

# Cylchlythyr

# Circular

## Guidance for the Submission of Regional Strategies for the Planning and Delivery of Higher Education

**Date:** 28 May 2010  
**Reference:** W10/16HE  
**To:** Heads of higher education institutions in Wales; Principals of directly-funded further education institutions in Wales  
**Copied to** Principals of further education institutions in Wales; post-16 providers in Wales; Local authorities; Sector Skills Councils; employers and their representative groups and other interested parties  
**Response by:** 30 November 2010  
**Contact:** Name: Celia Hunt/Dr Ewen Brierley  
Telephone: 029 2068 2224/029 2068 2291  
Email: [celia.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:celia.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk)  
[ewen.brierley@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:ewen.brierley@hefcw.ac.uk)

This document is available online, in large print, Braille, on CD and on audio CD and cassette. Should you or someone you know require this in an alternative format, please contact us on (029) 2068 2225 or email [info@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:info@hefcw.ac.uk).



## Introduction

1. This circular sets out guidance for the submission of regional strategies for the planning and delivery of higher education (HE) building upon a broad consultation with higher education institutions (HEIs), further education institutions (FEIs) and other stakeholders.
2. One strategy should be submitted by the higher education providers in each of the three regions by 30 November 2010.

## Background

3. *For our Future, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Higher Education Strategy and Plan for Wales*<sup>1</sup> included the expectation that the Welsh Assembly Government, working with stakeholders and HEFCW, would ‘develop a regional dimension to planning and delivery of higher education’. It noted the need for HEFCW to  
**‘explore, develop and co-ordinate, in concert with the HE community, the development of a regional planning and delivery structure in Wales which can identify and tackle need while demonstrating the best use of resources’** [para 76i].
4. We conducted a broad consultation on how to take forward this expectation, *Developing a Regional Dimension to the Planning and Delivery of Higher Education*, 16 February 2010.<sup>2</sup>
5. The outcomes of that consultation, including a summary of our initial proposals and of responses to the three questions we asked, is included in this circular at **Annex A**.
6. The consultation circular indicated that further guidance would be published in May on the development of regional strategies. This circular sets out the context, guidance, template, support and funding arrangements for the development of the strategies.

## Context

7. In developing the strategies, HE providers will wish to take into account published guidance from the Welsh Assembly Government. This includes references in *For our Future* and in the HEFCW remit letter 2010-11<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/091214hestrategyen.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/documents/publications/circulars/circulars\\_2010/W10%2006HE%20Developing%20a%20Regional%20dimension.pdf](http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/documents/publications/circulars/circulars_2010/W10%2006HE%20Developing%20a%20Regional%20dimension.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/documents/about\\_he\\_in\\_wales/wag\\_priorities\\_and\\_policies/2010-11%20remit%20letter.pdf](http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/documents/about_he_in_wales/wag_priorities_and_policies/2010-11%20remit%20letter.pdf)

### ***For our Future***

- ‘This will be an important part of creating a higher education system approach, and will target the eradication of nugatory local competition and wasteful duplication of provision’. [para 42]
- It will also support ‘the development of ... critical mass in Wales’ [para 42]
- ‘through collaboration, local and regional needs and priorities are better identified and met’ with ‘clear progression pathways to higher education in place from school, community, workplace, and FE’ [para 42].
- ‘a national higher education system for Wales will be created: different providers will have different strengths and different missions but will work to complement and enhance their individual strengths and missions. They will form a wider and more coherent system of providers, including FE colleges as well as HE institutions, working together and equipped to deliver sustained high quality higher education’. [para 36]
- There is also a wish to see ‘more examples of the type of approach being demonstrated in the Heads of the Valleys, where low HE participation and skills is being tackled through collaborative partnership and multi-sectoral approaches, within an overall context of regional economic and community regeneration’. [para 7]

### **HEFCW Remit Letter 2010-11**

- ‘I therefore expect the Council to introduce an integrated approach to regional planning which is linked to funding priorities and which delivers:
  - Tangible collaboration in back office services;
  - Better identification and matching of regional need against provision;
  - Eradication of unnecessary competition and duplication;
  - Opportunities for opening access and progression into HE through increasing coordinated provision of higher education programmes in school, community, workplace and further education venues; and
  - A coordinated FE and HE approach to employer responsiveness and the provision of workforce development, particularly in the planning and provision of foundation degrees’. [para 8]

## Aims and objectives

8. In developing a regional agenda for higher education in Wales, it is important to be clear about what it covers, and what it doesn't:
- 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. **In all that follows, it will be helpful to keep this simple statement in mind as the guiding principle for what is now required;**
  - It is about reaching agreements with partners through which to secure better subject availability (especially in subjects signalled as priorities), easier geographical access, clearer progression routes, and overall a higher degree of responsiveness to local needs;
  - It is also about working with partners to enable employers to find their way quickly to relevant local support, regardless of their initial point of enquiry;
  - It is about better use of the resources available for delivery of HE across Wales through engagement and enhancement of the complementary strengths of different providers, and through collaboration in back office services and capital developments;
  - It is about making a commitment to progressive, year by year, improvement, recognising that some steps can be taken quickly and others will take longer;
  - It is not about constraining higher education institutions to work only within their region. Nothing in this policy development is intended to curtail the wide and important range of activities currently being pursued in teaching, research and innovation and engagement (our new term for 'third mission' activity) on a Wales-wide, UK-wide or international basis, except where it is clear that there is wasteful local duplication, and associated nugatory competition;
  - It is not expected to cover all provision, or necessarily to achieve all proposed changes in one step. We will expect some provision to continue to be provided in only one, or a limited number of locations, to serve the needs of Wales;
  - It is not about establishing complex regional committees but about developing a strong habit of collaboration among providers, through as light a process as possible, to ensure the best possible collective support for local learners and employers.

We believe that there are already many examples of good practice within Wales in all the dimensions required by this agenda. It is entirely legitimate for regional strategies to identify these and show how they will

be further developed. It would also make sense for providers to learn from others' existing good practice rather than re-invent wheels.

## Regions

9. The consultation indicated broad support for our proposals in relation to regions. We will therefore be using three regions to cover Wales. These regions should be defined and be measurable; should build on existing HEFCW-funded collaborations and initiatives; should take into account Welsh Assembly Government regional policies where appropriate; and should take account of the physical location and type of institutions.
10. In terms of our definition of the regions we have now apportioned HE and FE providers within the regions and will use the unitary authorities, and Census area statistics wards within them in terms of their measurement.

### The regions are as follows:

11.

Region	Institutions*	
<b>North and Mid Wales</b>	<u>Directly funded institutions</u>	
	<p>HEIs: Glyndŵr University, Bangor University, Aberystwyth University, Open University</p> <p>FEIs: Coleg Llandrillo Cymru.</p>	
	Other HE and/or FE providers: Deeside College, Coleg Llysfasi, Welsh College of Horticulture, Yale College, Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor, Coleg Menai, Coleg Harlech WEA (N), Coleg Ceredigion, Coleg Powys	Unitary Authorities: Denbighshire, Flintshire, Wrexham, Isle of Anglesey, Conwy, Gwynedd, Ceredigion, Powys
<b>South East Wales</b>	<u>Directly funded institutions</u>	
	<p>HEIs: University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, Cardiff University, University of Glamorgan, University of Wales, Newport, Open University</p> <p>FEIs: Bridgend College; Merthyr Tydfil College (through University of Glamorgan)</p>	
	Other HE and/or FE providers: Barry College, Coleg Glan Hafren, Coleg Gwent, Coleg Morgannwg,	Unitary Authorities: Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taff,

	Ystrad Mynach College, St David's VI Form College, WEA South, YMCA	Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Newport, Monmouthshire, Bridgend
<b>South West Wales</b>	<u>Directly funded institutions</u> HEIs: Trinity University College, University of Wales, Lampeter, Swansea University, Swansea Metropolitan University, Open University FEIs: Coleg Sir Gâr; Swansea College	
	Other HE and/or FE providers: Gorseinon College, Pembrokeshire College, , Neath Port Talbot College	Unitary Authorities: Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Swansea, Neath Port Talbot

\* Titles pre-date any currently proposed mergers.

12. Institutions will be free to be part of regional strategies outside of their geographical location, with the focus of the strategies being on delivery rather than recruitment catchment areas. These regions overlap with those used by HEFCW in other developments, e.g. current Third Mission collaborations and Centres for Teacher Education.
13. The regional partnerships will need to take into account the pan-Wales role of distance and technology-enhanced learning and of other types of provision. Open University provision should be taken into account in each regional strategy and we would expect the University to be involved in the work of all three partnerships. The partnerships will also need to take account of the pan-Wales role of the proposed Coleg Ffederal for Welsh medium provision. A number of higher education and further education institutions are in the process of merger. These mergers are not taken into account in this document but will need to inform the development of the regional partnerships.

### Defining need

14. As noted in the consultation, we have done some work on defining 'need' or demand in a particular region, looking at two types of evidence: an analysis of higher education students (including cross-border flows) against areas of population within Wales; and drawing upon work undertaken by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to develop a 'common evidence base' for assessing proposals for new higher education provision<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/challenge/evidence/>

15. Taking account of a number of consultation responses which queried the value of a central evidence base, we will be putting the onus on the providers, in any proposals for funding or funded numbers, to prepare robust evidence of student or employer demand or need in the region. Therefore, rather than see our work as an 'evidence base' to support funding decisions, we will provide our analyses as a 'toolkit' to assist the work in the region. As noted in the consultation responses, there are many other sources of data available to institutions in the region, including labour market information and the regional statements of need. Sector Skills Council (SSC) responses drew attention to SSC Labour Market Intelligence, which could provide material for providers in terms of sectoral need. Providers already have strong links with other stakeholders and providers within the region which will facilitate the collection of this information.
16. We therefore plan to invite providers to collaboratively to commence the work of identifying need at a local and regional level in Wales, using available quantitative and qualitative information and consulting with local stakeholders, including employers, within the region. This will inform our consideration of any future adjustments to the funding of provision on a regional basis, supported by the quantitative and qualitative evidence base as it develops. We expect to publish our 'toolkit' soon after this circular to inform the development of the strategies.

### **Regional strategies**

17. This circular invites all current higher education providers within a region (HEIs and FECs) to collaborate to prepare a regional strategy for all modes of HE provision in their region for submission to HEFCW. **We expect the lead to be taken initially by those institutions currently funded directly by HEFCW**, drawing progressively on others as the strategy requires, and as it develops. The strategies should look across widening access, learning and teaching (including Welsh medium) and innovation and engagement (third mission) policy areas but do not need to include research, although aspects of research can be included if providers feel it is appropriate. We expect the strategies also to address possible collaborative approaches to capital investment and shared 'back office' services.
18. In preparing the strategies, we expect HE providers to liaise with local stakeholders, including students and students unions, local authorities, post-16 providers, employers and employer groups, schools, and other key bodies and partnerships within the region, to establish the need for higher education and to develop progression routes.
19. In developing their strategies, providers will need to take account of the Welsh language and the need for Welsh medium provision, including the role of the Coleg Ffederal, as it develops. They will also need to consider equality and diversity, including scheduling impact assessment of the strategies, as appropriate, to meet equalities legislation. They will

also need to take account of sustainable development and climate change issues.

20. We recommend that the regional strategies cover a period of three years, with key targets and deliverables to be identified. However, we expect to introduce the regional approach on a progressive basis, with incremental changes in our funding allocations, through the Strategic Implementation Fund. We also recognise that the November submission date for the strategies is tight. **While we will expect them to be a concrete response to the challenge of adopting a regional approach, we will also expect the strategies to be further developed, revised and rolled forward annually**, taking account of any updated or additional guidance or changes in external circumstances. Our new *Corporate Strategy*, which we will publish once we have Ministerial approval, will include a range of high level outcome targets for the delivery of *For our Future*. Providers should note the areas of focus within these targets, which should inform the actions being taken within regional strategies, as well as by institutions individually and separately.

### **Format of the regional strategies**

21. The strategies should cover the following areas. A template for completion is provided at **Annex B, which will be circulated electronically to all HEIs and directly-funded FEIs**:

#### **A Vision, and aims and objectives, for the strategy**

22. In order to set the context for the strategy, the partners should establish a vision for their regional development, that is an outline of what their region would look like once the strategy is delivered. Providers should also set out a brief statement of the overarching aims and objectives of the strategy to assist in the delivery of the vision.

#### **B Audit of current course/module provision including areas of duplication**

23. One of the objectives of the regional approach is to minimise wasteful duplication and nugatory competition within a region. As part of preparing their strategies, the providers in the region should undertake an audit of current higher education course provision and, where appropriate (ie where there are particular issues of competition), modular provision across all HE providers in the region. This audit should take into account Open University distance learning provision available in the region. A summary of the high level outcomes of the audit should be given in the strategy (the evidence underpinning this may be requested by the HEFCW in considering any subsequent funding proposals).
24. The strategies should identify the key areas where there is unnecessary duplication between the higher education providers within the region. By unnecessary duplication, we mean where there is no clear and identified

difference between the markets served by the different course/module provision within the region. The assessment should take account of the aspects identified in paragraphs 8 and 9 above. The strategies should also indicate provider plans to work together to tackle unnecessary duplication.

25. The strategies should also identify those specific areas of duplication which can be addressed from 2011/12. Funding incentives will be available to facilitate the immediate rationalisation of identified areas of duplication within the region (see para 49 below).

### **C Identification of key progression routes**

26. The strategies should identify the key progression routes from post-16 education into higher education and from higher education to other higher education within the region. There is no need to cover progression routes to other regions. Both full- and part-time provision should be included. A summary of the key progression routes should be included in the strategy.
27. Following consultation with key employer/employer representative contacts in the region, appropriate progression routes from work-based provision, including apprenticeships, into local higher education provision (course or module) and community based provision should also be identified.
28. Providers should take account of the Welsh language and the particular progression arrangements for Welsh medium provision, including the role of the Coleg Ffederal as it develops, when establishing progression routes.

### **D Identification of any new higher education provision required within the region**

29. Following consultation with stakeholders, the strategies should identify any perceived gaps in provision and note the specific areas of new provision required within the region. This requirement would need to be based on an assessment of the demand for the provision within the region, looking at key sources of data on demand from employers and employer representative bodies such as Sector Skills Councils, local authorities, post-16 providers and schools, as well as the Welsh Assembly Government and other national sources. A summary of the market evidence for the demand should be provided (the full evidence underpinning this assessment may be requested by HEFCW in considering any subsequent funding proposals). The aim would be to achieve a better matching of regional need against provision. The assessment should take into account the factors identified in paragraph 9 above as well as, where appropriate, provision made available across the border in England.

30. The assessment should specifically identify any new provision (subject, course/module, level, mode and language medium) which regional partners propose to offer (and can be ready to offer) from 2011/12 to meet an identified demand. Current Assembly Government priorities such as Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) and Modern Foreign Languages (MFL), as well as Welsh medium provision, should be taken into account. Funding incentives will be available to facilitate limited new provision in the areas identified with the strongest cases.
31. New provision would need to take account of *For our Future* expectations regarding greater diversity and flexibility in programme design, duration and delivery to match need and demand. We would expect new provision to be focused primarily on full-time or part-time Foundation Degree provision, or modules which would build towards such a qualification at one or more of the regional providers. Joint approaches to learning and teaching strategies for this provision would be welcomed.

#### **E Identification of opportunities for more coordinated widening access activities**

32. Existing HEFCW funding streams support regional widening access partnerships to coordinate activities through the *Reaching Wider* initiative. From 2011/12 we will fund three, rather than the current four, partnerships to align with the regions in paragraph 11 above. The funding will be directed to the partnerships to support widening access to regionally based provision.
33. As noted in our remit letter, this will cover increasingly coordinated provision of higher education programmes in school, community, workplace and further education venues.
34. The regional strategies should build upon the close widening access partnership working already in place under *Reaching Wider* and to take account of the current *Reaching Wider* structures and initiatives in developing future arrangements. For 2010/11, the regional strategies should set out the high level objectives of the regional 'Reaching Wider' partnership, with the detail being set out in the separate funding proposals to HEFCW from the RW partnerships. From 2011/12 we would expect the management and governance of the *Reaching Wider* partnerships and activities to come under the governance arrangements for the regional strategies (see below). We expect to retain the national '*Reaching Wider*' brand within the new regional arrangements.

#### **F Identification of opportunities for joint regional work with employers**

35. Strategies should show how the partners will work with employers, employer representative bodies including Sector Skills Councils, as

appropriate, to identify where joint working could help to meet regional skills needs. This would include activities to meet the *For our Future* expectations of strengthening the contribution of higher education to workforce development and the exploitation of knowledge. Our remit letter 2010-11 notes the need for a 'co-ordinated FE and HE approach to employer responsiveness and the provision of workforce development, particularly in the planning and provision of foundation degrees'.

36. Specific actions should be identified in the regional strategies which might be the subject to regional initiative funding.
37. Reference should be made to intentions in respect of innovation and engagement (formerly 'third mission') activity. We are in the process of developing arrangements in relation to a new cycle of innovation and engagement funding, beginning in 2011/12. Guidance will be issued later this year, but HEIs should signal in their new regional strategies the potential to develop a regional approach, where appropriate, in relation to their innovation and engagement activity, including building upon current collaborative activity already supported under the former Third Mission Fund.

#### **G Identification of collaborative capital developments and shared services**

38. Providers should undertake a review of 'back office' services and identify initial and future possibilities for collaboration across a defined range of services areas. As strategies are implemented, we expect providers to develop this approach with non-HE partners within the region, eg through local service boards. In the light of this review, strategies should state the particular opportunities for shared services which could result from joint regional working. Our remit letter 2010-11 indicates the need for 'tangible collaboration in back office services'. Some opportunities would be relatively cost-free and could be funded from savings achieved (for example procurement). Others may require initial funding support. We would expect to see a mixture of these identified within the strategies.
39. The strategies should identify those specific areas where collaboration in shared services can be achieved from 2011/12. Funding incentives will be available to facilitate the sharing of services on a regional basis but the criteria for allocation will include an assessment of opportunities already taken to achieve savings.
40. Our remit letter 2010-11 noted the need for us to 'demonstrate to the Welsh Assembly Government that all planned capital developments are in line with *For our Future* objectives.' We are expected to 'ensure that capital funding is not used to support unnecessary and nugatory competition between HE providers in Wales'. We will expect this regional approach to inform future capital *expenditure*, which will also need to take into account the Welsh Assembly Government's

Transformation agenda<sup>5</sup> and our remit letter requirement to embed sustainability.

## **H Governance**

41. Strategies should identify the arrangements which have been put in place to secure both the ongoing and formal liaison between partners to facilitate the regional collaboration.
42. This should include project management arrangements (including any release of staff to facilitate this) and the partnership structure which will manage the regional dimension, including at both strategic (head of institution) and operational levels. Details should also be given of the stakeholders involved (particularly the involvement of students and employers) in the governance arrangements. Where appropriate, eg in terms of *Reaching Wider Partnerships*, information should be given about how other groupings in the same region are being taken into account. We do not expect to see complex committee structures put in place to establish these strategies. We expect providers to be reporting regularly on regional developments through their institutional governing bodies.
43. The strategies should also provide an assessment of the equality and diversity impact of the proposals put forward in the regional strategy. Strategies should take account of the annex to our remit letter related to Sustainable Development & Climate Change
44. Providers should use the template provided in preparing their strategies. This includes additional information requirements in terms of a risk assessment; and timetable for the implementation of the strategy against the three years; strategic outcomes and targets linked to the vision and aims and objectives for the strategy; and confirmation of institutional involvement.

## **Support**

45. We invite the submission of one strategy from the partners in each of the three regions. We would expect the strategy to identify, for administrative purposes, a lead institution and a named individual for liaison purposes. Strategies should be submitted by the end of November 2010.
46. We understand that it might be helpful for HEFCW to assist in initiating some of these activities. Following publication of this circular, we intend to hold initial meetings with the directly funded institutions in each of the three regions.

---

<sup>5</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/100301transformationpolicyen.pdf>

47. Recognising the breadth of work required to prepare each strategy, we are in the process of employing consultants who will assist the three regions in developing the initial strategies for the November deadline. The consultants will be expected to work with stakeholders within each of the regions to facilitate and encourage the strategy development process. This will include: meeting with HEIs and directly-funded FEIs to discuss what they want to achieve; meeting with stakeholders within each of the regions to feed requirements and suggestions into the strategic planning process; the collection and analysis of supporting data on current provision and the needs of each of the regions; drafting and/or assisting in the drafting of the strategy on behalf of each of the regions; and acting as a 'critical friend' to help guide the development of each of the strategies. They will also provide a means of sharing practice between the three regional partnerships and reporting back to HEFCW on a regular basis regarding progress. The earliest date for appointment of these consultants is late July/early August 2010.
48. We will expect HE providers to work constructively with the successful contractors. Providers might wish to consider actions which could be taken forward by the consultants at that time. However, providers will have initiated discussion on the development of their regional partnerships and undertaken some preliminary work on the identification of current provision, regional needs and progression routes prior to the start of the contract.
49. In addition, we will provide a sum of £10k to each region to cover the costs of travel and subsistence for meetings, etc. Staff time must be covered by the institutions involved.
50. We will require a brief interim report on progress from each regional partnership by 30 September, in order to keep us abreast of developments and to enable us to keep the Minister informed of progress.
51. Following submission of the strategies, we will work iteratively with regional partnerships to analyse and develop the strategies. Whilst there will be opportunities to review and revise the strategies annually, it will be important to ensure that the initial strategy is based on robust information and assessments of regional demand and supply. Some of the ways in which we plan to fund regionally in future are set out below. We expect to introduce these progressively over the period of our *Corporate Strategy*, once published (see below).

## **Funding**

52. Increasingly some elements of our funding will support the regional strategies. The regional dimension will feed into the review of our funding methodologies which we have started in the light of *For our Future*. In line with our remit letter 2010-11 we now expect that funding to support regional developments will come under our new Strategic

Implementation Fund. As noted in the consultation, funding to support the regional strategies will come initially from the following sources:

- a) Efficiencies generated by partnership working, especially where, through redistribution of activity, these generate economies of scale;
- b) Funded credits generated by top-slicing from those currently available. We expect to top-slice up to 5% of funded credits for 2011/12 and will re-allocate these by region (see paragraph 51 below);
- c) Additional credits associated with partnership-delivered Foundation Degrees, within the evolving Assembly Government priority for Foundation Degrees (see *For our Future*, paras 62-64) and funded from One Wales monies (or that released as a result of the Jones' Review of Higher Education in Wales)
- d) A 'Regional Initiatives Fund', established as part of our Strategic Implementation Fund which will support a range of projects at regional level, including for shared services and rationalisation of provision.
- e) Regional allocations of funding to support the submission of regional approaches in specific areas (eg initially ITT and innovation and Engagement (3M))
- f) We will expect this regional approach to inform future capital *expenditure*, which will also need to take into account the Welsh Assembly Government's Transformation agenda<sup>6</sup> and our remit letter requirement to embed sustainability.

53. We expect to take at least two steps towards funding regionally from 2011/12, using top sliced credits. Further information about these aspects will be published in due course:

- a) We will be inviting proposals later this year for additional funded credits to be offered in the region, based on detailed proposals, including market evidence of demand. The proposals will be due for submission soon after the regional strategies. These will be assessed through our normal processes for strategic funding. Successful proposals will receive funded credits outside of the recurrent grant in 2011/12, rolled-in in subsequent years;
- b) We will deploy funding to recognise the rationalisation of provision undertaken to eliminate unnecessary duplication and nugatory competition within regions. To do this, we will operate an additional redistribution exercise. Regional partners will have the opportunity in this exercise to redistribute numbers between them in line with their regional strategies. Additional funded credits from the top-sliced sum will be awarded pro rata to the amount of redistribution undertaken in this exercise, subject to a minimum amount.

---

<sup>6</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/100301transformationpolicyen.pdf>

54. We have also been discussing with the Welsh Assembly Government, as funders of FEIs, the potential for a clear steer for those institutions to be fully engaged in the regional dimension.

### **Reconfiguration and Collaboration – Our Expectations**

55. The proposals in this document complement existing policy on reconfiguration and collaboration<sup>7</sup>. We have included further information about our expectations in our *Corporate Strategy*, which we expect to publish in the near future.

### **Involving our stakeholders**

56. We are committed to making equality a core issue in developing and implementing policies and services, and evaluating and refining those approaches to advance the equality agenda. We have a legal responsibility to assess the impact of our policies on equality groups and to set out how we will monitor or address any possible negative impact. The outcome of our equality impact assessment of this guidance will be available on our website, [www.hefcw.ac.uk](http://www.hefcw.ac.uk)
57. If you are disabled or have experience working with disabled people in the sector and would like to be more actively involved in providing feedback or contributing to equality impact assessments – please contact us at [equality@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:equality@hefcw.ac.uk) to be added to our stakeholder database. Any information is stored safely and confidentially and will not be shared with institutions or third parties.

### **Submission of regional strategies**

58. Further details of the support to be made available to the three regions in developing the strategies will be made available before the end of July 2010. At the same time we will publish our intentions with regard to the top-slicing of funded credits for 2011/12 and other initiative funding to support the regional strategies.
59. Regional strategies (one per region) should be submitted to Craig Brett [Craig.Brett@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:Craig.Brett@hefcw.ac.uk) by 30 November 2010. One copy should be submitted electronically, with a signed hard copy submitted in parallel
60. The consultants will be expected to submit a progress report on the development of the regional strategies to HEFCW by 30 September

---

7

[http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/documents/publications/circulars/circulars\\_2009/W09%2032HE%20Rec%20onfiguration%20and%20Collaboration.pdf](http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/documents/publications/circulars/circulars_2009/W09%2032HE%20Rec%20onfiguration%20and%20Collaboration.pdf)

2010. Please give them every support in enabling them to achieve this early deadline.

61. Any queries about this circular should be addressed to Celia Hunt or Dr Ewen Brierley (tel 029 2068 2224 or 029 2968 2291; e-mail [celia.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:celia.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk) or [ewen.brierley@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:ewen.brierley@hefcw.ac.uk))