

Image © National Union of Students



Cyngor Cyllido Addysg  
Uwch Cymru  
Higher Education Funding  
Council for Wales

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## What we do for students

**HEFCW is the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.**

Under the Higher Education (Wales) Act 2015 we regulate most of the higher education provision in Wales, which means we make sure that universities and FE colleges who provide higher education are financially secure and are working to deliver an excellent experience for their students.

**We work with institutions to help them to ensure that:**

- higher education in Wales meets the needs of the diverse student population and that this education continues to be of a very high standard;
- graduates in Wales have the skills they need for the workplace, both on a national and international level;
- the excellence and impact of research in Wales continues to increase;
- there are more opportunities for studying through the medium of Welsh;
- they incorporate the student voice explicitly into enhancement activities and regulatory processes in Wales.

### **The student voice**

We co-ordinate the National Student Survey in Wales – giving final year undergraduate students the opportunity to have their say about their study experience. We ensure that the student voice strengthens higher education and contributes to our policy making by including a Member from NUS Wales on our Student Opportunity and Achievement Committee and our Quality Assessment Committee. The President of NUS Wales makes an important contribution as an observer of our Council.

### **Working in partnership with students**

We work in partnership with students through NUS Wales, consulting them on key areas such as developing fee and access plans. We ensure that all regulated institutions have a meaningful student charter and a Students' Union relationship agreement in place. We are partners of the Wise Wales, which aims to achieve meaningful partnership between educators, student unions and students across Wales, making Wales an excellent place for students to study and enabling students to take part in improving their learning experiences.

### **Fee and access planning**

Fee and access plans explain how institutions will spend a percentage of student tuition fees in supporting equality of opportunity and promoting higher education. We work with institutions to monitor and ensure that students are fully involved in the process. Because the money comes from fees, and should benefit students, it is very important for students and student unions to be involved. This helps to ensure that the plans deliver outcomes that will benefit current and future students.

# What we will do in the future

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We will continue to encourage increased flexible learning options to meet the diverse needs of students, including part-time provision, higher apprenticeships, work-based learning and distance learning.

We will effectively monitor the student experience and ensure that the student voice is embedded in our policies and regulatory requirements by ensuring that we:

- Work with NUS Wales, the sector and other stakeholders to drive the agenda of students as partners;
- Encourage providers to respond to the diversity of the student experience;
- Embed the student voice in our sector guidance and policies;
- Encourage the publication of reliable and timely information about higher education;
- Monitor and manage unintended impacts of the changes to the fees and funding regime on student finances;
- Operate a proportionate and robust regulatory system, which minimises risk to students and institutions.

We will continue to ensure that we embed the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act in our policies and guidance, and we will encourage others to support this legislation.

We will ensure that our policies protect the student interest so that all students have the opportunity to succeed.

We will continue to work with organisations throughout the rest of the UK, providing advice and using our influence to ensure that the voice of Wales, including Welsh students, is represented at all levels of decision making.

## Creating Opportunities for Students

We will continue to lead the Achieve through Work Experience Programme which is a part financed European Social Fund initiative delivered by universities in Wales. It is aimed at full time students aged under 25 years old who meet the eligibility criteria.

The Programme is backed with £4.7m from the European Social Fund through the Welsh Government and helps to provide students who most need additional help to become better equipped for the world of work.



Cyflawni drwy  
Brofiad Gwaith  
Achieve through  
Work Experience

## Equality and Diversity

We encourage equality and diversity and promote effective and inclusive practices in higher education. Institutions attract a diverse range of staff, applicants and students and we are committed to working with institutions to secure equality of opportunity for everyone they engage with. We encourage universities to recognise the experience of potential students from non-traditional backgrounds. We influence improvement and evidence-based assessment of performance, as well as taking account of the institutions' engagement with UK-wide equality initiatives and effective practice. There are many benefits of improving equality and diversity in higher education and ensuring inclusive approaches, including contributing to social justice and making Wales a fairer society.

For more information about our work please visit  
[www.hefcw.ac.uk](http://www.hefcw.ac.uk) or follow us @hefcw 