Cyngor Cyllido Addysg Uwch Cymru
Higher Education Funding Council for Wales

hefcw

Press release

Date: **Thursday 5 June 2008**

Title: Performance Indicators 2006/07

UK-wide figures published today showed that higher education institutions in Wales have continued with their successes in recruiting students from under-represented groups.

The figures, for the academic year 2006/07, show the Welsh higher education (HE) sector's achievements in widening participation in HE.

Welsh universities and colleges continued to recruit higher proportions of young, full-time undergraduate students from state schools, lower socio-economic groups and neighbourhoods with low participation in HE than the UK as a whole.

The proportion of part-time undergraduate entrants with no previous experience of HE and who were from a low participation neighbourhood was the highest in the UK.

A major achievement is that the proportion of full-time undergraduate students in Welsh institutions in receipt of a Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) continues to rise and remains higher than the proportion for the UK as a whole.

The main results for Wales in 2006/07 were:

• 93% of young full-time undergraduate entrants to Welsh higher education institutions (HEIs) in 2006/07 were from state schools or colleges, compared to

88% for the UK as a whole.

• 10% of young full-time undergraduate entrants to Welsh HEIs were from low participation neighbourhoods, compared to 9% for the UK as a whole.

• The proportion of full-time undergraduate entrants to Welsh HEIs from the four lowest socio-economic groups rose and is slightly higher than the proportion for the UK as a whole.

• At 7.9%, Wales has the highest proportion in the UK of part-time undergraduate entrants with no previous HE experience and from a low participation neighbourhood.

• The proportion of full-time undergraduate students in Welsh HEIs in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) continued to rise, with 5.4% in receipt of DSA in 2006/07. This also continued to be greater than the proportion for the UK as a whole.

• 12% of mature full time undergraduate entrants in Wales had no previous experience of HE and were from a low participation neighbourhood, compared to 11% for the UK as a whole.

• The proportion of full-time first degree entrants to Welsh HEIs not continuing after their first year has fallen from 10.3% in 2005/06 to 9.5% in 2006/07, although it still remains above the figure for the UK.

Professor Philip Gummett, Chief Executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, said:

"These figures contain great news for Wales. They confirm the commitment of our universities and colleges to offering opportunities to all those with the ability to benefit from higher education. The higher education experience is immensely

rewarding and our institutions work hard with schools and colleges to spread this message throughout the communities in Wales through our Reaching Wider initiative, which is all about raising aspirations amongst both young and mature potential students. “The growth in the number of students in receipt of a DSA in Wales is also welcome.

Although we welcome the fall in the proportion of full-time students not continuing after their first year, we recognise that it is still too high. We have introduced an additional premium in our funding to support and further improve widening access performance including support for hard to retain students, and are working with the sector on the development of a strategy to improve retention.

Ends

Notes:

Contacts for further information

HEFCW: Emma Raczka, Communications Manager, 029 2068 2225
emma.raczka@hefcw.ac.uk
Hannah Falvey, Senior Manager for Statistics and Funding, 029 2068 2240
hannah.falvey@hefcw.ac.uk

Performance Indicators

Full text and tables of Performance Indicators in Higher Education in the UK 2006/07 can be found on the HESA website at www.hesa.ac.uk/pi.

The Performance Indicators are published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) on the behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies (Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), Scottish Funding Council (SFC), and in Northern Ireland the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL).

The postcode indicator which shows the proportion of students from low participation neighbourhoods has been replaced this year and therefore indicators relating to those proportions are not comparable to previous years.

The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) is an Assembly Government Sponsored Body responsible for administering funds made available by the Welsh Assembly Government in support of:

- education in higher education institutions (HEIs);
- research undertaken by HEIs; and
- higher education courses at further education colleges.

HEFCW is also responsible for accrediting providers of initial teaching training for school teachers and commissioning research to improve the standards of teachers and teacher training.

In addition to its funding responsibilities, HEFCW provides advice to the Welsh Assembly Government on the funding needs, aspirations and concerns of the higher education sector in Wales.