

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**  
**Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg**  
**Minister for Education and Welsh Language**



**Llywodraeth Cymru**  
**Welsh Government**

Delyth Jewell AS  
Committee Chair  
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,  
Sport, and International Relations Committee  
Senedd Cymru  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1SN

SeneddCulture@senedd.cymru

30 November 2023

Dear Delyth

Thank you for your letter of 25 October asking for further information following recent reports that Duolingo will not continue to edit or update the Welsh course from October 2023. You also wrote to me on 22 November seeking an update following our discussions with Duolingo; I am pleased to update you following the meeting on 13 November in this response.

It is important to note at the outset that the Welsh course will still be available on the Duolingo platform and will remain free for all learners to use. Since starting their partnership with Duolingo in January 2022, the National Centre for Learning Welsh (“the Centre”) has ensured that the content on Duolingo is matched to the Centre’s curriculum for its foundation and entry level courses. This means that learners can use Duolingo as a valuable resource and practicing tool alongside courses they undertake with the Centre. The Welsh course on Duolingo is comprehensive and this is supported by the high number of active users. I am pleased, therefore, that the course will continue to be available to learners to support their Welsh language learning.

From November 2023, Duolingo is pausing work on all its courses that are developed with partner organisations such as the Centre; focussing for the time being on developing language courses in-house using their own staff. As developing content requires a significant number of specialist staff, Duolingo is focussing on the larger languages first.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

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

[Gohebiaeth.Jeremy.Miles@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Jeremy.Miles@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Jeremy.Miles@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Jeremy.Miles@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.

I sent a letter to Dr Luis von Ahn, founder and CEO of Duolingo on 25 October, shortly after becoming formally aware of their plans, asking him to re-consider the company's decision to suspend the developments on Duolingo's Welsh language content. That letter has been published on the Government's website:

<https://www.gov.wales/letter-duolingo>

I received a reply from Dr von Ahn on 29 October stating that the decision to pause the development of new content of the Welsh course had not been an easy one. However, Dr von Ahn stated that he believes the company has a continued role to play in helping languages like Welsh thrive and noted that he had asked members of his team to reach out to my office to see how Duolingo could continue to support Cymraeg 2050.

Due to the National Centre's formal contract with Duolingo, all interaction regarding the Welsh course prior to the announcement was between those two parties. Officials from the Cymraeg 2050 Division met with Duolingo's Head of Government Affairs on 13 November. During the meeting Duolingo highlighted the significant challenges it faces in developing new content and that, whilst it was pausing the development of new content, the door is not closed on future developments. Duolingo was also keen to emphasise that its experience of working with the Centre as a partner organisation has been a positive and constructive one, and praised the commitment shown by the Centre to developing the Welsh Duolingo course and to increasing the number of users.

I am pleased to say that through this meeting we have forged a positive relationship with Duolingo and have agreed on a number of actions to ensure that the company's commitment to the Welsh language continues. In the short-term we have agreed to have an on-going discussion to better understand the challenges that Duolingo face in developing new content and to see if there is any practical help we can offer to facilitate this work in the future. We have also agreed to look at ways in which we might work in partnership with Duolingo the Centre to continue to increase the number of people that use the Welsh course as a learning aid and to promote progression opportunities for learners who have come to the end of the Duolingo course.

In the longer-term we have agreed to meet regularly as we develop the proposals in the Welsh Education Bill and a single continuum for learning Welsh, and to consider if Duolingo has a role as a resource to support teaching and learning as people progress along the continuum.

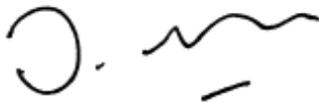
Duolingo has also committed to share their expertise to help with our mission to engage with young learners and offer free Welsh lessons to 16-25 year olds. A significant proportion of Duolingo's users worldwide are within that age bracket and I am pleased, therefore, that we can draw upon their experiences as we look for the best ways to attract young people to learn Welsh.

Duolingo also reaffirmed its commitment to ensure that the Welsh course will always be available free of charge to users, and that it is willing to have a regular dialogue with us and the Centre which will allow us to review if updates to the Welsh course are required in the future.

The Centre are satisfied with the current Welsh course on Duolingo corresponds approximately to A2 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The Centre has worked with Duolingo to develop this content so that it is a valuable teaching aid for its learners, which can help them along their journey to becoming Welsh speakers. At this stage it is not possible to determine the financial implications of developing new content, but both Duolingo and the Centre have indicated that developing the Welsh course to intermediate level (up to B2 on the CEFR continuum) would require a significant amount of additional resource in terms of staff time.

As outlined above, we are keen to maintain a dialogue with Duolingo to better understand the challenges it faces and to ensure that any future developments support the creation and delivery of a continuum for Welsh language learning.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' followed by a series of wavy lines and a short horizontal stroke at the end.

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**  
Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg  
Minister for Education and Welsh Language

