

Press release

Date: 25 November 2009

Title: HEFCW welcomes higher education plan *For our Future*

The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) has welcomed the publication today by the Welsh Assembly Government of *For our Future – The twenty first century higher education plan for Wales*.

The plan, which follows a review of higher education (HE) in Wales chaired by Professor Merfyn Jones, Vice-Chancellor of Bangor University, acknowledges the crucial role which HE plays in the social, cultural and economic development of Wales.

The plan sets out a range of expectations for higher education with a particular focus on the Assembly Government's priorities of social justice and supporting a buoyant economy.

Roger Thomas, Chairman of HEFCW, said: "The Education Minister has set out very clearly the pivotal position of higher education for the future of Wales and has laid at the door of all providers the challenge of reshaping and streamlining the HE system better to meet the needs of Wales. To HEFCW, she has given the task of implementing her vision – a challenge which we warmly embrace."

Professor Philip Gummert, Chief Executive of HEFCW, said: "The plan emphasises how higher education contributes to economic recovery and development, as well as its equally important social and cultural contribution. It stresses the need for HE to focus on meeting the needs of the people of Wales,

but recognises that it cannot do so without being an effective player on the international stage.

“To maintain these balances, and to develop the regional approach outlined in the plan, an approach which requires all HE providers to play to their distinctive strengths in a coherent way, will be a significant challenge. It is a challenge, though, which HEFCW is well placed to meet, and we look forward to working with the higher education providers in Wales to make the Minister’s vision a reality.”

HEFCW is tasked with providing details of actions, measures and timelines for delivering the plan by the Spring of 2010.

Ends

Notes

Contacts for further information

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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.