

# Cylchlythyr | Circular

## Consultation: 2017/18 fee and access plan template

**Date:** 17 March 2016  
**Reference:** W16/09HE  
**To:** Regulated institutions and other interested parties.  
**Response by:** **31 March 2016**  
**Contact:** Name: Celia Hunt / Jane Johns  
Telephone: 029 2068 2224 / 029 2068 2219  
Email: [celia.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:celia.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk);  
[jane.johns@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:jane.johns@hefcw.ac.uk)

This consultation circular seeks views on HEFCW's draft 2017/18 fee and access plan template.

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



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## Introduction

1. This consultation seeks views on HEFCW's draft 2017/18 fee and access plan template.
2. This consultation supplements the consultation on HEFCW's draft 2017/18 fee and access plan guidance and should be understood in that context (see circular [W16/07HE](#)).
3. The 2017/18 fee and access template (the template) is the form to be used by applicants when applying to HEFCW for a fee and access plan in 2017/18.
4. The consultation period for the template is brief to enable HEFCW to take account of consultation responses in finalising the template and the 2017/18 fee and access plan guidance before publication in late March/early April 2016.

## Background

5. Further information on the Higher Education (Wales) Act's associated Regulations and Welsh Government's guidance to HEFCW on fee and access planning is provided in HEFCW circular [W16/03HE](#). Information provided on HEFCW's [HE Act webpages](#) may also be helpful. The HEFCW draft 2017/18 fee and access plan guidance has been developed in accordance with the Higher Education (Wales) 2015 Act.
6. [The Higher Education \(Fee and Access Plans\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2015](#) provides that a governing body of a fee and access plan applicant must determine the institution's fee and access plan objectives relating to equality of opportunity and the promotion of higher education, the proportion of fees payable by qualifying persons undertaking qualifying courses that will be spent on the fee and access plan objectives and the provisions in a fee and access plan that a governing body is required to take or secure the taking of.
7. HEFCW acknowledges that there is no statutory requirement under the 2015 Act for it to consult on fee and access plan guidance or template. However, HEFCW is committed to consulting on both documents.
8. HEFCW circular [W16/07HE](#) consulted on HEFCW's draft 2017/18 fee and access plan guidance to inform development of the final guidance. The circular confirmed that HEFCW would consult separately on the fee and access plan template, that it would be subject to a shorter consultation period and that there would be an opportunity to consider the template at a HEFCW consultation event.
9. HEFCW arranged a fee and consultation event on 22 February 2016 to seek early steers and feedback on the draft 2017/18 fee and access plan

guidance. A working draft of the fee and access plan template was shared and early steers provided to HEFCW.

10. A summary of consultation responses, including consultation event responses will be published in conjunction with the final fee and access plan guidance and template. The responses and discussions at the event have informed the further development of the draft template.
11. HEFCW is consulting separately on the 2017/18 fee and access plan template. This separate consultation has enabled us to begin to take account of the responses at the 22 February fee and access plan consultation event and the fee and access plan guidance consultation responses (see circular W16/07HE: this consultation closed on 14 March 2016). HEFCW recognises that on receipt of the template consultation responses, further revisions to the template will be undertaken, where possible, before the guidance and template is finalised for publication.

### **HEFCW draft 2017/18 fee and access plan template**

12. The 2017/18 draft fee and access plan template is attached as **Annex Ai** and **Annex Aii**.
13. The template comprises of three sections:
  - regulatory information to be provided to HEFCW for it to assess eligibility for entry into the regulated system;
  - the focus and contents of the fee and access plan as it relates to delivery of activities supporting equality of opportunity and the promotion of higher education; and
  - authorisation of a fee and access plan submission to HEFCW by the applicant's governing body.
14. HEFCW will not publish the regulatory information submitted by the applicant. The information provided to HEFCW on the focus and content of the fee and access plan should be published by applicants when the fee and access plan is approved. When publishing the focus and contents section of the fee and access plan, a cover reflecting an institution's corporate style may be added and HEFCW guidance notes in the template may be removed to improve the plan's accessibility for students and other interested parties. However, the institution's text which forms the basis of the fee and access plan, as approved by HEFCW cannot be changed in any way without the submission of a proposal for variation to be approved by HEFCW. This information may be helpful in responding to the consultation questions below.

## Consultation questions

15. We welcome responses on any aspect of the draft 2017/18 fee and access plan template. In particular, we are seeking responses to the following questions:

**Question 1:** does the template enable the applicant to respond fully to the information requirements as set out in the draft fee and access plan guidance consultation?

**Question 2:** does the template clearly set out what information is required? If further clarification is required, please explain where this would be helpful and why.

**Question 3:** are there any gaps or omissions in the template that should be addressed? Please explain what these are and how they should be addressed.

**Question 4:** should more be done to improve the template not already identified in the responses given to the questions above? If more should be done, please explain the improvements that might be helpful and why.

**Question 5:** is there any other information that it would be helpful for HEFCW to consider in developing the template further?

## Responding to the consultation

16. Please respond to this consultation electronically. Responses should be emailed to either [cyngorrheoleiddio@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:cyngorrheoleiddio@hefcw.ac.uk) or [regulationadvice@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:regulationadvice@hefcw.ac.uk)). The consultation closes on **Thursday 31 March at 17:00**. HEFCW is unable to accept responses after this time.
17. HEFCW's consultation processes, including our duties under the Freedom of Information Act and our approach to analysing responses is as set out in our consultation circular on the 2017/18 fee and access plan (circular W16/07HE).

## Finalising the HEFCW 2017/18 fee and access plan template.

18. HEFCW will consider all consultation responses submitted electronically and raised at the consultation event and, subject to any changes made as a result of legal advice on the 2017/18 fee and access plan guidance, it is intended that the HEFCW Council will approve the guidance and template for publication in late March/early April 2016.

## Assessing the impact of our policies

19. HEFCW has undertaken an impact assessment of the draft 2017/18 fee and access plan guidance. The fee and access plan template provides the format for 2017/18 fee and access plan submissions. HEFCW's impact assessment of the guidance helps us safeguard against discrimination and to promote equality. The assessment also considers the impact on Welsh language and Welsh language provision and the goals and sustainable development principle of the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#). In responding to this consultation on the fee and access plan template we would particularly welcome responses on matters of equality, the Welsh language and in relation to the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act as appropriate. We commit to taking into account all equality-related responses in finalising the template for publication.

## For further information

20. The 2015 Act enables HEFCW to provide information and advice to the governing body of a regulated institution and to prospective applicants. HEFCW's aim is to ensure that all applicants are fully aware of their obligations before they become a regulated institution and to minimise administrative burdens on applicants and on HEFCW at all stages of the application process.
21. New email addresses have been developed for queries about any aspect of the Higher Education (Wales) Act 2015, including fee and access plan template queries. Please email queries to either:  
[cyngorrheoleiddio@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:cyngorrheoleiddio@hefcw.ac.uk) or [regulationadvice@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:regulationadvice@hefcw.ac.uk)
22. Alternatively contact:  
Celia Hunt (tel 029 2068 2224; email: [celia.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:celia.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk)) or  
Jane Johns (tel 029 2068 2219; email [jane.johns@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:jane.johns@hefcw.ac.uk)).