

Meeting
12/03/10

Agenda Item
26

Reference No
HEFCW/10/33

1 Issue

- 1.1 This item provides for the information of members the final report on the progress of the Higher Education Academy against the grant letter for 2008/09 and the annual report of the Academy for the UK.

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 HEFCW will 'work with the HE Academy to enhance quality and standards of provision.' 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 report of the Higher Education Academy on performance against the HEFCW grant letter for 2008/09;
 - ii. Note the annual report of the Higher Education Academy for the UK for 2008/09.

4 Timing for decisions

- 4.1 There are no timing implications for this paper.

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 HEFCW pays around 5 per cent of the total cost of the Academy for the UK funding bodies. The Academy is also funded by subscriptions from institutions.
- 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 funded by all four funding bodies, and Wales-specific activities.
- 7.4 In addition to activities funded via the core grant from HEFCW to the Academy, other activities are funded separately. These include work on the Higher Education Achievement Report and the Gwella work, to support our strategy for enhancing learning through the use of technology. In the future HEFCW will also fund National Teaching Fellowship Awards separately to the core grant.
- 7.5 At its March 2009 meeting Council approved funding from HEFCW to the Academy of £884,809 for 2009/10 (item HEFCW/09/CE2 refers). This reflected a zero per cent rise in funding for 2009/10.

8 Higher Education Academy reports for 2008/09

- 8.1 The grant letter for 2008/09 from HEFCW to the Academy is attached at **Annex A**.
- 8.2 The final report of the Academy on performance against the HEFCW grant letter 2008/09 is attached at **Annex B**. This was provided for discussion to the January 2010 Student Experience, Teaching and Quality meeting.
- 8.3 The Academy's annual report for 2008/09 is available at http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/resources/publications/annual_reports/AnnualReport2009.pdf.

The Council is invited to note the final report of the Higher Education Academy on performance against the HEFCW grant letter for 2008/09;

The Council is invited to note the annual report of the Higher Education Academy for the UK for 2008/09.

9 Financial implications

- 9.1 The core grant from HEFCW to the Academy is £884,809 for 2009/10. HEFCW pays approximately 5% of the total cost to the funding bodies of the HE Academy. The payment for the Academy is allocated within the learning and teaching fund. The Academy is also funded by institutional subscriptions.

- 9.2 HEFCE indicated in a letter to the Academy that its 2010/11 grant letter would be likely to require savings of approximately 30%, or possibly more, by 2012/13. This will lead to a corresponding reduction in the funding from HEFCW to the Academy.
- 9.3 HEFCW also funds some activities separately, on a case by case basis, as identified in para 7.4. The cost of the HEAR work to HEFCW will be in the region of £30k, as agreed by Council at its September 2008 meeting (item HEFCW/08/CE5 refers). The cost of supporting 'Enhancing learning and teaching through technology: a strategy for higher education in Wales' via the Gwella project was approximately £222k over a four year period, to 2010/11, as agreed by Council at its March 2008 meeting (item HEFCW/08/CE2 refers). The cost of the national teaching fellowship awards to HEFCW will vary on an annual basis, depending on how many awards are given to Wales. Wales' participation in this scheme was agreed by Council at its October 2009 meeting (item HEFCW/09/Min133 refers).
- 9.4 Further information on the cost to HEFCW of the HE Academy for 2010/11 will be brought to Council for approval when available.

10 Communications implications

- 10.1 No communications implications arise out of this paper.

11 Diversity and Equal Opportunities implications

- 11.1 Paragraph 10 of the grant letter for 2008/09 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.
- 11.2 Paragraph 16 b (v) included 'continuing to work with the HEFCW-funded Disability and Diversity Coordinator to facilitate institutions in broadening access and improving provision for under-represented groups in HE. This includes taking forward the outcomes of the joint Equality Challenge Unit/Higher Education Academy ethnicity, gender and degree attainment project and your work on diversity in the curriculum'.
- 11.3 Paragraph 16 c provided a section on supporting Welsh medium teaching.

12 Risk Assessment

12.1 Risks are identified in the table below:

RISK	ACTION TO ADDRESS RISK
The Academy fails to deliver an efficient and responsive service.	The performance of the Academy is discussed twice a year by all the funders. SETQC considers the final report of the Academy on performance against the grant letter for each year.
Academy focuses on HEFCE priorities and agendas to the detriment of HEFCW or institutions in Wales	HEFCW officers hold regular meetings with the Academy to identify priorities for Wales and monitor 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.