

nus cymru

national union of **students**
undeb cenedlaethol y **myfyrwyr**

FIGHT SMARTER FOR FAIRER.

DOL TEGACH.



FAIRER FUTURES.



DYFODOL TEGACH.

A FAIR DEAL FOR OUR FUTURE

**NUS CYMRU 2026
STUDENT MANIFESTO**



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FOREWORD» FOR OUR FUTURE

NUS Cymru is calling on all political parties and 2026 Senedd Election candidates to commit to investing in a **thriving future for learners and society**. A fair deal for Students is a fair deal for Wales because when students succeed, Wales succeeds. Together, we can build a stronger, greener, and fairer nation for all.

After a decade of the marketisation of higher education, and misaligned priorities, the post-16 education system in Wales is under pressure.

Financial instability, outdated structures, and uneven opportunities mean it's not working as it should for students or Wales. But this can change. We have the chance to build a world-leading education system, one that invests in students, strengthens our economy, and delivers fairness for every student.

Our vision is a Wales where every student is seen, supported, and empowered to shape their own future. A Wales where background never limits opportunity, and education opens doors instead of creating barriers.

In this future, learning is flexible and fair. Pathways recognise your skills and experience, and funding is predictable, so no one has to choose between learning and living. Campuses are safe, vibrant, and inclusive places where every student belongs, free from hate and discrimination.

Our voice matters. Decisions will be made with us, not for us. Feedback drives real change, and complaints lead to action. Transport is free, housing is fair, and mental health support is easy to access. Colleges and universities work together with communities, giving students the chance to lead, create, and make a difference.

This is a Wales where learners don't just get by, we thrive. We graduate with skills, confidence, and hope, ready to shape the nation's future because our own future has been shaped with care, fairness, and ambition.

A Wales that invests in its Learners is a Wales that invests in its future.

DEIO OWEN

Llywydd UCM Cymru
NUS Cymru President



1» FAIR FUNDING & SUPPORT

After a decade of the marketisation of higher education, and misaligned priorities, the post-16 education system in Wales is under pressure.

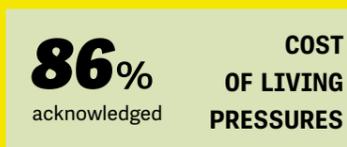
Wales already leads the UK on student support, but we need to go further. The current system hasn't kept pace with inflation or the true cost of living, leaving many learners struggling to make ends meet.

To help students thrive, we're calling on the next Government to:

- 1. UPRATE FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND ELIGIBILITY THRESHOLDS** for all post-16 learners in line with the cost of living.
- 2. MOVE THE FINANCIAL BURDEN OF EDUCATION AWAY FROM STUDENTS** by sustainably lowering tuition fees.
- 3. PROVIDE A LIFELONG LEARNING ENTITLEMENT FOR EVERY PERSON IN WALES** enabling learners of all ages to reskill, upskill, and pursue education opportunities throughout their lives.
- 4. REVIEW THE PROCESS FOR ACCESSING THE DISABLED STUDENTS' ALLOWANCE** to make it less burdensome for learners.
- 5. INCREASE FUNDING FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN GROWING SECTORS** such as green energy, digital innovation, and healthcare to future-proof Wales' workforce.



» 33% of learners say additional financial support whilst studying would be most helpful to managing the cost-of-living crisis. (WST Oct 2025)



» 86% of learners highlight that the cost of living has had a negative impact on their studies. (WST Oct 2025)

2» FAIR ACCESS TO EDUCATION



Access to education must never depend on background or postcode. Yet today, opportunities still vary by region. Everyone who wants to learn should be able to access the right course for their needs. Learners in Wales deserve a system that is truly free, accessible, and lifelong.

We're calling on the next Welsh Government to:

- 1. REFOCUS THE SEREN ACADEMY** and develop a national strategy to provide clear pathways, incentives, and outreach for Welsh Learners to access Higher Education in Wales.
- 2. ENSURE ALL PLACES OF STUDY ARE FULLY ACCESSIBLE FOR THOSE WITH DISABILITIES**, and ensure that long-term funding is in place for support services.
- 3. ENSURE THAT ALL LEARNERS HAVE ACCESS TO FREE, INDEPENDENT ADVICE & GUIDANCE**, relating to their education pathways, career opportunities, and employment.
- 4. INTRODUCE A CLEAR, CONSISTENT NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CREDIT TRANSFER AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)**, so learners can move easily between courses and institutions, and have their existing skills, experience and qualifications recognised wherever they study in Wales.
- 5. ENSURE THAT EVERY LEARNER HAS ACCESS TO CONSISTENT WELSH MEDIUM PROVISION** throughout their educational pathway.
- 6. JOIN THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA AS AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER**, and commit to reducing international student fees in collaboration with students and universities.
- 7. SECURE CONSISTENT FUNDING FOR TAITH**, to enable learners and young people to access global opportunities and invaluable experiences.



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3» FAIR TRANSPORT



In 2023, Welsh Government research revealed that 41% of young people aged 16–24 identified transport as their biggest barrier to accessing education, jobs, or apprenticeships. High costs, poor public transport links, and a fragmented system are keeping learners from reaching their potential.

To change this, the next Welsh Government must act to make transport affordable, accessible, and reliable for all learners.

This includes, and isn't limited to:

- 1. **FREE ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT** for students with a valid Student ID card.
- 2. **EXPAND BUS ROUTES IN AREAS** with poor service and improve transport links to places of study, with a focus on rural communities.
- 3. **INTEGRATION OF BUS AND RAIL TRAVEL**, enabling the use of a single ticketing system, and streamlined timetables.
- 4. Ensure that the Welsh public transport network **IS SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY.**

50% missed classes **BECAUSE OF TRANSPORT**

» 50% of learners have missed classes due to unreliable transport. (WST Oct 2025)

41% will vote **TO LOWER TRANSPORT COST**

» 41% of learners report that lowering the cost of transport is their priority when deciding how to vote. (WST Oct 2025)



4» FAIR HOUSING & LIVING CONDITIONS

For decades, students have endured poor-quality housing, soaring rents, and a lack of basic rights. Instead of worrying about heating, contracts, and mould, they should be free to focus on their studies, supported by strong tenant protections. Living in substandard conditions has become the norm and it's time to break that cycle.

The Welsh Government must act to deliver fair, safe, and affordable housing for every learner.

Welsh students are asking for:

1. REVIEW THE RENTING HOMES (WALES) ACT 2016

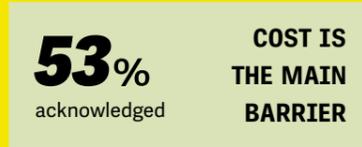
with specific attention given to the amount of time a contract can be signed before taking up occupancy, and the number of individuals able to be on the same contract.

2. IMPLEMENT RENT CAPS AND CONTROL ON RENT INCREASES

in both private rented housing and purpose-built student accommodation.

3. INTRODUCE STRONGER REGULATION AND OVERSIGHT OF LANDLORDS

to ensure fair treatment, safety, and quality for all tenants.



» 53% of learners said their main barrier to accessing housing was affordability. (WST Oct 2025)



» 35% of learners say a reduction in housing costs would be most effective to help them manage the cost-of-living crisis. (WST Oct 2025)

5» FAIR HEALTH & WELLBEING



Positive mental health and wellbeing is fundamental for every learner's success. Yet unequal access to support, unclear pathways, increasing waiting times, and outdated policies leave too many students behind. Investing in mental health is essential for building a fair and successful education system. When learners are healthy and supported, Wales thrives, with better grades, stronger communities, and a brighter future.

To revolutionise mental health support, we're calling for:

- 1. IMPROVED ACCESS TO, AND REDUCE WAITING TIMES** for mental health services.
- 2. INVEST IN BUILDING LOCAL COMMUNITY** through funding community organisations to tackle loneliness and the causes of mental ill health.
- 3. INVEST FURTHER IN MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SERVICES ON CAMPUS,** promoting collaboration between education providers and health boards.
- 4. OPEN A GENDER IDENTITY CLINIC IN WALES,** to provide gender affirming care.
- 5. ENHANCE NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR POST-16 EDUCATION PROVIDERS** to tackle sexual violence, abuse and harassment, with funding in place for targeted activities.
- 6. CREATE A NATIONAL STRATEGY THAT PRIORITISES YOUNG PEOPLE'S SAFETY ONLINE,** tackling harmful content and promoting digital wellbeing.



» 70% of students report they have sought or require mental health support during their studies (WST Oct 2025)



» 71% of students report that their mental health has affected their academic performance or grades. (WST Oct 2025)

A FAIR FUTURE

Students in Wales want to play an active role in shaping the country they live and learn in. They envision a future where every young person is empowered to participate in democracy, understands their rights, and can influence decisions that affect their lives. To build a more engaged, informed, and inclusive Wales, the next Welsh Government must take bold steps to strengthen student voice and remove barriers to political participation.

Welsh students are calling on the next Welsh Government to:

**1. FUND STUDENT VOICE AT A NATIONAL LEVEL
TO SUPPORT AND EQUIP STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES
TO CONTRIBUTE EFFECTIVELY TO DECISION MAKING.**

**2. ROLL OUT AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION
TO ALL ELIGIBLE VOTERS ACROSS WALES.**

**3. DEVELOP A NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR DEMOCRATIC
EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT WHICH EMBEDS
POLITICAL AWARENESS IN THE CURRICULUM
AND ENCOURAGES PARTICIPATION.**

**4. INCREASE LEARNERS' DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT
BY LOCATING POLLING STATIONS IN PLACES OF STUDY.**

GET IN TOUCH

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YMLADDWN DROS DEGWCH.

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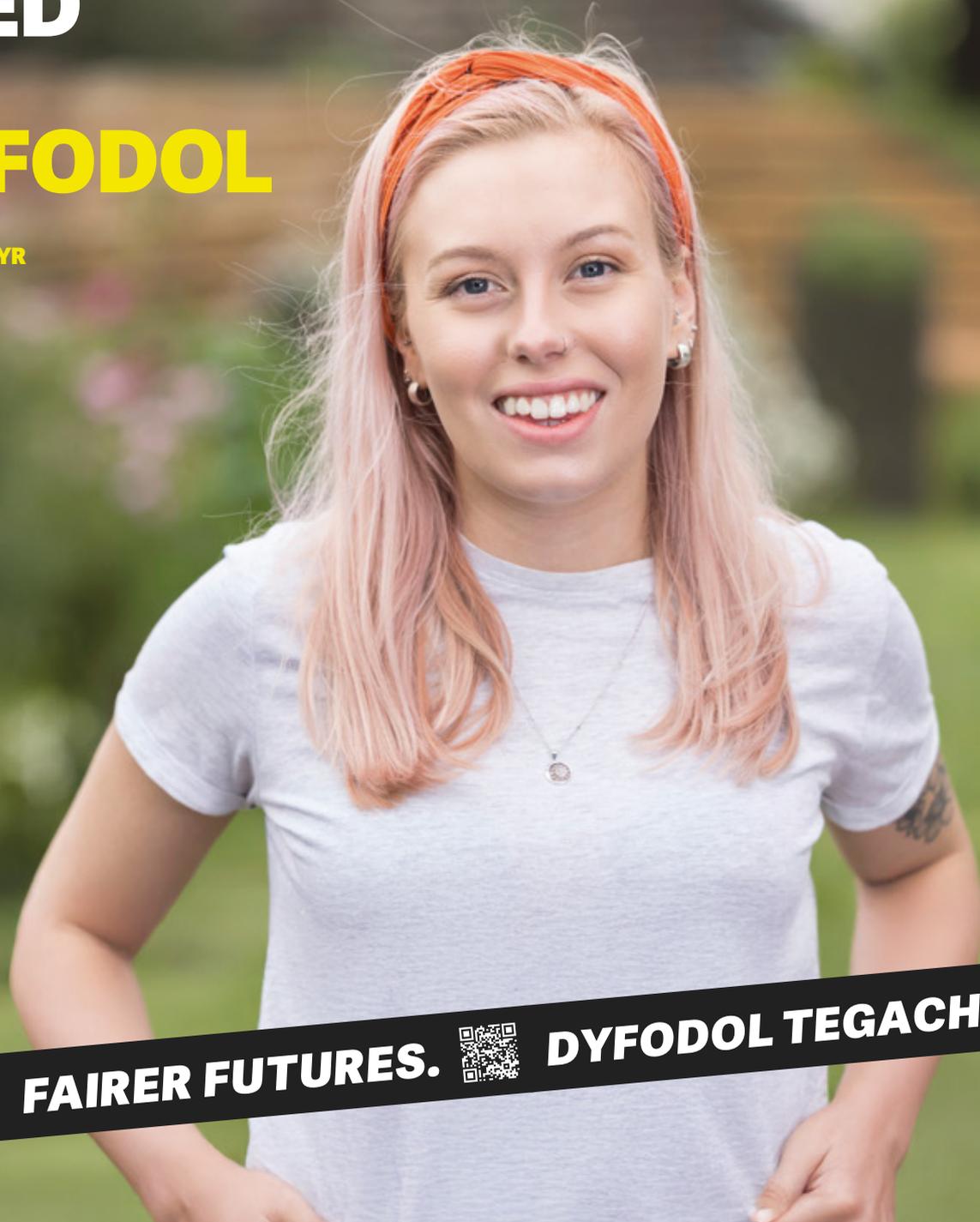
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TARGED TEG I'N DYFODOL

**NUS CYMRU 2026
MANIFFESTO MYFYRWYR**



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BLAEN» AR GYFER EIN DYFODOL

Mae UCM Cymru'n galw ar bob plaid wleidyddol ac ymgeiswyr ar gyfer Etholiad y Senedd 2026 i ymrwymo i fuddsoddi mewn dyfodol llewyrchus i ddysgwyr a chymdeithas. Mae bargaen deg i Fyfirwyr yn fargaen deg i Gymru oherwydd pan fydd myfirwyr yn llwyddo, mae Cymru'n llwyddo. Gyda'n gilydd, gallwn adeiladu gwlad gryfach, fwy gwyrdd a thecach i bawb.

Ar ôl degawd o farchnadeiddio addysg uwch, a blaenoriaethau anghydawns, mae'r system addysg ôl-16 yng Nghymru dan bwysau. Mae ansefydlogrwydd ariannol, strwythurau hen ffasiwn, a chyfleoedd anwastad yn golygu nad yw'n gweithio fel y dylai i fyfirwyr na Chymru. Ond gall hyn newid. Mae gennym y cyfle i adeiladu system addysg o'r radd flaenaf, un sy'n buddsoddi mewn myfirwyr, yn cryfhau ein heconomi, ac yn darparu tegwch i bob myfyriwr.

Ein gweledigaeth yw Cymru lle mae pob myfyriwr yn cael ei weld, ei gefnogi a'i rymuso i lunio ei ddyfodol ei hun. Cymru lle nad yw cefndir byth yn cyfyngu ar gyfleoedd, lle mae addysg yn agor drysau yn hytrach na chreu rhwystrau.

Yn y dyfodol hwn, mae dysgu'n hyblyg ac yn

deg. Mae llwybrau'n cydnabod eich sgiliau a'ch profiad, ac mae'n bosib rhagweld o ble daw'r cyllid, felly does dim rhaid i neb ddewis rhwng dysgu a byw. Mae campysau yn lleoedd diogel, bywiog a chynhwysol lle mae pob myfyriwr yn perthyn, yn rhydd rhag casineb a chamwahaniaethu.

Mae ein llais yn bwysig. Bydd penderfyniadau'n cael eu gwneud gyda ni, nid ar ein cyfer ni. Mae adborth yn sbarduno newid go iawn, ac mae cwynion yn arwain at weithredu. Mae teithio am ddim, mae'r system dai yn deg, ac mae cymorth iechyd meddwl yn hawdd ei gael. Mae colegau a phrifysgolion yn cydweithio â chymunedau, gan roi cyfle i fyfirwyr arwain, creu a gwneud gwahaniaeth.

Dyma Gymru lle mae dysgwyr yn gwneud mwy na dim ond goroesi; rydym yn ffynnu. Rydym yn graddio â sgiliau, hyder a gobaith, yn barod i lunio dyfodol y wlad oherwydd bod ein dyfodol ein hunain wedi'i lunio â gofal, tegwch ac uchelgais.

Mae Cymru sy'n buddsoddi yn ei Dysgwyr yn Gymru sy'n buddsoddi yn ei dyfodol.

DEIO OWEN

Llywydd UCM Cymru
NUS Cymru President



4» TAI AC AMODAU BYW TEG



Ers degawdau, mae myfyrwyr wedi gorfod goddef tai o ansawdd gwael, rhenti sy'n codi'n sydyn, a diffyg hawliau sylfaenol.

Yn hytrach na phoeni am wresogi, contractau a llwydni, dylent fod yn rhydd i ganolbwyntio ar eu hastudiaethau, gyda chefnogaeth amddiffyniadau cryf i denantiaid. Mae byw mewn amodau salach na'r safon sy'n dderbyniol wedi dod yn norm ac mae'n bryd torri'r cylch hwnnw.

Rhaid i Lywodraeth Cymru weithredu i ddarparu tai teg, diogel a fforddiadwy i bob dysgwr.

Mae myfyrwyr Cymru yn gofyn am:

1. ADOLYGIAD O DDEDDF RHENTU CARTREFI (CYMRU) 2016 gan roi sylw penodol i faint o amser ymlaen llaw y gellir llofnodi contract cyn dechrau byw yn yr eiddo, a nifer yr unigolion sy'n gallu bod ar yr un contract.

2. GWEITHREDU CAP AR RENTI A RHEOLAETH AR GYNYDDU'R RHENT MEWN tai preifat ar rent a llety myfyrwyr pwrpasol.

3. CYFLWYNO RHEOLEIDDIO A GORUCHWYLIAETH GRYFACH O LANDLORDIAID ti sicrhau triniaeth deg, diogelwch ac ansawdd i bob tenant.

cydnabodd **53%** COSTAU BYW FEL Y PRIF RWYSTR

» Dywedodd 53% o ddysgwyr mai fforddiadwyedd oedd eu prif rwystr i gael mynediad at dai. (WST Hydref 2025)

gofynnwyd **35%** I GOSTAU TEITHIO LEIHU

» Mae 35% o ddysgwyr yn dweud mai gostyngiad mewn costau tai fyddai o'r cymorth mwyaf iddynt wrth geisio ymdopi â'r argyfwng costau byw. (WST Hydref 2025)

5» IECHYD A LLESIANT TEG



Mae iechyd meddwl cadarnhaol a llesiant yn hanfodol i lwyddiant pob dysgwr. Ac eto mae mynediad anghyfartal at gymorth, llwybrau aneglur, amseroedd aros cynyddol, a pholisïau hen ffasiwn yn golygu bod gormod o fyfyrwyr yn colli allan. Mae buddsoddi mewn iechyd meddwl yn hanfodol ar gyfer adeiladu system addysg deg a llwyddiannus. Pan fydd dysgwyr yn iach ac yn cael cefnogaeth, mae Cymru'n ffynnu, gyda graddau gwell, cymunedau cryfach, a dyfodol disgleiriach.

Er mwyn chwyldroi cymorth iechyd meddwl, rydym yn galw am:

1. GWELL MYNEDIAD AT WASANAETHAU IECHYD MEDDWL a lleihau amseroedd aros ar eu cyfer.

2. BUDDSODDI MEWN ADEILADU CYMUNEDAU LLEOL trwy ariannu sefydliadau cymunedol i fynd i'r afael ag unigrwydd ac achosion salwch meddwl.

3. BUDDSODDI YMHELLACH MEWN GWASANAETHAU IECHYD MEDDWL A LLESIANT AR Y CAMPWS, gan hyrwyddo cydweithio rhwng darparwyr addysg a byrddau iechyd.

4. AGOR CLINIG HUNANIAETH RHYWEDD YNG NGHYMRU, i ddarparu gofal ar gyfer cadarnhau rhywedd.

5. GWELLA SAFONAU CENEDLAETHOL AR GYFER DARPARWYR ADDYSG ÔL-16 I FYND I'R AFAEL Â THRAIS cam-drin ac aflonyddu rhywiol, gyda chyllid ar gael ar gyfer gweithgareddau wedi'u targedu.

6. CREU STRATEGAETH GENEDLAETHOL SY'N BLAENORIAETHU DIOGELWCH POBL IFANC AR-LEIN, mynd i'r afael â chynnwys niweidiol a hyrwyddo llesiant digidol.

nododd **70%** eu bod WEDI GOFYN AM GYMORTH

» Dywed 70% o fyfyrwyr eu bod wedi ceisio neu angen cymorth iechyd meddwl yn ystod eu hastudiaethau. (WST Hydref 2025)

nododd **71%** fod eu PERFFORMIAD WEDI'I EFFEITHIO

» Mae 71% o fyfyrwyr yn nodi bod eu hiechyd meddwl wedi effeithio ar eu perfformiad academiaidd neu eu graddau. (WST Hydref 2025)

DYFODOL TEG

Mae myfyrwyr yng Nghymru eisiau chwarae rhan weithredol wrth lunio'r wlad maen nhw'n byw ac yn dysgu ynddi. Maen nhw'n rhagweld dyfodol lle mae pob person ifanc wedi'i rymuso i gymryd rhan mewn democratiaeth, yn deall ei hawliau, ac yn gallu dylanwadu ar benderfyniadau sy'n effeithio ar eu bywydau. Er mwyn adeiladu Cymru fwy ymgysylltiedig, gwybodus a chynhwysol, rhaid i Lywodraeth nesaf Cymru gymryd camau beiddgar i gryfhau llais myfyrwyr a chael gwared ar rwystrau i gyfranogiad gwleidyddol.

Mae myfyrwyr Cymru'n galw ar Lywodraeth nesaf Cymru i:

1. CYLLIDO LLAIS MYFYRWYR AR LEFEL GENEDLAETHOL

I GEFNOGI A CHYFARPARU CYNRYCHIOLWYR MYFYRWYR I GYFRANNU'N EFFEITHIOL AT WNEUD PENDERFYNIADAU.

2. SEFYDLU SYSTEM AR GYFER COFRESTRU PLEIDLEISWYR AWTOMATIG I BOB PLEIDLEISIWR CYMWYS LEDLED CYMRU.

3. DATBLYGU STRATEGAETH GENEDLAETHOL AR GYFER ADDYSG A CHYFRANOGIAD DEMOCRATAIDD SY'N GWREIDDIO YMWYBYDDIAETH WLEIDYDDOL YN Y CWRICWLWM AC YN ANNOG CYFRANOGIAD.

4. CYNYDDU YMGYSYLLTIAD DEMOCRATAIDD DYSGWYR TRWY LEOLI GORSAFOEDD PLEIDLEISIO MEWN MANNAU ASTUDIO.

CYSYLLTWCH

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