

Cylchlythyr | Circular

Consultation: Developing the HEFCW Corporate Strategy 2013-14 to 2015-16

Date: 25 July 2012
Reference: W12/27HE
To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales
Principals of directly-funded further education institutions
in Wales
Responses by: 12 October 2012
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This circular attaches for consultation the draft HEFCW Corporate Strategy 2013-14 to 2015-16 including a consideration of possible performance measures.

The circular invites views from higher education institutions and directly-funded further education institutions. Other interested parties will be invited to respond through the website.

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 attaches for consultation the draft HEFCW Corporate Strategy 2013-14 to 2015-16 including a consideration of possible performance measures.
2. The circular invites views from higher education institutions and directly-funded further education institutions. Responses should be sent to Craig Brett craig.brett@hefcw.ac.uk by Friday, 12 October 2012. Other interested parties will be invited to respond through the website.

Background

3. The Minister's response to the report of the Jones Review, *For our future: The 21st Century Higher Education Strategy and Plan for Wales* was published in late November 2009¹. Subsequently HEFCW developed our Corporate Strategy 2010-11 – 2012-13². That document was approved by the Welsh Assembly Government Cabinet and, together with annual operating plans, it forms the action plan for *For our Future*. The strategy includes twelve 'For our Future' measures against which performance is assessed.
4. Guidance to HEFCW on its responsibilities as a Welsh Government Sponsored Body notes in relation to Corporate Plans that:
'Following publication by the Welsh Government of a strategic agenda, HEFCW must produce a corporate plan. In developing its corporate plan, HEFCW must have due regard to the Welsh Government's policy framework as described in the remit letter. The corporate plan must cover the period of the strategic agenda and be updated as and when requested by the sponsor team'.
5. HEFCW's remit letter 2012-13 includes a section on Renewing Corporate Strategy, which gives further guidance:
'the Council's current Corporate Strategy formally ends in 2013. The Government's broader strategies to promote economic renewal and to enhance social justice or mobility, together with the changes already being implemented in relation to the structure, governance and funding of HE in Wales constitute the backdrop against which the Council will need to frame its future strategy. I intend to ask my officials later this year to begin a programme of work to redefine the outcomes we expect from the higher education sector building on the changes now under way. I will look to the Council to work closely with my officials to establish desirable outcomes at national level and in the light of our renewed vision for higher education to develop a new Corporate Strategy for the medium to long term'.

¹ wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/forourfuture/?lang=en

²

www.hefcw.ac.uk/documents/publications/corporate_documents/Corporate%20strategy%202010%20-%20English.pdf

Developing the Corporate Strategy

6. In developing the draft strategy for consultation, Council agreed some overarching elements. Specifically, members:
 - Agreed the development of a new Corporate Strategy to cover the period 2013-14 – 2015-16;
 - Agreed that *For our Future* should continue to be the underpinning strategic framework, together with the Science Strategy, the Programme of Government and more recent Welsh Government steers;
 - Agreed that the five strategic themes continue to be relevant, with some updating of text;
 - Agreed that the two enabling themes continue to be relevant and that an additional enabling theme be added on organisational effectiveness;
 - Agreed a shorter vision and mission;
 - Noted, in response to the Stakeholder Survey, that HEFCW's role as a 'buffer body' should be clearly referenced;
 - Noted in response to the remit that the 'Student Voice' should be explicit.
7. The current Strategy has been revised and developed, taking account of these overarching elements, as well as the Welsh Government remit, Programme of Government, and other guidance. This has included an initial consideration with Welsh Government officials of the work to redefine the outcomes expected from the higher education sector.
8. A draft Corporate Strategy 2013-16 is attached at **Annex A**. It is a high level approach which will be supported by more detailed annual operational plans. The overall outcomes sought from the higher education sector, as set out in *For our Future*, namely social justice and a buoyant economy, will be achieved through actions relating to the five strategic and three enabling themes and objectives.
9. As with the current Strategy, the strategic direction is based on *For our Future* and under each of our strategic themes we will continue to work towards particular *For our Future* expectations during the three year period of this Strategy. It will be developed further in the light of the consultation.
10. In support of the strategic and enabling themes/objectives, a range of performance measures has been considered. A discussion document is attached at **Annex B** which considers the twelve current measures under each of the themes/objectives and seeks views on alternative or additional measures. These measures will be developed into specific targets, taking account of the consultation and Welsh Government advice.
11. Mindful of the requirement in our remit letter 2012-13 to ensure that 'organisational decisions are taken within an appropriate sustainable

development decision-making framework' we will reflect sustainable development principles in developing our Corporate Strategy, taking account of this consultation, and in our annual operating plans.

12. Some questions you may wish to consider in responding to this consultation are:
- Does the strategy remain relevant?
 - Are the strategic and enabling themes/objectives the correct ones and will they assist in achieving the overall *For our Future* outcomes of social justice and a buoyant economy?
 - Are there any gaps?
 - Do the measures, collectively, give a sufficient sense of whether or not the HE system is performing well enough?
 - Are the individual measures the appropriate ones (views are invited on the detailed measures in Annex B)?

Involving our stakeholders

13. In addition to this consultation with HE and FE institutions, we are planning a broad web-based consultation with our stakeholders more generally. This will be launched on our website on 3 September 2012.
14. We are committed to making equality a core issue in developing and implementing our policies. We must assess the impact of our policies on individuals with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion and/or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and set out how we will monitor or address any possible negative impact.
15. We have carried out an equality impact assessment (EIA) screening to help safeguard against discrimination and promote equality. We also considered the impact of policies on the Welsh language, and Welsh language provision within the HE sector in Wales, as well taking account of sustainable development issues. The outcomes of the screening are available on request.
16. To contribute to our EIA process more generally, contact us at equality@hefcw.ac.uk. For more details, see www.hefcw.ac.uk → Working with HE Providers → Equality and Diversity.

Consultation Responses

17. We invite responses from higher education institutions and directly-funded further education institutions through this circular. Responses from other interested parties will be invited from Monday, 3 September to Friday, 12 October 2012.

18. Responses should be sent to Craig Brett, craig.brett@hefcw.ac.uk by Friday, 12 October 2012.
19. Any queries should be addressed to Celia Hunt or Leanne Holborn (tel 029 2068 2224 or 029 2968 2259; e-mail celia.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk or leanne.holborn@hefcw.ac.uk