

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/ MA-P/EM/4054/17

Mr David Allen OBE
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7 February 2018

Dear David

I am writing to provide you with further information on the Welsh Government's proposals to develop degree apprenticeships. Your original remit letter for 2017-18 outlined the opportunities for the higher education sector to support delivery of higher level apprenticeships as part of the Diamond implementation. After careful consideration I am pleased to inform you the Apprenticeship budget will provide support to HEFCW for the funding of degree apprenticeships.

I am grateful for the cooperation demonstrated by your officials in undertaking the preparatory work to enable the delivery of degree apprenticeships. I expect the Council to continue with this work in order to add value to the apprenticeship offer and strengthen the brand. I understand initial estimates for the delivery of degree apprenticeships stand at around £20m, for the first three years of its operation, however this commitment can only be realised where there is demand from employers for this new type of Apprenticeship. In the remit letter for 2018-19, I expect to allocate funding in line with demand and linked to our overall apprenticeship budget, but this is subject to confirmation at that point. At this that time I will also further outline my expectations.

I am pleased that your are already working in key priority areas that will benefit the Welsh economy such as digital, engineering and advanced manufacturing occupations and hope you continue your work with the higher education sector to develop the combined qualifications that are required.

The delivery and development of apprenticeships in Wales is governed by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (the Act) and the Council will need to comply with the provisions of the Act in delivering this work, the relevant sections are contained in Part 1 Chapter 1. In particular the Council should note that in order to obtain their apprenticeship certificate an apprentice will need to be following a degree

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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.

apprenticeship framework which needs to comply with the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW) (as modified). Further that a recognised Welsh Framework is one which complies with SASW and which is issued by the appropriate issuing authority depending upon the sector to which it relates. The Council should discuss any questions about this with my officials to ensure that all the necessary statutory requirements are met.

The Welsh Government's aspirations for apprenticeships are detailed in the Apprenticeship Plan published in February 2017. Degree Apprenticeships will make a significant contribution to re-alignment of our skills system to deliver the higher level skills that our economy needs. As delivery moves from the initial phase into mainstream, decisions will need to be made on the shape and size of the future programme. I would like to take a collaborative approach to developing aspirations for the future programme.

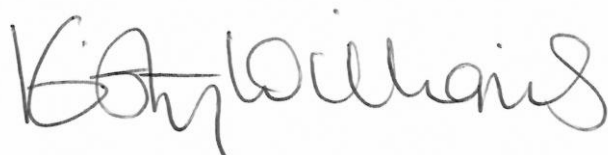
In future years it is intended that any funding will be allocated in response to research and intelligence about demand and the cost and benefits of provision. As we move forward with proposals for reform to the post compulsory education and training (PCET) system further consideration will be given as to how provision is developed and supported. As we progress with the technical consultation on the creation of the new PCET body there will be an opportunity to discuss this matter further.

In undertaking this work I expect the Council to continue to work closely with my officials. Although I am expecting the Council to allocate funding for degree apprenticeships, the provision itself will be part of Wales' wider apprenticeship programme and as such I expect HEFCW to consider the merits of a commonality of approach in matters such as eligibility, marketing and research including the compilation of statistics. It will be important to work with Regional Skills Partnerships, employers and their representative bodies to ensure that the voice of the employer is heard and that sustainable provision is developed and delivered in line with both employer and economic needs.

I would also like to highlight the opportunity for HEFCW and the higher education sector to work more broadly with the work based learning network. In particular to support delivery of higher apprenticeships at Level 4 and 5 in order to maximise completions at these levels and encourage progressions through into degree apprenticeships.

The Council will play a crucial role in ensuring successful implementation. I would expect the first places to be available in September 2018.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', written in a cursive style.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM

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Cabinet Secretary for Education

CC Eluned Morgan AC/AM Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning