

Press release

Date: Thursday, 1 April 2010

Title First appointment in development of Coleg Ffederal announced

Geraint Talfan Davies has been confirmed as Chairman of the Shadow Implementation Board for the Coleg Ffederal, which will oversee the legal development of the Welsh medium higher education federal college over the coming year.

HEFCW was asked to set up the Implementation Board to put in place the arrangements for the Welsh Medium Coleg Ffederal - which will maintain, develop and oversee Welsh medium higher education provision in Wales – through the Welsh Assembly Government's 21st century higher education strategy and plan, *For our Future*.

This followed the report to the Welsh Assembly Government by Professor Robin Williams in 2009 which proposed a model for the Coleg Ffederal.

The new Board will also develop arrangements for handling funding, the incorporation of the Centre for Welsh Medium Higher Education, the management and staffing structure of the Coleg Ffederal and for appointing and handing over to the Coleg Ffederal's new National Council.

Geraint Talfan Davies said: "The Williams Report put forward a very innovative solution for taking Welsh medium higher education forward. Working with a very committed team of people, it will be a privilege to help create a framework that will realise the report's vision."

Professor Philip Gummett, Chief Executive of HEFCW, said: “I am delighted that a person of the standing and experience of Geraint Talfan Davies has agreed to chair the Implementation Board.

“The Implementation Board will, over the coming months, be working on the legal agreement and other aspects which will enable the National Council, as the governing body of the Coleg Ffederal, to come into existence, and to realise Professor Williams’s ambition for the Coleg to welcome its first students in September 2011.”

Higher Education Wales (HEW) has also welcomed the appointment of Geraint Talfan Davies. Professor Noel Lloyd, Chair of HEW and Vice-Chancellor of Aberystwyth University, said: “We are keen to move this agenda forward to make the Coleg Ffederal a reality and I am sure that Geraint’s track record in delivery will help us lead a further significant change in the development of Welsh medium higher education in the years to come.

“Expanding access in this area is challenge requiring action from a range of bodies and agencies in Wales, including schools and colleges as well as universities.”

Mr Davies will continue in his roles as Chairman of the Institute for Welsh Affairs and the Welsh National Opera while work progresses until the hand over to the National Council in March 2011.

Notes

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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.

Geraint Talfan Davies is Chairman of the Institute of Welsh Affairs and of Welsh National Opera. He was Controller of BBC Wales from 1990-2000. Following his retirement from the BBC he represented Wales on the Radio Authority.

He is also a former chairman of the Arts Council of Wales, and has been a Governor of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and of UWIC. In the arts sector, he has been Chairman of CBAT, the Arts and Regeneration Agency, and a board member of the Artes Mundi International Visual Arts Prize, Wales Millennium Centre Ltd, and Sgrin.

He is also a non-executive director of Glas Cymru Cyf. (Welsh Water), a Trustee of the Media Standards Trust and an honorary Fellow of UWIC and of the RIBA.

The Coleg Ffederal will be a new and independent legal entity with a Constitution. It will not be a single geographical entity and will not be a degree awarding body, but will work with and through existing higher education institutions (federal). Its mission will be to maintain, develop and oversee Welsh medium provision in HE in Wales.

Higher Education Wales is the representative body for heads of higher education institutions in Wales, and is a part of Universities UK.