

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee

SeneddCYPE@Assembly.Wales

3 April 2020

Dear Lynne,

Following my attendance at CYPE Committee on Thursday 19 March, I agreed to provide an update on the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the progress of referral processes for pupils with Additional Learning Needs who are awaiting referrals, and how the AAT qualification would be assessed.

In relation to referral processes, we recognise that this unprecedented situation means that existing systems and processes are not currently operating as they normally would. We are encouraging a practical and flexible approach and that wherever possible services are provided remotely.

Referrals made to educational psychologists and other professionals as part of the statutory assessment and statementing process will be impacted by the current situation. The Coronavirus Act 2020 allows for temporary emergency powers to enable Welsh Ministers, where necessary, to modify the legal requirements on local authorities in fulfilling their duties in relation to special educational needs (SEN). We are considering if we need to apply these powers in Wales and will issue information around this as soon as possible.

Where the relevant process involved input from clinicians, you will be aware NHS routine activity has been stepped down, and waiting lists suspended. Young people will be kept on the waiting lists in their order. Where NHS services are able to provide some form of action, alternative ways to review cases such as virtual review are being encouraged and resources to support this are being developed across Wales. If the related condition has deteriorated and is having a greater effect on a young person, patients may want to contact their GP for advice. However, GPs will also be dealing with increased work due to the pandemic and may not be in a position to respond in a timely manner.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

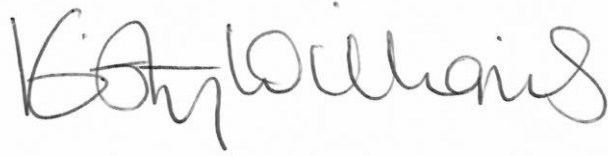
Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales

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.

On the second follow up action, the Association of Taxation Technicians wrote to all learners on 20 March informing them that, following the cancellation of the May 2020 examinations, they would be automatically registered for examinations in November 2020. More information, and further FAQs can be found directly on the ATT website <https://www.att.org.uk/may-2020-exams-faqs>

Yours sincerely

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

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