

Foundation Degrees and Work-based Learning Projects

Foundation degrees, with their focus on the needs of employers and their flexible mode of delivery, have a crucial role to play on upskilling existing workforces and we see them as an important pillar of the skills agenda in Wales. HEFCW circular W10/29HE *Foundation Degrees* (July 2010)¹ presented HEFCW's policy on foundation degrees and announced the allocation of *One Wales* funding for the development, promotion and delivery of new part-time foundation degree provision, inviting proposals to be submitted by regional partnerships by 7 January 2011.

A total of 37 individual foundation degree proposals were received with a total value of £13.8 million against available funding of £7.64 million. These proposals were considered against a series of criteria, including fit with regional strategies; the extent to which proposals evidenced employer need and market demand for the proposed activities; the extent to which proposed provision would contribute towards upskilling the workforce through part-time provision; and the strength of the proposed partnerships described between HEIs, FEIs, Sector Skills Councils and employer representatives.

As a result, HEFCW is now funding 23 new part-time, employer focused foundation degree programmes. These are currently being developed and delivered by partnerships of HEIs, FEIs, SSCs and employers from within the three regions of Wales.

This policy development and funding programme sits alongside the programmes being supported under the *Higher Skills Wales* ESF programme funded via WEFO and managed by the University of Glamorgan on behalf of the HE and FE sector across the whole of Wales². *Higher Skills Wales* includes a £16.5million Foundation Degree Programme that provides opportunity for those employed in the private sector living and/or working within the Convergence area to study (fully or part funded) towards a Foundation Degree qualification. A list of courses funded through the programme is attached (attach list).

Higher Skills Wales also incorporates a £34million Work Based Learning Programme. This initiative provides opportunity for workforce upskilling via flexibly delivered, bite-sized university accredited courses (again, fully or part funded) up to a maximum of 60 credits. A list of courses funded through the programme is attached (attach list).

We have commissioned the QAA to undertake a developmental review of all foundation degree provision in Wales in 2012/13. The review will cover all foundation degree provision in Wales, including provision funded through HEFCW's teaching funding; funded specifically through HEFCW's Foundation Degree Programme (see above); funded through the ESF *Higher Skills Wales* programme;

1

http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/documents/publications/circulars/circulars_2010/W10%2029HE%20Foundatio n%20Degrees%20circ%20and%20Annex%20A.pdf

² <http://www.higherskillswales.co.uk/>

and provision delivered through UHOVI. It will provide information about how foundation degree qualifications across Wales are being developed against the Quality Assurance Agency's foundation degree benchmark, and will identify issues related to this, including employer engagement and progression arrangements. The review will also help to identify areas of good practice within the sector.

HEFCW, as part of the Higher Education Academy's *Future Directions* programme, held a conference in February 2012 to highlight policy and practice issues emerging from the provision of foundation degrees in Wales.

In March 2012 we published an [Agreement on Skills and Employability for Wales](#) and a draft [Skills and Employability Framework Action Plan](#).

ESF-funded FD and WBL projects (as of September 2011)

Foundation Degree Programme

Project Title	Partner Institutions	Area	Outputs (participants accessing qualifications)	Results (minimum 120 credits)	No. Employers to be assisted (no names)	Date	
						Start	End
FD Process Ops and Maintenance	Trinity St David/ Pembrokeshire College	West Wales	36	30	4	1.5.10	31.7.13
FD Aerospace	UoG/Coleg Morgannwg	SE Wales	46	41	3	1.8.10	31.7.13
FD Sustainable Construction & Surveying	UoG/Coleg Morgannwg	UHOVI	59	44	58	1.9.10	31.9.13
FD Energy and Power Technologies*	Bangor Uni/ Coleg Llandrillo	North Wales	25	23	11	1.1.11	31.3.14
FD Business Pathways	UoG/UWN	UHOVI	154	132	95	1.1.11	31.3.14
FD Music Industry Entrepreneurship	UoG	Pan Wales	75	59	75	1.6.11	31.5.14
FD Sustainable Design & Construction	UWIC, Coleg Llandrillo, Bridgend College, Coleg Powys	Pan Wales	108	88	56	1.4.11	30.10.14
FD Food Science & Technology	UWIC, Bridgend College, Coleg Menai, Ystrad Mynach College	Pan Wales	86	77	40	1.4.11	31.12.14
FD Financial Services*	UWIC, Bridgend College and Ystrad Mynach College	SE Wales	111	93	59	1.9.11	31.12.14
FD Tourist Guiding*	UWIC/ Coleg Llandrillo	Pan Wales	18	16	18	1.9.11	31.3.14
FD Engineering*	Swansea University/ Neath Port Talbot College/ Gower	SW Wales	112	104	50	1.7.11	31.9.14

	College						
FD ICT for SMEs*	Swansea University	SW Wales	84	80	60	1.9.11	31.12.14
FD Vehicle Performance Technology*	Glyndwr University/ Swansea Met University/ Coleg Llandrillo/ Coleg Sir Gar	Pan Wales	48	44	42	1.10.11	31.3.15

Work Based Learning Programme

Project Title	Partner Institutions	Area	Outputs (participants accessing qualifications)	Results (maximum 60 credits)	No. Employers to be assisted (no names)	Date	
						Start	End
LATERAL	Trinity St David	Pan Wales	180	140	45	1.6.10	31.5.13
Mentoring our Workforce	Trinity St David	Pan Wales	80	62	21	1.6.10	31.5.13
The Professional Academy	UoG	SE Wales	480	384	235	1.7.10	30.6.13
Advance Professional Training in Bioscience*	Swansea University	SE Wales	440	412	150	1.7.10	31.12.13
DEHOV (Digital Economy in the Heads of the Valleys)	UoG/UWN	UHOVI	1373	960	270	1.9.10	31.8.13
Built Environment Outreach Programme*	Glyndwr University/Coleg Menai	North Wales	36	29	27	1.7.11	31.3.14
Horticultural Training for community projects*	Glyndwr University/Coleg Sir Gar	South Wales	30	24	10	1.7.11	31.3.14
Business and technology skills for a co-supportive outdoor leisure industry*	Glyndwr University/Coleg Menai	North Wales	60	45	25	1.7.11	31.3.14
CiDS (Creative & Cultural Workforce Development Scheme)	UoG	SE Wales	220	160	120	1.4.11	31.3.14
Health & Well Being	Bangor University	North Wales	490	341	95	1.8.11	31.7.14
Innovation*	Swansea/UWIC	South Wales	500	400	100	1.10.11	31.12.14
High Performance Working Network*	UWIC, UoG, UWN, Swansea University, Trinity St David, Bangor, Coleg Llandrillo,	Pan Wales (4 different regional hubs)	1600	1280	640	1.4.11 (North Hub potentially)	30.6.14

	Glyndwr					starting 1.9.11)	
Engineering*	Swansea University & UWN	South Wales (UWN is SE partner)	480	440	120	1.1.12	31.12.14
SkillSet Academi+	UWN & UWIC	South Wales	540	379	360	1.4.11	30.6.14
Professional and Practical Creative Development for the Performing Arts*	Aberystwyth University	West Wales	54	54	54	1.9.11	31.12.14
METaL – Materials Education Training and Learning*	Swansea University	South Wales	350	326	18	5.9.11	31.1.15
Higher Translation Skills / Modern Languages*	Bangor/Swansea/Aberystwyth	Pan Wales	894	779	310	1.9.11	31.12.14

* Contracts currently in final negotiations