

10 March 2026

Dr Ioan Matthews
Chief Executive
Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

Dear Ioan,

Medr's response to the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's second advice note

Thank you for sharing the Coleg's detailed and considered advice note on regulating tertiary education and training providers in August. This advice came at a key stage of our work to develop a new regulatory system for tertiary education in Wales, ahead of phase two of our consultation, and has been especially helpful in shaping the Welsh Language Condition and other aspects of the framework relating to the Welsh language.

In line with Section 9 of the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022 and our Memorandum of Understanding, I am pleased to enclose Medr's Board-approved response to this advice note (Annex A). Most decisions have now been reflected in the draft regulatory documents published for consultation on 22 October 2025, which were discussed with Coleg officers ahead of publication. A small number of points will be taken forward through our post-consultation work and through the development of the National Plan for the Welsh Language in Tertiary Education. We very much see the development of our regulatory framework as an ongoing process, and some areas raised in the advice note will inform considerations over the medium to long-term.

I would like to thank the Coleg again for its continued positive engagement. I know that Medr officers have valued the collaborative nature of these discussions, finding it both productive and constructive. I hope Coleg colleagues have also found these useful.

We look forward to continuing to work together to promote Welsh language and Welsh-medium tertiary education in the months and years ahead.

Yours sincerely,



James Owen
Chief Executive Officer
Medr

Rydym yn croesawu 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 correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence in Welsh will be answered in Welsh, and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

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Annex A. Medr's decisions in response to Coleg's advice note

Regulatory Objective and Approach

Advice Point 1: Strengthen wording in relation to Medr's regulatory objective for the Welsh language

In relation to Medr's strategic aim *to encourage greater use of the Welsh language, increasing demand for and participation in learning and assessment through the medium of Welsh*, the Coleg highlighted that the wording of the regulatory objective within the Regulatory Approach and Intervention Powers document would benefit from being aligned more closely with the wording of TERA.

Decision: Agree

Medr agreed that this wording should be strengthened. The following additional wording was agreed and included in the revised draft of the Regulatory Framework:

Regulatory objective: *Increased access to quality Welsh-medium provision, together with encouragement and support to participate in it, helps protect the Welsh language and supports the Welsh Government's aspiration for a million Welsh speakers.*

Advice Point 2: Strengthen wording in relation to Medr's regulatory approach for the Welsh language

In relation to Medr's strategic aim *to encourage greater use of the Welsh language, increasing demand for and participation in learning and assessment through the medium of Welsh*, the Coleg highlighted that the wording of the regulatory approach within the Regulatory Approach and Intervention Powers document would benefit from being aligned more closely with the wording of TERA.

Decision: Agree

Medr agreed that this wording should be strengthened. The following additional wording was agreed and included on p.5 of the revised draft of the Regulatory Framework:

Regulatory approach: *Medr will work with key stakeholders, including the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, to develop a national plan for Welsh-medium tertiary education. Informed by that plan, we will regulate in a way that challenges providers to expand and improve provision—both in quality and accessibility; to encourage demand and participation; and to promote greater use of the language across all tertiary environments.*

Advice Point 3: Adopt a holistic and close engagement model tailored to each provider.

Decision: Partially agree

Following extensive consultation with the sector, Medr has developed a blended model of monitoring that draws on the strengths of the two original options presented in our first consultation in 2025. This model forms the foundation for how we will assess compliance with the Conditions of Registration and Funding, and how we will engage with providers to identify risk, support improvement, and protect learners and the public interest. This approach deliberately combines assurance-led oversight with wider engagement.

Information Provided to Prospective Students Condition

Advice Point 4: The Coleg advise Medr to further consider explicitly requiring providers to provide clear information to prospective learners on the linguistic nature of their provision.

Decision: Partially agree

Medr agrees with the importance of ensuring that learners have the necessary information and support to make informed decisions about the language medium through which they wish to undertake their studies, and this why Medr has built this into the Welsh Language Condition.

With regards to including explicit requirements within the Information Provided to Prospective Students Condition, it was felt this would be too specific for inclusion within this condition, as this document was written specifically with CMA compliance in mind.

Medr intends to revisit this post-consultation and consider whether the requirement as it is currently set out in the Welsh Language Condition could be strengthened. However, consideration would need to be given to how such requirements may interact with the broader regulatory environment (e.g. Welsh Language Standards) and Medr's responsibilities in relation to institutional autonomy.

Quality Framework

Advice Point 5: The Coleg advise Medr to further consider how data sources relating to quality can be able to be split by language.

Decision: Partially agree

It was felt that the wording offered by the Coleg was too specific for inclusion within the Quality Framework document, particularly considering the ongoing challenges around Welsh-medium data. However, Medr agrees that any assessment of the outcomes for

learners will need to include those who study partially or wholly through the medium of Welsh, as well as different groups of learners, including those with protected characteristics, where sufficient data is available. Medr is currently considering provider performance measures and Welsh-medium considerations are an active part of this work.

Welsh Language Condition

Advice Point 6: The Welsh Language Condition should state that each provider is expected to have a strategy for the Welsh language that has been agreed by its governing body.

Advice Point 7: The Welsh language condition should set out how providers will be expected to demonstrate that they are constantly moving towards their targets.

Advice Point 8: The Coleg advises Medr to consider using the regulatory condition for the Welsh language to place an expectation on relevant providers to contribute towards this.

Advice Point 9: The Coleg advises Medr to consider using the regulatory condition to place an expectation on relevant providers to contribute towards ensuring that all learners can study Welsh as a subject.

Advice Point 10: The Coleg advises Medr to consider using the regulatory condition for the Welsh language to place an expectation on relevant providers to contribute towards [the carrying out of research and innovation and of activities related to research and innovation through the medium of Welsh].

Decisions: Partially agree

Medr officers have worked collaboratively with the Coleg in shaping this aspect of the Welsh Language Condition. Medr notes, in particular, the Coleg's comments on the inclusion of Welsh as a subject and Welsh-medium research within this condition.

Where the provider is an institution which undertakes research and innovation, Medr has also included a requirement in the draft Welsh Language Condition for these providers to set out in their strategy how they will encourage their researchers, including staff and student researchers, to carry out research and innovation activities which support the Welsh language.

We note that the Coleg, in its advice note and further comments in response to phase 2 of Medr's consultation on a new regulatory system, have also recommended strengthening the language in the Condition as it relates to workforce requirements. The current wording states that a provider's Welsh Language Strategy should "consider what workforce capacity may be required to support more learners to study through the medium of Welsh and Welsh as a subject". When drafting this, we had to carefully consider how Medr's regulatory levers can encourage providers to plan their workforce

and act on that planning in a manner that is proactive in a proactive way, whilst not intervening in the decisions of their governing bodies.

We will consider the Coleg's additional comments in the context of our response to the consultation and explore whether there is alternate wording that strengthens expectations, without infringing upon the institutional autonomy of providers.

Advice Point 11: The Coleg expects that the National Plan will provide a framework for providers to set ambitious targets...The Coleg advises that this be discussed further in due course in relation to monitoring the progress of the National Plan.

Decision: Agree.

Medr agrees that the National Plan for the Welsh Language in Tertiary Education should provide a framework for setting targets for ensuring providers make continuous progress along the Welsh language continuum. Medr also agrees with the principle of publishing progress reports to ensure accountability and transparency. The National Plan is currently in its early development stage. Medr will revisit the Coleg's initial comments in relation to the National Plan the context of the working group's discussions.

Medr also agrees with the Coleg's broader point that tertiary providers are all starting from different points in relation to their promotion of Welsh language use and increasing demand for, and participation in, Welsh-medium provision and research. We welcome their acknowledgement of the need for Medr's regulatory approach to the Welsh language to be flexible enough to allow providers to respond to their current situation by making positive progress along the Welsh language continuum.

Advice Point 12: The Coleg wishes to work with Medr to ensure that the monitoring processes of the two bodies are aligned where possible in order to reduce the administrative burden on providers and avoid duplication.

Decision: Agree.

Medr agrees to continue its close relationship with the Coleg in relation to monitoring providers' compliance with the Welsh Language Condition and other regulatory requirements in relation to the Welsh language, so that the Coleg can alert Medr early on of any concerns regarding providers' compliance. This has been reflected in the Monitoring section of the draft Welsh Language Condition.

Further work will be undertaken in preparation for implementing the Welsh Language Condition to identify ways of reducing administrative burden by aligning monitoring processes between Medr and the Coleg. Medr will also explore the Coleg's annual assessments as a form of evidence for compliance.

Advice Point 13: The Coleg advises Medr to provide supplementary guidance on the Welsh Language Condition once the National Plan has been published.

Advice Point 14: The Coleg advises that guidance may also be required for the development of provision in line with the National Framework for Welsh Language Education and Learning Welsh.

Decision: Partially agree

Whilst Medr acknowledges that supplementary guidance may be required to support providers with complying with the Welsh Language Condition, we do not want to pre-empt the feedback we will receive through formal consultation at this stage. Medr will reflect on the need for supplementary guidance in light of responses to the Phase 2 consultation and further discussions with the National Plan working group.

Any need for guidance on developing provision in line with Welsh Government's National Framework for Welsh Language Education and Learning Welsh will be revisited and discussed further with the Coleg as this new framework emerges.