

Cylchlythyr | Circular

Fee Planning: 2013/14 fee plan monitoring and 2016/17 planning information

Date: 2 March 2015
Reference: W15/02HE
To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales,
Principals of directly-funded further education colleges in
Wales; institutional fee plan contacts
Response by: 24 April 2015
Contact: Name: Jane Johns
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This circular requests 2013/14 fee plan annual monitoring statements and provides information on the 2016/17 fee planning process.

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 requests 2013/14 fee plan annual monitoring statements (AMS) and provides information on the 2016/17 fee planning process.

Background

2013/14 annual monitoring statements

2. The HEFCW circular W14/13HE¹ and our Chief Executive's letter to Vice Chancellors and Principals on fee plan monitoring (July 2014) confirmed that we would: require more detail in fee plan reporting; consult on a revised fee plan template for 2013/14 monitoring; request the 2013/14 fee plan AMS around April 2015, rather than the previous October (2014); and that we would expect the fee plan AMS to be subject to internal audit prior to submission to us to confirm the achievement/underachievement of targets.
3. Since this correspondence, the Welsh Government has recently agreed, and Council have confirmed, that the fee plan process will change from 2017/18, and not 2016/17 as previously proposed. As the fee planning processes will change significantly from 2017/18, we will **not change the 2013/14 fee plan AMS reporting template** thereby easing the reporting burden on higher education providers. Therefore, there will be no consultation on changes, as previously indicated. Within the same reporting format we will require more detail to evidence achievement of targets or to explain underachievement.

Fee planning 2016/17 and 2017/18

4. The Higher Education (Wales) Bill² developments have resulted in broader discussions between Welsh Government, HEFCW and further and higher education institutions in relation to fee planning processes up to 2016/17 and from 2017/18, when fee and access plans are covered by new regulations under the Higher Education (Wales) Bill, once it receives royal assent.
5. We signalled much of the above in our email to Vice-Chancellors and Principals and provider contacts in an email earlier this month (17 February 2015).

2013/14 Fee Plan AMS template

6. The draft 2013/14 fee plan AMS template is attached as **Annex A**. We will populate individual AMS templates with providers' 2013/14 fee plan targets and send them to fee plan contacts by Wednesday 4 March 2015.

¹ HEFCW circular [W14/13HE](#) (April 2014)

² [Higher Education \(Wales\) Bill](#)

7. The 2013/14 AMS requires more detailed reporting than in the first year of fee plan reporting including: information/data sources evidencing that targets have been met; a comprehensive explanation where targets have not been achieved and; an explanation for underachievement, including an indication of how progress has been made where there was under-achievement.
8. We had some concerns about institutional processes for signing off fee plan monitoring returns following the 2012/13 AMS process but, as we have built the fee plan AMS into the annual audit cycle from 2013/14, we would not expect additional internal auditing prior to the fee plan AMS submission. If internal audits identify any cause for concern we would expect to be notified³.

AMS Timetable

9. A timetable for submitting the 2013/14 fee plan AMS is as follows:

Action	Submission date
2013/14 AMS individual templates provided to fee plan contacts	4 March 2015
2013/14 annual monitoring statements submitted to HEFCW	24 April 2015
Feedback from HEFCW and dialogue on 2013/14 AMS reports prior to HEFCW confirming acceptance, or otherwise, of the 2013/14 AMS report.	26 May 2015 - 26 June 2015

2016/17 Fee Planning

10. The Welsh Government has agreed to an extension of HEFCW's current Corporate Strategy and targets (2013-14 to 2015-16) to 2016-17. This means that our current Corporate Strategy targets (widening access, participation, retention, Welsh medium, National Student Survey, employment and employability and the areas we monitor) will cover the 2016/17 fee planning period.
11. We plan to issue 2016/17 fee plan guidance in March 2015, earlier than our 2015/16 guidance. The guidance will be largely the same as in 2015/16 and thus higher education providers may begin to develop their 2016/17 plans now⁴.

³ See HEFCW circular [W15/01HE](#) Guidance for Internal Auditors to use in their Annual Internal Audit of HE Data Systems and Processes

⁴ See HEFCW circular [W14/14HE](#) 2015/16 fee plan guidance

Assessing the impact of our policies

12. We carry out impact assessments to help safeguard against discrimination and promote equality. We will also consider the impact of policies on the Welsh language, and Welsh language provision within the HE sector in Wales. Contact Rachel O’Gorman, contact details below, for more information about EIAs.
13. A similar responsibility to assess the impact of policies to help safeguard against discrimination and promote equality rests with universities and colleges.

Further information and AMS submissions to

14. Please submit your 2013/14 fee plan AMS to Rachel O’Gorman (tel 029 2068 2227; email rachel.ogorman@hefcw.ac.uk) or contact her for further information.

Institution	
Institutional Contact name for Fee Plans	
Post held	
Contact details – Email/Tel	

2013/14 fee plan measurable targets and activity	Target achieved? Y/N	Progress against targets/comment on unspent balances ¹
HEFCW will forward individualised fee plan templates to fee plan contacts for completion on 4 March 2015		

¹ As set out in paragraph 7 of this circular (W15/02HE), please provide information /data sources evidencing that targets have been met; a comprehensive explanation where targets have not been met; and an explanation for underachievement, including an indication of how progress has been made where there has been underachievement. Detailed commentary on unspent balances should be set out in detail in the explanation of variance column below.

Expenditure breakdown for Fee Plans	Estimated Total 2013/14 (£)	Actual (£)	Explanation of Variance ²
a) Total Fee New Fee income			
b) Amount spent on equality of opportunity			
c) Amount spent on promoting HE			
d) Sum of b) and c)			

I confirm that expenditure figures included in the above table are correct and that the funding has been spent in accordance with the institution's original intentions as agreed with the Council.

Signature (Head of Institution):

Date:

² Detailed commentary on unspent balances should be set out in detail in the explanation of variance column.