

Cylchlythyr | Circular

HEFCW's Child Poverty Strategy 2012-13 to 2015-16

Date: 30 March 2012
Reference: W12/11HE
To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales
Principals of directly-funded further education colleges in
Wales and other interested parties
Response by: No response required
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This circular sets out HEFCW's Child Poverty Strategy 2012-13 to 2015-16 and summarises the consultation responses, including the equality and diversity impact assessment outcomes associated with its development.

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 sets out HEFCW's Child Poverty Strategy 2012-13 to 2015-16 and summarises the consultation responses, including the equality and diversity impact assessment outcomes associated with its development.

Background

2. The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) is a Welsh Government Sponsored Body (WGSB). We are supported by the Welsh Government and others to use funding strategically to secure higher education learning and research of the highest quality, to make the most of the contribution of higher education to Wales's culture, society and economy and to ensure high quality, accredited teacher training.
3. The Child Poverty Act 2010 and the Welsh Assembly Government's Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 established a statutory framework to drive actions to eradicate child poverty by the UK Government, the Welsh Assembly Government, local authorities and other public agencies.
4. The Measure placed the following duties on 'Welsh Authorities': the term used to define Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies, such as HEFCW:
 - to prepare and publish a strategy to assist in the goal of eradicating child poverty by 2020;
 - to ensure continued support for participation in education, training and community life, and help for young people to take advantage of employment opportunities.
5. This Strategy sits beneath our *Corporate Strategy 2010-11 to 2012-13*¹. It sits alongside the *HEFCW Strategic Approach and Plan for Widening Access to Higher Education*, published in February 2011².
6. The Strategy's purpose is to promote a clear understanding of our commitment and contribution to the eradicating child poverty.
7. In February 2012 we published for consultation our draft Child Poverty Strategy³. In addition to our usual consultation processes, we invited responses specifically on any equality and diversity implications of the draft Strategy. This level of engagement aimed to ensure that the draft Strategy, and its implementation, did not impact negatively on, nor had unintended consequences for, individuals with protected characteristics or individuals under-represented in higher education. We also welcomed comments more generally on the content of the Child Poverty Strategy as a whole.

¹ HEFCW's Corporate Strategy can be found at http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/publications/corporate_documents/corporate_strategy.aspx

² HEFCW Circular [W11/09HE](#)

³ HEFCW Circular [W12/06HE](#).

8. Following the consultation and engagement process, we revised the draft Strategy taking account of the feedback received, prior to publication.

HEFCW's Child Poverty Strategy

9. Our Child Poverty Strategy is attached as **Annex A**.
10. A summary of the consultation responses is attached as **Annex B**.
11. The responses welcomed and endorsed the Strategy and provided a range of suggestions either to improve the Strategy or relating to broader HEFCW policy issues. The responses included equality and diversity issues to consider in developing the Strategy, plus issues relating to: social mobility and employability; geographical focus, including rurality; alignment with organisations, strategies and policies; and HE provision and funding advice.
12. Where the consultation responses related specifically to this Strategy and reflected on what higher education can do specifically to contribute to the eradication of child poverty we have sought to reflect them the final Strategy, with the bounds of our funding settlement. A number of the equality and diversity-related responses had broader policy implications than for just this Strategy. Therefore, we will take these forward, as appropriate through our Strategic Equality Action Plan.
13. We will report our progress on implementing the Child Poverty Strategy annually to HEFCW's Student Experience, Teaching and Quality Committee and we will review the Strategy by 31 March 2014 to fulfil our duties under the Welsh Government's 2010 Measure.

Further information / responses to

14. Jane Johns (tel 029 2068 2219 email jane.johns@hefcw.ac.uk).

Equality and diversity implications

As set out above, we have undertaken a full equality impact assessment of this policy to help safeguard against discrimination and promote equality. We also considered the impact of this policy on the Welsh language, and Welsh language provision within the HE sector in Wales. Please contact equality@hefcw.ac.uk for more information about EIAs.

A similar responsibility rests on higher education institution partners to assess the impact of their proposals to help safeguard against discrimination and promote equality.