

Cylchlythyr | Circular

Reporting the Outcomes of Skills and Employability Action Plans 2012/13 and 2013/14

Date: 21 August 2014
Reference: W14/35HE
To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales
Response by: **Friday 7 November 2014**
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This circular invites institutions to report back on the outcomes of their Skills and Employability Action Plans (SEAP) and activities supported with SEAP funding for 2012/13 and 2013/14.

If you require this document in an alternative accessible format, please telephone us on (029) 2068 2225 or email info@hefcw.ac.uk.



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Introduction

1. This circular invites institutions to report back on the outcomes of their Skills and Employability Action Plans (SEAPs) and activities supported with SEAP funding for 2012/13 and 2013/14.

Background

2. In the 2011-12 remit letter to HEFCW, the Minister required HEFCW to look at enhancing employability in order to give graduates from Welsh institutions the extra 'edge' which would make them attractive to employers and more able to compete successfully in the global economy. In order to meet this requirement HEFCW, NUS Wales, Higher Education Wales and CBI Wales devised the *Agreement on Skills and Employability for Wales*¹ and it was launched on 19 June 2012.
3. The Agreement set out the challenge faced in Wales and the commitment of all partners to bring together activities within an Action Plan for Wales. Three priority areas were identified under which future effort would be focussed:
 - Work placements and work experience
 - Employer approved courses
 - Embedding employability skills across all higher education curricula
4. As part of HEFCW's commitment to the Agreement it invited higher education institutions (HEIs) in Wales to develop their own SEAPs for the 2012/13 and 2013/14 academic years.² In support of this, one off funding was provided to encourage all HEIs to establish new and innovative activities or devise pilot programmes which would enhance skills and employability. Funding was allocated to all HEIs in Wales based on a formula method taking into consideration graduate numbers including those from Communities First areas and achievement in graduate employability.
5. HEFCW received individual SEAPs and funding proposals from every HEI in Wales. Activities included in the plans and funding proposals focused on a range of actions including outward mobility, placements, staff development, internships, volunteering and employability training.

Reporting on the outcomes

6. With the final year of the SEAPs now completed we are asking that all institutions report back on outcomes of their institutional SEAPs. As noted

¹ [Agreement on Skills and Employability for Wales](#)

² [W13/03HE: Skills and Employability Action Plans \(SEAPs\) 2012/13 & 2013/14 and SEAP Funding](#)

in our original request for SEAPs we had intended to monitor this through the Annual Monitoring Statement process. However, as communicated to SEAP contacts, it was decided that we would monitor this through a one off exercise that would allow us to gain a better understanding of the outcomes across the sector.

7. We would like all institutions to report against the targets/objectives of their SEAPs, taking account of benchmarks where included. A copy of the institutions' original SEAP will be sent to each SEAP contact with an additional column provided to detail these outcomes. These documents will be sent out on publication of this circular.
8. Additionally we would like to receive more detailed information on some of the activities set out under the three priority areas of the Agreement. As part of the reporting process we will ask that each institution provide a brief case study detailing one activity from each priority area which has been particularly successful during the two year period of the plans. Where possible we would like to receive information regarding activities that have not been so successful and will ask for one further reflective case study from any of the priority area headings, focusing on lessons learnt. In total therefore we are requesting four case studies.
9. In addition for those activities that received SEAP funding we would like a summary addressing all of the funded projects. We would expect this to include a comment on how the funding was used to develop the initiative as well as the activity's future sustainability and detailing how it met HEFCW's aim to widen access and deliver social justice.

Future Plans

10. HEFCW intends to identify good practice and lessons learnt from the outcomes reported and it is intended that these will be published and circulated to the sector and brought to the attention of the Minister as a means of highlighting the ongoing good work on skills and employability. We envisage that the good practice and lessons learnt will be a key feature of an event in spring 2015 which will promote skills and employability activities in Welsh HEIs. This event will further inform HEFCW's delivery of its skills and employability remit going forward
11. In order for HEFCW to understand institutional approaches to skills, employability and enterprise in the future a section on this area will be included in HEFCW's new strategic engagement process. It will be expected that institutions will detail institutional aims in this area and provide a concise narrative to explain how these aims will be achieved.

Further information / responses to

12. Each institution should report back on the outcomes of its Skills and Employability Action Plan, plus details of its SEAP funded projects to HEFCW by **Friday, 7 November 2014**. They should be submitted electronically to Steve Williams (Email: steven.williams@hefcw.ac.uk; Tel: 029 2068 2285).
13. Any queries arising from this circular should be directed to Steve Williams (Email: steven.williams@hefcw.ac.uk; Tel: 029 2068 2285).