

New directions for higher education in Wales

Foundation Degrees Update

Stakeholder Survey 2010

Latest Coleg Ffederal news

Universities week

Donating to Universities

Environmental briefs

Working with businesses

Health at work awards

Events

We want you to become involved

Recent circulars

## New directions for higher education in Wales

Since we received our remit letter from the Education Minister in March, we have been consulting and considering how, with its additional guidance, to implement most effectively the Welsh Assembly Government's strategy and plan for higher education, *For our Future*, published at the end of 2009.

New developments include:

*A new HEFCW corporate strategy.*

This outlines how we expect higher education (HE) to tackle the Welsh Assembly Government's priorities of social justice and a buoyant economy over the coming years. We plan to publish it soon.

*Developing a regional dimension to the planning and delivery of higher education in Wales.*

We have recently published guidance for universities and partners in Wales on their submission of regional strategies, designed to identify how best institutions can work together to tackle local learner and employer needs and reduce unnecessary duplication. Collaborations between HE institutions and further education colleges, post-16 education providers, local authorities, Sector Skills Councils, employers, representative groups, and so on, will help learners to progress from school, through to further and higher education or work-based learning, while also addressing skills

shortages. We have defined three 'regions' across Wales within which partners are encouraged to collaborate to improve provision, while at the same time continuing to play their full wider UK and international roles.

The aim is to improve provision regionally, especially for learners who, for whatever reason, are geographically constrained, and for employers who are seeking higher education support, of whatever kind, locally.

### Foundation degrees update

The foundation degree is a two year full-time or part-time equivalent higher level qualification, which bridges the gap between initial entry to higher education and the honours degree, while allowing progression to honours level. It is intended to provide generic higher education key skills together with broad academic and vocational knowledge.

We have been asked by the Welsh Assembly Government to prepare a Foundation Degree Policy, in response to *For our Future* and *Skills that Work for Wales: A Skills and Employment Strategy and Action Plan*.

The foundation degree qualification, which was first introduced in Wales in 2001:

- helps address a national skills shortfall by supplying graduates equipped with intermediate level skills
- expands higher education while making it more affordable to a wider range of students
- brings institutions of higher education and further education and employers together in partnership to design and deliver courses that promote social inclusion
- extend the routes to lifelong learning.

The policy, which we hope to publish in July, draws together the published guidance on the foundation degree qualification with the various initiatives which are currently promoting the qualification in Wales. We expect to announce further support for foundation degrees through the aforementioned regional approach later in 2010.

### Stakeholder Survey 2010

Our first survey of stakeholders and partners was carried out in 2007. We will soon be appointing consultants to carry out a second survey in the autumn, where we will be asking higher education institutions and other bodies in Wales and more widely about our performance and relationships over the past three years. We hope that those of who are approached to complete the survey will be happy to engage with the consultants openly and frankly so that we can find out where our strengths lie, whether we have progressed since the last survey and how we can improve our service to our stakeholders.

Stakeholder Survey 2007:

[www.hefcw.ac.uk/publications/corporate\\_documents/external\\_stakeholder\\_survey.aspx](http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/publications/corporate_documents/external_stakeholder_survey.aspx)

### Latest Coleg Ffederal news

The Coleg Ffederal (federal college) will maintain, develop and oversee Welsh medium higher education, working with and through the universities in Wales. There is now an Implementation Board to set up the Coleg Ffederal. The Board, chaired by Geraint Talfan Davies, will develop arrangements for handling funding, incorporating the Centre for Welsh Medium Higher Education, developing the Coleg's management and staffing structure and handing over to its governing body, the National Council, so that the Coleg can welcome its first students in September 2011.

## Universities week



14 – 20 June 2010

Q: What have universities done for us?

A: Quite a lot, actually.

More than 100 universities and organisations will be celebrating the contribution of higher education and universities on the economy, culture, society, the environment and much more from 14 June.

Events are being held locally and nationally to show what universities have to offer, and to highlight some of the Big Ideas coming out of them.

*"Universities are not for everyone but everyone in society benefits from them. They are an investment in all our futures."* **Sanjeev Bhaskar, actor, and University of Sussex Chancellor**

Following a national launch, there will be a week of activity online and in other media. Each day will highlight an area of strength at universities, and focusing on business and economic benefits; teaching and learning; the impact of university research; personal experiences; arts, culture and sport; and universities in the community.

The publicly-accessible [Facebook page](#) has a wealth of stories, articles and famous alumni, while the [Universities Week website](#) gives information about what's on and how universities can get involved. The co-ordinators, Universities UK, are urging as many people as possible to join the Facebook page, and include both these links in social media, newsletters, on websites, and so on.

## Donating to Universities

Welsh universities secured nearly £2 million in cash gifts from donors last year – an increase of 36% on the previous year.

The annual Ross-CASE survey, which is the only source of information on higher education philanthropic income in the UK, showed that in 2008-9 1,248 people or organisations made cash donations to universities in Wales, up 140% on the previous year. See more at [www.rosscasesurvey.org.uk/](http://www.rosscasesurvey.org.uk/).

As charitable bodies, universities depend on philanthropic donations for many aspects of their work - from undertaking ground-breaking research and building new facilities, to funding bursaries for talented students who would not otherwise be able to afford to go to university.

HEFCW's £10 million matched funding scheme for voluntary giving guarantees additional – matched - funding from HEFCW to supplement gifts to higher education (HE) institutions from organisations and individuals, including former students.

Following the success of a similar Matched Funding Scheme in England, CASE - the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education - is launching a campaign in Wales and England to increase awareness of the role of philanthropy in higher education and promote a culture of giving to universities. The campaign, entitled 'Whose life will you change?', will focus on the impact of charitable giving to universities and the wider achievements that gifts enable, including medical research, developments in social policy, scholarships and improved access to higher education.

To find out more about how about the campaign donations visit [www.giftofknowledge.org.uk](http://www.giftofknowledge.org.uk)

## Environmental briefs

The Welsh Institute of Sustainable Environments – WISE - Network comprising Bangor, Swansea and Aberystwyth Universities has been nominated for a PraxisUnico Environmental Impact Award, which recognises entrepreneurship in businesses which have an environmental focus.

[www.wisenetwork.org/](http://www.wisenetwork.org/)

The Willmott Dixon Construction Limited team which is building the University of Wales, Newport's new campus had been awarded a gold award under the Considerate Constructors Scheme.

[www.ccscheme.org.uk/index.php/site-registration/awards-site-awards](http://www.ccscheme.org.uk/index.php/site-registration/awards-site-awards)

Congratulations to both.

## Working with businesses

The HEFCW-funded Strategic Insight Programme (SIP) helps staff in the University of Glamorgan, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, the University of Wales, Newport and the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff (UWIC) develop and build relationships with partner organisations by giving them short-term placements in businesses. It helps them gain an understanding of businesses and their needs, and allows them to identify areas where the universities can benefit them, as well as develop ideas on both sides.

It is a credit to the institutions involved and the outcomes of the programme that the model and SIP brand have now been adopted by the University of Westminster, which will run the programme for just over a year.

[www.siprogramme.org.uk/](http://www.siprogramme.org.uk/)

## Health at Work awards

HEFCW picked up its silver health at work award in Cardiff's Millennium Stadium on 12 May. HEFCW was the first organisation in Wales to be awarded the Welsh Assembly Government's small workplace health award at silver level at the end of last year.

Professor Philip Gummett, HEFCW's Chief Executive, said: "An effective organisation values the welfare of its staff. Attaching importance to health and wellbeing through our resources, policies, culture and values helps motivate and sustain a high-achieving workforce."

## Events

### **Warsaw, Poland: Doctoral studies in the European Higher Education Area**

**17-18 June 2010**

The Polish Bologna Experts Team and the Polish LLP Erasmus National Agency are inviting representatives from higher education institutions to the international Bologna Seminar "**Doctoral studies in the European Higher Education Area**", which will take place in **Warsaw** on **17-18 June 2010**. The seminar will discuss how the Bologna Process has influenced doctoral education, and in which direction it should develop, and will be led by experts on doctoral studies from the EUA Council for Doctoral Education, Universities Austria, the University of Bristol and by Polish Bologna Experts.

For further information and to register, visit the **seminar website**:  
[phd.erasmus.org.pl](http://phd.erasmus.org.pl).

### **University of Plymouth: Getting there by degrees: fast track (two year Bachelor) degrees and flexible learning conference (free)**

**18 June 2010**

This free conference, supported by the Higher Education Academy and HEFCE, will look at how institutions can respond to requests to become more flexible, and explore alternative ways of providing courses.

## University of Bologna, Italy: Towards Financially Sustainable Universities II: Diversifying Income Streams

13-14 September 2010

This high level conference will bring together experts from across Europe to identify the key elements necessary for the financial survival of universities in the future, with a particular focus on income diversification.

[www.eua.be/events/eudis-experts-conference/home/](http://www.eua.be/events/eudis-experts-conference/home/)

### We want you to become involved

HEFCW is committed to communicating with staff, stakeholders, partners and the wider community in ways that best suit their individual needs and preferences. If you are interested in being involved in developing the next iteration of HEFCW's Equality Scheme over the summer, or helping with equality impact assessments, please contact us as soon as possible at [equality@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:equality@hefcw.ac.uk) to be added to our stakeholder database. Your details would be stored safely and confidentially and would not be shared with institutions or third parties.

### Latest circulars

#### [W10/16HE: Guidance for the Submission of Regional Strategies for the Planning and Delivery of Higher Education](#)

Guidance for submitting regional strategies for planning and delivering higher education.

#### [W10/15HE: Forecast Requests 2010](#)

Requests higher education institutions to submit: financial forecasts for 2009/10 to 2013/14; student number forecasts for 2010/11 to 2013/14; and staff number

#### [W10/14HE: Annual Monitoring Statements 2010](#)

Requests higher education institutions to submit Annual Monitoring Statements for 2010 to enable HEFCW to monitor discrete funding streams.