

To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales

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HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Human resources work in the sector is central the realisation of the Assembly's vision for higher education in Wales. That is why we have been encouraging institutions to include human resources development as a core element of their strategic planning. In undertaking this, some institutions have taken advantage of available resources and learning from UCEA, in the form of guidance and seminars, as well as guidance produced by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (*Rewarding and developing staff in higher education – Good practice in setting HR strategies. March 02/14*).

We are pleased to inform you that consultancy support will now be made directly available to institutions in Wales to further support human resources strategy development. HEFCW has commissioned the Office for Public Management (OPM) to provide advice to HEIs in Wales on the development of human resources strategies. You may be aware that OPM has been working in a similar way with HEIs in England over the last two years.

HEFCW is proposing to use the same six priority areas as HEFCE to structure the HR strategy development work in Wales. These are:

- recruitment and retention;
- staff training and development;
- equal opportunities;
- regular reviews of staffing needs;
- annual performance review for all staff;
- action to tackle poor performance.

Our aim is encourage all institutions to further develop their HR strategies in coming months to address these six priority areas. OPM will be available to provide consultancy help and advice to individual institutions. Their role will be to assist institutions in focusing their work on HR strategy development and linking it to wider institutional priorities. They will also provide feedback advice on draft plans and final strategy submissions.

This programme of support over the next six months will commence with a launch seminar on **Friday 4 April** in Mid Wales. Further information will be circulated in the near future regarding the venue for the seminar. However, it would be extremely helpful if you could make yourself, or a senior member of your management team, available to attend the seminar, in addition to the HR specialist and one other from your institution.

We are very keen to learn of effective human resources practice and, particularly, collaborative projects in human resources in Wales - as well as ensure that good practice identified is disseminated through the seminar, and the project more widely. We are aware that institutions in Wales are at different stages of development in HR matters, and that HR strategies will need to take account of reconfiguration plans, where appropriate. These important aspects of future development for institutions will be taken into account by OPM in their work with them.

Following the period of development work on HR strategies drawing on OPM help and support, the Council will invite institutions to submit their HR Strategies as part of the strategic plan documentation in Summer 2003. OPM will then be involved in assisting the Council to give feedback on institutional HR strategies to assist in their further development. More detail will be provided at the launch event about how this will be undertaken.

We very much hope that you will take best advantage of this advice, which will enable institutions in Wales to build upon work already completed in England and to further develop their HR strategies in line with best available practice.

If you have any queries about the suggested process or the seminar programme please contact either Paul Lloyd at OPM (email plloyd@opm.co.uk, tel: 07976-204816) or Celia Hunt (email: HuntC@elwa.ac.uk, tel: 029 2068 2224) or Anita Colley (email: ColleyA@elwa.ac.uk, tel: 029 2068 2276) at HEFCW.