

**Children and Young People Committee
Further Education and Higher Education (Governance and Information) Bill
FEHE 16 - Higher Education Funding Council for Wales**

Cyngor Cyllido Addysg
Uwch Cymru
Higher Education Funding
Council for Wales

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31 May, 2013

Olga Lewis,
Deputy Clerk
Legislation Office
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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Dear Ms Lewis,

Consultation on the Further and Higher Education (Governance and Information) (Wales) Bill

Thank you for the invitation to respond to the consultation on the Further and Higher Education (Governance and Information) (Wales) Bill.

HEFCW is a Welsh Government Sponsored Body established in 1992 under the Further and Higher Education Act. It assumed responsibility for funding higher education (HE) in Wales on 1 September 1993. It administers funds made available by the Welsh Government in support of the provision of education and the undertaking of research at higher education institutions (HEIs), and the provision of prescribed HE courses at further education institutions (FEIs). It also accredits providers of initial teacher training for school teachers. We work with HEIs to develop and sustain accessible, internationally excellent higher education in Wales, for the benefit of individuals, society and the economy of Wales.

The greater part of the bill relates to further education and the further education sector and, as such, is not a matter on which we would wish to comment. In terms of higher education, and our role, there are two areas on which we would comment. The first of these relates to section 5, paragraph 7 of the bill:

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Dr David Blaney
Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive
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Abolition of power to regulate higher education courses in further education sector

In the Education Act 2002, omit section 139 (power to make regulations prohibiting provision of higher education courses by institutions within further education sector without approval of Welsh Ministers and determining numbers of persons who may take such courses at such institutions).

We are currently responsible for the provision of tuition fee grant in respect of Welsh domiciled full-time undergraduate students. We have arrangements in place to manage the cost to our resources, and therefore to the Welsh public purse, arising from this responsibility. The proposed removal of controls as identified in the paragraph above could increase our financial exposure and we will wish to work with our colleagues in the Welsh government to explore any implications which arise.

The second area which relates to higher education concerns the provisions for the sharing of HMRC data with the Welsh Ministers in order to streamline the processes for Student Finance Wales. We consider that these proposals are likely to achieve their objectives aimed at enhancing the efficiency of the Student Finance Wales arrangements.

I confirm that we are content for this submission to be made available for public scrutiny and that, should the Committee wish, we would be prepared to give oral evidence, although would re-iterate that the bill is only marginally of relevance to our work.

Yours sincerely,



David Blaney
Chief Executive