

National Assembly for Wales
Environment and Sustainability Committee
WFG 22
Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill
Response from Higher Education Wales



Alun Davidson
Committee Clerk
Environment and Sustainability Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

29 August 2014

Dear Mr Davidson,

Re: HEW response to the Consultation on the Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the consultation on the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Bill which we consider to be important to Wales both intellectually and developmentally. At this stage, Higher Education Wales (HEW) would like to reiterate its position as set out in the response given to the Sustainable Development Bill White Paper in Spring 2013.

As highlighted by the Higher Education (HE) and Further Education (FE) Bill (Wales) 2012, the development of statutory provisions directly regulating Welsh universities could lead to serious consequences which both the Welsh Government and the higher education sector would wish to avoid. HEW has expressed these concerns in detail in its response to the Consultation on the Higher Education (Wales) Bill (available online at <http://www.hew.ac.uk/wp/media/HEW-response-to-HE-Wales-Bill-2014-consultation.pdf>). However, we feel it important to emphasise that HEW is broadly supportive of the principle of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill. To truly embed these sustainable objectives, education must play a central role by, for example, tackling these issues through the curriculum at all levels. Universities in Wales are committed to the principles outlined in the consultation, and are already actively engaged in a range of activity. This includes: the pan Wales Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship group, which considers issues relating to policy, practice, learning and teaching, and practical measures, for example, environmental management systems; five of Wales' students' unions participating in the National Union of Students (NUS) Green Impact projects, and others participating in the Student Switch Off campaign; and research conducted by the Higher Education Academy and the NUS suggests that students believed skills in sustainability are highly valued by employers, and want to see sustainable development further embedded within the curriculum.

Higher education is key to offering the thought leadership and research evidence required to drive forward this agenda in Wales.

As the legislation is taken forward, HEW is keen to engage positively with Welsh Government as it works towards embedding sustainable development.

With best wishes,



Amanda Wilkinson
Director