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Cylchlythyr

Circular

## Additional Support for Part-Time Students 2008/09

**Date:** 12 June 2008  
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**To:** Heads of higher education institutions in Wales  
**Response by:** Friday, 15 August 2008  
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This circular announces allocations for Additional Support for Part-Time Students in 2008/09. The provision is aimed at maintaining and strengthening part-time provision with a particular focus on widening access to higher education and at extending links with employers in the delivery of part-time higher education.

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## **Introduction**

- 1 This circular announces allocations for Additional Support for Part-Time Students in 2008/09. The provision is aimed at maintaining and strengthening part-time provision with a particular focus on widening access to higher education and at extending links with employers in the delivery of part-time higher education. It is expected that all funding will be used to benefit part-time students studying at or through an institution in Wales.

## **Background**

- 2 The Graham Review, published in 2006, assessed part-time higher education study in Wales. In particular the review examined existing fee and student support arrangements and the possible impact of changes to this system.
- 3 Following publication of the review the Welsh Assembly Government established a working group which included representatives from higher education in Wales. The group outlined proposals to meet the needs highlighted by the review and their conclusions inform the criteria for the use of the allocations announced in this circular.
- 4 The total annual allocation has been set at £6.4M and it is envisaged that this will be made available initially for three years, 2007/08 to 2009/10. Any decision on whether this funding should be extended beyond this three year period will be based on institutional performance, including innovation and emerging evidence of economic and social impact.

## **Purpose of funding**

### **Widening access and strengthening provision within institutions**

- 5 With this funding, totalling £4.4M, it is intended that institutions should consolidate and build on existing provision for students studying at 60 credits or less. It is open to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to strengthen part-time study by funding provision on a targeted basis or by providing financial support for students. The use of funding should be consistent with developments being taken forward via institutions' Widening Access and Learning and Teaching strategies, where appropriate.
- 6 The Council is aware that a number of Widening Access initiatives, which provide support for part-time students in institutions, are dependent on support from EU structural funds and that there can often be an hiatus in funding between phases of some projects. Where the sustainability of such EU-funded projects is threatened by such an hiatus, the Council would

expect support for such projects to form the first call on this funding stream.

- 7 In the context of the focus on widening access to higher education, the Council would expect to see this funding targeted at activities such as providing support to facilitate free access to learning for students from areas of recognised economic disadvantage including, for example, the Heads of the Valleys, Communities First wards or underrepresented groups in Higher Education such as care leavers, along with possible support in respect of other benefits forfeited as a consequence of accessing learning.
- 8 Other examples of specific areas of activity which institutions might wish to support include the following, although this is not intended as a definitive list:
  - provision of bursaries and other financial support for widening access to part-time students
  - improving the promotion of part-time provision and raising awareness of opportunities to move part-time to full-time or indeed from full-time to part-time, should this encourage completion and avoid drop-out
  - funding learning support outside regular working hours
  - providing more blended learning opportunities such as e-learning etc.
  - increasing bilingual/Welsh medium part-time provision
  - developing shared modules and curriculum across a region
  - disseminating good practice in collaboration
  - increasing hardship funds for part-time students

### **Strengthening employer links**

- 9 The second strand of funding, totalling £2M, is aimed at strengthening engagement with employers in the delivery of part-time higher education. The use of funding should be consistent with developments being taken forward via institutions' Third Mission strategies, including building up collaborative approaches where appropriate.
- 10 Examples of specific areas of activity which institutions might wish to support include the following, although, as before, this is not intended as a definitive list:

- increasing work-based learning opportunities and more flexible delivery including e-learning
- engaging employers in vocational skills provision
- working with employers to identify their needs and design and improve delivery
- developing innovative ways of responding to employers' skills needs

**NB For all of the above examples HEFCW would expect HEIs to take careful account of the views of relevant Sector Skills Councils.**

- 11 Funding should not be used to support activities which duplicate services made available through other Assembly funded programmes for employers. Funding should be used to reflect the principle that employers would normally be expected to contribute towards the cost of training their employees.

### **Allocation method**

- 12 The Widening Access allocation (£4.4M) has been calculated on the basis of part-time credit volume, with extra weight given to those credit values associated with students counted for the purposes of the widening access premium.

The remaining £2M linked to Engagement with Employers has been allocated on the basis of part-time credit volume (50% of the funding available) and a selection of elements from the Third Mission Funding formula (50% of the funding available).

Student and staff data used in the allocations are taken from the HESA student and staff records for 2006/07 and GO Wales data for phase 2 as at December 2006.

- 13 The allocations are shown at **Annex A**.

### **Claiming allocations**

- 14 The release of institutions' allocations will be subject to the submission of an acceptable plan for both areas of expenditure. These should be provided by completing the pro-forma shown at **Annex B**. An electronic version of the pro-forma can be downloaded from the Council's website ([www.hefcw.ac.uk](http://www.hefcw.ac.uk)) where it is available alongside this circular.

## Timing of payments

- 15 Subject to the submission of acceptable plans, the allocations for 2008/09 will be paid in two tranches in September 2008 and April 2009. The allocations are detailed in **Annex A**.

## Monitoring and evaluation

- 16 Expenditure of the 2008/09 allocations should be completed by **30 August 2009**. Institutions will be asked to confirm that funding has been spent in full and used in accordance with the plans approved by the Council. Individual institutional monitoring pro-forma will be included with the Annual Monitoring Statements which are issued by HEFCW in June.

As indicated in paragraph 4 above, extension of this funding beyond the initial three-year period will be subject to a review in 2009. Further details of this review will be determined in due course.

## Responses and further information

- 17 Institutions should submit their plans for use of Additional Support for Part-Time Students funding by **Friday 15 August 2008**, using the pro-forma provided. The completed pro-formas should be addressed to Emma Morris, Strategic Projects Manager, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, Linden Court, The Orchards, Ilex Close, Llanishen, Cardiff, CF14 5DZ.

Please note that HEFCW may be unable to distribute the allocations without an acceptable plan.

- 18 Any queries arising from this circular should also be directed to Emma Morris (029 2068 2292; [Emma.Morris@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:Emma.Morris@hefcw.ac.uk)).

**Additional Support for Part-time Students 2008/09  
Allocations**

Institution	2008/09			Payment Details		
	Widening Access £	Third Mission £	Total £	September 2008 £	April 2009 £	Total £
University of Glamorgan	877,997	333,832	1,211,829	807,886	403,943	1,211,829
Aberystwyth University	129,906	137,727	267,633	178,422	89,211	267,633
Bangor University	143,682	126,411	270,093	180,062	90,031	270,093
Cardiff University	348,323	358,215	706,538	471,025	235,513	706,538
University of Wales, Lampeter	203,628	69,843	273,471	182,314	91,157	273,471
Swansea University	197,867	189,759	387,626	258,417	129,209	387,626
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff	187,675	135,827	323,502	215,668	107,834	323,502
University of Wales, Newport	745,705	207,855	953,560	635,707	317,853	953,560
North East Wales Institute	448,741	139,062	587,803	391,869	195,934	587,803
Swansea Metropolitan University	226,275	70,686	296,961	197,974	98,987	296,961
Trinity College Carmarthen	63,046	41,125	104,171	69,447	34,724	104,171
Open University in Wales	827,155	189,658	1,016,813	677,875	338,938	1,016,813
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,400,000</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>6,400,000</b>	<b>4,266,666</b>	<b>2,133,334</b>	<b>6,400,000</b>

