities. We note that this would extend to areas not directly related to provision, such as academic research.

**Other related issues:**

In supporting the Welsh Government's vision in establishing the Commission we are aware that there are wider issues to be addressed. Following the extension of the Coleg's responsibilities regarding the post-16 sector, for example, we are aware of issues that have been raised by colleagues in the sector in relation to the relationship between schools and colleges in terms of A-level provision. This is a complex and sensitive issue in relation to the Welsh language and we would like assurances that every effort will be made to ensure that decisions are not taken that could lead to unintended consequences. The Coleg already supports the Government in promoting the Welsh language as a subject. We would be prepared to extend this work subject to receiving adequate resources.

Consideration should also be given at this point to the relationship between the Tertiary Education and Research Bill and the proposed Welsh Language Education Bill which is another important element of this Government's programme for the sixth Senedd. The Minister for Welsh Language and Education has stated publicly that consideration will be given to placing the role of the Coleg on a statutory footing in that bill and therefore care should be taken to limit any references in the Tertiary Education Bill that might hinder future legislation.

**For more information please contact Gwenllian Griffiths, the Coleg's  
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