

Meeting	Agenda Item	Reference No
07/12/07	19	HEFCW/07/111

1 Issue

- 1.1 This item provides the final progress report of the Higher Education Academy to HEFCW against the grant letter for 2006/07.

2 Corporate Planning Implications / Rationale for paper

- 2.1 Under 'The Deal for Students' in the current Corporate Strategy and Corporate & Operational Plan it is stipulated that in 2006/07 HEFCW would
- ii) Continue to support improvement of quality in learning and teaching, including ... through work with the Higher Education Academy.' The Academy is also listed as one of HEFCW's partners.

3 Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 The Council is invited to:
- i. Note the final progress report of the Higher Education Academy for 2006/07.
 - ii. Approve the HEFCW funding of £861,128 for the Academy for 2007/08.

4 Timing for decisions

- 4.1 The Council is invited to note the report and approve the HEFCW funding for the Higher Education Academy at this meeting because payments need to be made to the Academy.

5 Council members' interests

- 5.1 No conflicts of interests have been declared in advance of the meeting.

6 Further information

- 6.1 Contact Dr Cliona O'Neill (Tel 029 2068 2283; E-mail: cliona.oneill@hefcw.ac.uk).

7 Background

- 7.1 The Academy's mission is to help institutions, discipline groups and all staff to provide the best possible learning experience for their students. It is funded primarily by the UK funding bodies through an annual grant, and by institutional subscriptions.
- 7.2 A Funding Agreement between the Academy and HEFCE, on behalf of the four funding bodies, was signed in 2004 and is now in place until 2009. At its July 2005 meeting the Council delegated authority to the Chief Executive to approve the release of funds of up to £820,000, plus an allowance for inflation based on the GDP deflators current at the time, for the HE Academy to cover expenditure in the periods August 2006 to July 2007 and August 2007 to July 2008. This comprised five per cent of the total cost for the UK.
- 7.3 HEFCW provides an annual grant letter to the Academy stipulating areas to be addressed in the coming year. This includes UK-wide activities and Wales-specific activities.
- 7.4 The Academy is currently undergoing an interim evaluation. The final report of the evaluators will be brought to Council in February.

8 Higher Education Academy final progress report for 2006/07

- 8.1 The grant letter for 2006/07 from HEFCW to the Academy is attached at **Annex A**.
- 8.2 The final progress report of the Academy for 2006/07 is attached at **Annex B**.

The Council is invited to note the final progress report of the Higher Education Academy for 2006/07.

9 HEFCW's funding for the Higher Education Academy

- 9.1 HEFCW's contribution to the Academy is £861,128 for 2007/08. This sum was agreed in the January budget paper within the Learning and Teaching fund.
- 9.2 At its May 2007 meeting Council noted HEFCW's involvement in and details of the costs of a UK-wide evaluation of the Higher Education Academy, commissioned by HEFCE. HEFCW's expected contribution would be around £5,000.

The Council is invited to approve the HEFCW funding for the Academy for 2007/08.

10 Financial implications

- 10.1 The cost of the Academy to HEFCW is £861,128 for 2007/08.

11 Communications implications

- 11.1 No communications implications arise out of this paper. The Annexes have been shared with and discussed by HEFCW's Learning and Teaching Committee.

12 Diversity and Equal Opportunities implications

- 12.1 Paragraph 10 of the grant letter for 2007/08 stipulates that 'Throughout its operations, we would ask the Academy to incorporate the requirements of all equal opportunities legislation (currently protecting against discrimination on the grounds of gender, ethnic origin/racial group, sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability, and age) into its work. The Academy should also seek opportunities to actively promote race, disability and gender equality, in line with the requirements placed on the English, Scottish and Welsh higher education funding councils under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2006, and in line with the requirements placed on the Department for Employment and Learning under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.'
- 12.2 The letter also includes the Academy 'working with the HEFCW-funded Disability and Diversity Coordinator to facilitate institutions in broadening access and improving provision for under-represented groups in HE.'
- 12.3 Finally, the grant letter includes a section on supporting Welsh medium teaching.

13 Risk Assessment

- 13.1 Risks are identified in the table below:

RISK	ACTION TO ADDRESS RISK
The Academy fails to deliver an efficient and responsive service.	The interim evaluation is examining the activities of the Academy, including its efficiency, responsiveness and whether it represents value for money. The Academy will need to address recommendations arising from the evaluation.
Academy focuses on HEFCE priorities and agendas to the detriment of HEFCW or institutions in Wales	HEFCW officers hold a series of meetings with the Academy to identify priorities for Wales and review activities being carried out. The grant letter reflects UK-wide priorities and specific priorities for Wales.
Institutions decide not to subscribe to the Academy	The Academy is liaising regularly with institutions in Wales to identify areas with which it may be able to provide support for enhancement purposes.