

**To: Heads of higher education
institutions in Wales**

Reference: W04/25HE

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Response By: T.B.A.

Further Information: Adrian Day

Tel: 0117 931 7428

e-mail: a.day@hefce.ac.uk

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Dear

Development of HE Business and Community (HE-BC) Interaction Survey (formerly HE Business Interaction Survey)

I am writing to update you on developments to the annual survey of interaction between higher education institutions (HEIs) and business and the community, in preparation for the 2004 survey. This letter also explains how the data will be collected this year.

Both the UK Government and the Welsh Assembly Government have stated their commitment to a permanent stream of funding in support of institutions' third mission activities. In turn the sector needs to demonstrate that such an investment will bring concrete benefits to both economy and society in Wales; this requires the development and refinement of suitable performance indicators. The HE-BC survey helps us to meet these objectives by collecting annually a single minimum range of performance and other data, thereby helping to reduce the overall data collection burden on institutions.

In advance of this year's collection exercise (for data from academic year 2002-03), the stakeholders group – of which HEFCW is a member - reviewed both the questionnaire and its associated data collection process. In the light of current thinking and policy development in this area, the updated questionnaire gives more scope not only to the social, civic and cultural impact of higher education on the economy and society, but also to services for public sector and not-for-profit organisations that may still involve commercial transactions but deliver wider social benefits for the public good. Examples could include providing resources or opportunities in regeneration programmes, and consultancy or contract research for public service organisations. One of the most obvious changes is renaming the survey to the Higher Education Business and Community Survey (HE-BC). This sits comfortably with the re-focusing of HEFCW's interest in these areas as part of its recent post-HEED consultation exercise.

To expedite the survey process we will be using the HEFCE extranet. Many of your colleagues will already be familiar with this system, which has already been used to collect information on mid-year finance returns and additional student numbers. The survey

consists of two sections. Part A is an on-line survey of strategy and activities. Once this is complete, a Microsoft Excel document (Part B) containing questions on numeric and financial outputs will be available to download.

Please pass this letter to the individual who will be your institution's contact for returning information to HEFCE on your institution's strategy and outputs for third mission activities (for example the Head of Business and Community).

The nominated contact should then log on to <https://extranet.hefce.ac.uk> in order to register his/her contact details. Once registration is complete, two password keys are required to complete the HE-BC survey. The first is for your institution's specific extranet area (not visible to other HEIs) and the second allows your institutional contact to access the HE-BC survey.

The passwords for ***** are:

Organisation Key *****

Group Key **H299-35EF9A6C**

HEFCE will be inviting institutions to share some of their data with other HEI respondents. This will allow more useful benchmarking of activity by HEIs without providing third parties access to institutional level data. Further detailed guidance is available on the extranet. Please can you ensure that your institution's contact registers as soon as convenient. The survey itself will be live by **10 May 2004**.

HEFCE will also be inviting institutions across the UK to attend regional seminars, to be held in London, Birmingham and Newcastle. The purpose of these will be two-fold:

- to explain changes to the content and process of the HE-BC survey
- to bring together those active in institutional third mission strategy and delivery, in order to identify sources of good practice, which will be disseminated at a later stage.

If you have any queries about the survey, please contact Adrian Day at HEFCE.

Yours sincerely

Phil Gummett
Interim Chief Executive