

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref HED/KW/0008/17

Professor Stewart Croft
Vice Chancellor
University of Warwick
Coventry
CV4 7AL

24 May 2017

Email: VCPA@warwick.ac.uk

Dear Professor Croft,

I have received correspondence which alleges that the University of Warwick made an offer to an undergraduate History degree applicant which specifically excluded A-level Welsh. I am also aware that this matter resulted in a number of concerns being raised with the Welsh Language Commissioner and that she has written to you requesting a response to the allegation.

My officials have advised me that the University has issued a media statement which indicates that the matter which gave rise to the allegation resulted from an error in the University's response to a particular application. However, I remain concerned about the possible negative impact on students in Wales who are currently studying for the Welsh A-level qualification either as a first or second language. Any negative impact would be unacceptable.

I understand that Supporting Professional Admissions (SPA) produces guidance for universities about native language considerations in admissions. I should appreciate a response as to whether the University has applied the guidance to its admissions process with particular reference to A-level Welsh.

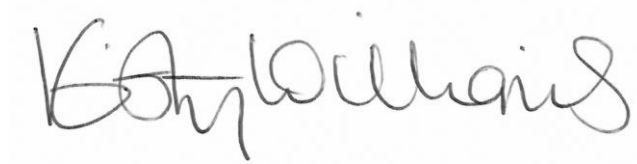
As the Commissioner has indicated in her letter Welsh is an official language in Wales and the Welsh A-level is regulated by Qualifications Wales in line with other A-level qualifications under the Qualifications Wales Act 2015. I expect all universities in the UK to accept our A-levels as valid qualifications to gaining entry to higher education.

On a separate, but related matter, I have written to you regarding the reformed Welsh Baccalaureate - Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate. I am seeking assurance that Warwick will accept it as part of your future entry requirements or as part of an alternative offer within your University. I am disappointed that Warwick is one of only two Russell Group universities that has failed to accept the Welsh Bacc as an entry requirement in previous years.

I do hope that these two matters – the Welsh Bacc and Welsh Language A-Level – don't demonstrate a prejudice against Welsh students and Welsh qualifications at Warwick.

I am copying this letter Meri Huws, Welsh Language Commissioner and Philip Blaker Chief Executive of Qualifications Wales.

Yours sincerely,

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

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Cabinet Secretary for Education