Jane Davidson AM

Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

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Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru Welsh Assembly Government

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Dear How many

Following my statement on 15th July announcing the new Individual Learning Account Wales (ILA Wales) programme opening to individuals, you asked who would be responsible for administering the 'means test' in the programme and I agreed to respond to you in writing.

As there are three levels of support available via ILA Wales, there will be a means test to determine the amount an individual is eligible to apply for. This is not as onerous as it may appear. In order to receive the maximum 100% support from ILA Wales, an individual must be in receipt of Income Support or Income based Job Seekers Allowance and must produce a copy of their most recent award notice as proof of benefit. They will not be expected to disclose their full financial situation as they would have already gone through this process with Jobcentre Plus in calculating their benefit entitlement. Similarly, if an individual is applying for 80% support, then they must produce a copy of their award notice detailing their Working Tax Credit, issued by the Inland Revenue. If an individual is in receipt of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit, a copy of their award notice from their local authority is required. The Department of Work and Pensions, the Inland Revenue and the Welsh Local Government Association on behalf of the local authorities in Wales, fully endorse this approach.

This system of means testing in ILA Wales was designed to make the application process as straightforward as possible so as to reduce any preconceived 'bureaucratic' barriers that potential applicants may have.

As learndirect are the source of ILA Wales application forms, we are able to engage the Careers Wales Adult Guidance network in the programme. Their

BUTO DECEDOWR MEWN POIR, PRIVESTOREN PERMAN trained advisers are available to assist potential applicants in completing their application form as well as offer advice and guidance on the most appropriate learning. The TUC has also been involved in the development of ILA Wales and their Learning Reps are ideally placed to offer their members help in completing the application form.

I was keen to see that our target client group is offered the necessary support they need through ILA Wales and I believe that the straightforward application system and means test that we have in place, will encourage those who are traditionally hardest to engage.

Jane Davidson AM Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning