

Meeting	Agenda Item	Reference No
14/03/14	21	HEFCW/14/30

1 Issue

- 1.1 This paper provides a progress report on the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol since March 2013.

2 Corporate Planning Implications / Rationale for paper

- 2.1 Our remit letter for 2013-14 listed a number of tasks relating to the Coleg, the principal ones of which stated:

“The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol has moved forward considerably during 2012-13 with the publication of the Academic Plan, the funding of more lecturers and the development of the Welsh-language skills certificate. I expect the Council to do the following:

- continue to undertake its role in funding and monitoring the Coleg's activity, including its management of the Welsh language scholarship schemes.
- undertake an evaluation of the outcome of the Coleg's activities, including a review of the funding provided to the Coleg and to supply my officials with the details of this review by September 2013 and a final report by September 2014”

3 Recommendation

- 3.1 The Council is invited to:
- i. note the progress of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol since March 2013

4 Timing for decisions

- 4.1 The paper is for information.

5 Council members' interests

- 5.1 No conflicts of interests have been declared in advance of the meeting. Professor Robin Williams was the author of the original Coleg Ffederal report to the Welsh Government in 2009 and is an Honorary Fellow of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.

6 Further information

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7 Background

- 7.1 The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (the Coleg) was established in March 2011 as a company limited by guarantee and is also registered as a charity. All higher education institutions in Wales are members of the Coleg and it has an equal number of stakeholder member organisations. The Coleg has a Board of 13 Directors comprising the independent chair, six higher education sector directors, four independent directors, a student director and a staff director. HEFCW has observer status on the Board.

8 Funding

- 8.1 For the current academic year 2013/14 the Coleg was allocated a grant of £6,495,549, with the additional Scholarship scheme allocation increasing to £330,000 (to cover the three cohorts of scholarship students).
- 8.2 The funding allocated is based on the funding requirements set out in Professor Williams' 2009 report to the Welsh Government. It is a combination of funding specifically made available by the Welsh Government and funding which had previously been made available by HEFCW to support the development of Welsh medium provision.
- 8.3 Funding for the Coleg has been confirmed until 2016/17. The rolling nature of the schemes offered by the Coleg means that appointments made to the five year Academic Staffing Scheme since 2012/13 run beyond the current funding period. Arrangements have been put in place should funding not continue beyond 2016/17, these are noted in the paper.

9 Evaluation of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

- 9.1 An evaluation of the outcome of the Coleg's activities to date is due to begin in 2014, with the competitive tender process underway. As remitted, we provided WG officials of the details of the tender process by the September 2013 deadline. The scope and funding of the evaluation was shared with Council members on 5 September 2013 ([HEFCW/13/CE5](#)).
- 9.2 We have recognised that this is early in the lifetime of the Coleg to undertake an evaluation of the 'outcome'; our expectation is therefore to look at what has been achieved thus far against key objectives. The aim is also to provide assurance to Welsh Government and HEFCW that funding provided to date has been spent effectively.

10 Academic Plan

- 10.1 The Coleg has established an Academic Board and launched its first five-year Academic Plan in September 2012. Its aim is to establish a strategic framework to develop individual subject plans by discipline, which will set aims, objectives, targets and funding priorities for the future.
- 10.2 Individual subject panels have been established and they meet regularly during the year to discuss the plans. The Academic Board has approved the final plans in the following subject areas, Welsh Language and Literature; Music; Creative Industries; Education Studies; History and Theology; Modern Languages; Politics; Criminology and Policing Studies; Law; Social Policy and Sociology;

Social Work; Nursing; Business; Sport; Mathematics and Physics and Geography, Environmental Studies and Agriculture.

11 Academic Staffing Scheme

- 11.1 The [Academic Staffing Scheme](#) provides funding to institutions to employ Welsh medium academic staff, fostering new lecturers and increasing the delivery of Welsh medium provision. Institutions make applications for posts to the Coleg which are considered by an expert panel.
- 11.2 The target is for 100 Welsh Medium academic posts to be in place by academic year 2015/16. An additional 18 appointments were made to begin in 2013/14 bringing the total to date to 74.
- 11.3 The posts are funded for a period of five years by the Coleg, however as funding for the Coleg has only been confirmed until 2016/17 and these posts run beyond that, arrangements have been put in place for the relevant institution to bear all contractual responsibilities should funding not continue.
- 11.4 The holders of these awards are responsible for teaching and developing Welsh medium provision within their respective subject areas. Although their main responsibility will centre upon teaching students, they are also expected to contribute to the intellectual and Welsh medium life of Welsh universities through research work, facilitating collaboration with other departments and institutions, and promoting the Welsh language within their subject areas and institutions.

12 Strategic Developments and Projects Fund

- 12.1 The Coleg's Strategic Developments and Projects Fund supports strategic developments that will have a significant impact on Welsh medium provision and the numbers studying through the medium of Welsh.
- 12.2 Fund provides financial assistance to universities to realise the strategic goals and priorities that are outlined in subject plans agreed with the Coleg. As noted above, future decisions will be in line with the Coleg's Academic Plan and revised subject development plans which will follow from this. As well as funding for individual institutional and collaborative development projects, the fund is also used to support a number of sector-wide projects/project officers.

13 Scholarship Scheme

- 13.1 The Coleg operates three scholarship schemes funded by the Welsh Government: Main Scholarships, Incentive Scholarship and Masters' level scholarships. HEFCW has a separate legal agreement with the Welsh Government to allow it to exercise functions on behalf of the Minister in allocating funding to the Coleg for student scholarships.
- 13.2 The Main Scholarships are for students who intend to study degree courses that include at least 240 credits of Welsh medium provision (including at least 80 in each year). The value of the scholarships is £1,000 per year for the duration of the three year course. Institutions are allocated an agreed number of scholarships, according to the range of eligible subjects which they offer. The Coleg, in conjunction with the individual institutions, is responsible for the

process of awarding the scholarships, with universities using their various procedures for allocating scholarships.

- 13.3 In 2013/14 a total of 45 Main Scholarships were awarded and distributed as follows:

University	Number awarded
Swansea University	2
Aberystwyth University	11
Bangor University	14
Cardiff University	4
Cardiff Metropolitan University	4
University of Glamorgan	3
University of Wales Trinity St David	7
Total	45

- 13.4 The Incentive Scholarships are for students who intend to study degree courses that include at least 120 credits of Welsh medium provision (including at least 40 credits in each year). The value of the scholarships is £500 per year for the duration of the three year course. These scholarships are awarded by the Coleg following receipt of applications from students for courses agreed as meeting the credit volume threshold for eligibility.

- 13.5 In 2013/14 a total of 104 Incentive Scholarships were awarded in the following subject areas: Environmental Sciences and Agricultural Sciences; Health Studies; Social Work; Business and Management; Sport Science and Studies; Law (incorporating the current CyfNawdd sponsorship scheme); Psychology; Modern Languages; Mathematics; Chemistry; Biology; Physics; Geography and Nursing. These were distributed as follows:

University	Number awarded
Swansea University	8
Aberystwyth University	34
Bangor University	31
Cardiff University	8
Cardiff Metropolitan University	15
University of Glamorgan	2
University of Wales Trinity St David	6
Total	104

- 13.6 Masters' Scholarships are for students on taught Masters' programmes. Such programmes enable the students concerned to work professionally through the medium of Welsh at a high level. To be eligible the course must have at least 60 credits taught through the medium of Welsh and have the capacity to enable the student to undertake their thesis through the medium of Welsh.

- 13.7 Proposals were submitted in December 2012 to award two or one year Incentive Scholarships. This was agreed by Welsh Government and a variation document was signed in July 2013. The two year and one year Scholarships will be made available when students that were awarded three year main or incentive scholarships become ineligible for the Scholarship. The balance available for Scholarships would remain the same, however, the use of funding will be maximised when these instances arise.

University	Number awarded	Number awarded
	Two-year Scholarship	One-year Scholarship
Swansea University	1	
Aberystwyth University	10	
Bangor University	11	5
Cardiff Metropolitan University	12	
University of South Wales	2	
University of Wales Trinity St David	6	
Total	42	5

- 13.8 34 applications for Masters' Level Scholarships were received in 2013/14 in the following subjects: Fine Art; Creative Industries; Creative Writing; Welsh and Celtic Studies; Social Work, Community Development, Music, Early Years Education, Welsh Law, Politics; Social Sciences; Welsh and Language Policy. A number of these applicants were successful in applying for funding from elsewhere, and therefore 17 scholarships were awarded.

14 Research Scholarships

- 14.1 The Research Scholarship Scheme is funded by the Coleg separately to the other Scholarship schemes. The Scheme was established under the previous Centre for Welsh Medium Higher Education. This scheme provides financial sponsorship (that is equivalent to Research Council UK's (RCUK) post-graduate scholarships) to prospective academics who are studying for a doctorate. The holders of these scholarships also receive staff development and training in teaching skills and gain experience by contributing towards the teaching of undergraduate modules through the medium of Welsh. This is designed to ensure that by combining research qualifications and Welsh medium teaching experience and skills, they can be strong candidates for lecturing posts after they have completed their research.
- 14.2 Funding is provided for three or four years depending on whether the student is required to complete a Master's degree before embarking on a PhD. A further year's funding is given when the holders are employed as members of the academic staff within their departments after they have completed their doctorate. Their teaching duties increase during that extra year, and they are expected to plan and develop the Welsh medium provision.
- 14.3 In 2013/14, 28 applications were received for Research Scholarships with 10 being awarded. The ten were in the following subjects areas, Education; Philosophy; Creative Industries/; International Politics; Environmental Sciences and/or Geogrpahy/ Biological Sciences and Langauge and Literature.
- 14.4 In the case of each award, the department or university where the holders are studying is expected to create a new lecturing post which the holder will be able to apply for at the end of the funding period.

15 Technology-enhanced learning

- 15.1 The Coleg's e-learning portal, [Y Porth](#), is used to enhance the learning experience of Coleg students studying Welsh-medium university modules. There has been a significant increase in the number of users accessing Y Porth,

with 1,600 Welsh medium students self enrolled as members and 750 members of teaching or support within the sector listed on the staff register.

- 15.2 In 2012/13 the Coleg's Learning Spaces were used for the first time. The rooms, supported by the Coleg are designated spaces for Coleg staff and students. The HD video conferencing equipment and a direct link to the Porth's e-learning platform allow the Coleg to offer modules collaboratively. As well as being a focus for the Coleg's teaching, locally and collaboratively, the Learning Spaces offer a visual presence for branch activities within universities.

16 Welsh Language Skills Certificate

- 16.1 Students were able to take the new Welsh Language Skills Certificate for the first time in 2013, a total of 34 students successfully achieved the certificate with 6 of those achieving an excellence award. The certificate has been developed to enable students studying in Wales to gain a qualification which provides evidence of their language skills, and their ability to work through the medium of Welsh. Several employers have already expressed their support for the certificate. The certificate provides evidence (recognised by the higher education sector and employers) of the level of skills attained, and demonstrates a student's ability to communicate confidently in Welsh in a variety of contexts.

The Council is invited to note the progress of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol since March 2013

17 Financial implications

- 17.1 The funding provided to the Coleg to date is noted in paragraph 8.1. The grant for the Coleg is estimated to rise in line with Professor Williams' report as its schemes, particularly the Academic Staffing Scheme and the Scholarships Scheme reach full capacity in 2015/16. The rolling nature of the Coleg's schemes means that commitments which the Coleg has made in 2013/14 for the Academic Staffing Scheme will have implications beyond the period of the current government. Arrangements beyond this period of funding are noted in paragraph 11.3.

18 Communications implications

- 18.1 The Coleg provides full information on its work and programmes on its website <http://www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk/cy/> and <http://www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk/en/>.

19 Diversity and Equal Opportunities implications

- 19.1 The paper is central to the development of Welsh medium higher education and enhanced choice for students. Our funding agreement with the Coleg states that the Coleg will be expected to have regard to legislative requirements relating to diversity and equal opportunities matters which impact on its work.

20 Risk Assessment

- 20.1 The main risks are:

Risk	Action to address risk
Future funding pressures, particularly for schemes where there are long-term funding commitments.	HEFCW officials are working with the Coleg to consider options available beyond 2016/17.
Failure to meet target for Welsh medium provision.	A new Welsh medium corporate strategy target has been developed which will focus on the volume of provision being studied as well as the number of enrolments. All institutions are required to provide a Welsh medium target within their fee plan.