



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Information for Candidates

Higher Education Funding Council for Wales

Appointment of Members



INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

Background

The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (“HEFCW” or “the Council”) is a Welsh Government sponsored body established in May 1992 under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 (“the 1992 Act”).

The Council is responsible for the funding of higher education in Wales and administers funds made available by the Welsh Government to support education, research and associated activities at universities in Wales and teaching by the Open University in Wales. It also provides funds for prescribed higher education courses at further education colleges. HEFCW is also responsible for taking forward aspects of the delivery of student support.

The Council is also responsible for the funding of teacher training for school teachers and the accreditation of providers of initial teacher training in Wales. These responsibilities are covered under the Education (School Teachers’ Qualifications) (Wales) Regulations 2012 and the Education Act 2005.

The Council’s Annual Report 2011-12 and Corporate Plan 2013-14 to 2015-16, together with the Welsh Government’s Remit letter 2014-15 are available on HEFCW’s website www.hefcw.ac.uk. The Welsh Government’s Policy statement on higher education can be found on www.wales.gov.uk. <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/highereducation/policy-statement/?sessionid=32D5EEBD2A950D94B2E96420BC880FB6?lang=en>

Council’s Role

The Council’s vision is to develop and sustain international excellent higher education in Wales, for the benefit of individuals, society and the economy in Wales and more widely.

The Council’s principal task currently is to distribute funds made available by the Welsh Government for the provision of education and the undertaking of research by higher education institutions (HEIs) in Wales. In 2014-15, the budget for HEFCW is approximately £362 million. The grants made to the Council by the Welsh Government have terms and conditions attached to them, as set out in the Remit Letter for 2014-15. However, the Higher Education Bill currently before the National Assembly for Wales will change the Council’s role to a regulatory role, which in turn will mean significant changes in the way in which the Council approaches its duties. This will mean developing alternative approaches to deliver Welsh Government priorities.

The Council provides expert advice and has specific responsibilities for quality assessment, with the Chief Executive fulfilling an Accounting Officer role for the use of funds made available by the Welsh Government.

The student finance and higher education reforms announced in 2010 and the Welsh Government’s policy statement on higher education outlines a new vision for the future of higher education in Wales. The Welsh Government will work in partnership

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with HE providers and HEFCW to deliver the shared ambition for a world-class higher education system in Wales that serves the interests of learners and the nation in the twenty-first century.

The HEFCW Corporate Strategy (2013-14 to 2015-16) sets out the key strategic themes that the Council need to consider over the next three years. The Council's vision for the future is a sustainable, accessible and internationally excellent higher education in Wales.

The Council's mission is to:

- secure an excellent quality higher education student experience and internationally excellent quality research;
- promote the contribution of higher education in Wales, the UK and internationally;
- enable higher education providers to deliver Welsh Government and UK priorities for higher education; and
- inform and shape Government policy to be relevant and appropriate for delivery by higher education providers;

in order to:

- enhance social justice; and
- support a buoyant economy.

Strategic Aims

The Council's strategic aims in discharging its responsibilities are:

- **WIDENING ACCESS** – secure inclusion, progression and success in higher education;
- **STUDENT EXPERIENCE** – secure excellent quality higher education and student experience, enhanced by the student voice;
- **SKILLS , EMPLOYABILITY and ENTERPRISE** – secure graduates who are equipped for life and work, and universities that contribute to an upskilled workforce;
- **INNOVATION and ENGAGEMENT** – secure the application and exploitation of knowledge to deliver social justice and a buoyant economy;
- **RESEARCH** – secure research of internationally excellent quality to deliver a buoyant economy and support social justice.

In addition, the work of the Council will be underpinned by the following key principles:

- **RECONFIGURATION AND COLLABORATION** – secure a reconfigured higher education system with strong providers that, through collaborative partnership working, particularly regionally, offers more accessible higher education opportunities and a stronger HE offering across Wales;
- **GOVERNANCE** – secure continual improvement in the quality of governance and long term sustainability of the higher education system;

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- **ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS** – be a well run and cost effective organisation which will work productively in partnership with the Welsh Government and higher education providers individually and collectively.

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Role Description

Members are expected to:

- work closely with the Chair and the Chief Executive in giving advice and encouragement to the HEFCW in the initiation, development and implementation of policy and in the fulfilment of its statutory responsibilities;
- attend meetings of the Council and are expected to contribute, and be party to key decisions concerning the Council's strategy;
- provide authoritative and timely advice to the Welsh Government on a limited basis between meetings;
- chair or be members of committees of the Council, as and when required;
- uphold, and be widely perceived to uphold, the highest standards of integrity and impartiality;
- build respect for the work of the Council; and
- be able to deal confidently with the Welsh Government and the Welsh Higher Education sector.

Person Specification

In appointing Council Members, the Welsh Ministers are required by section 62(4) of the 1992 Act to:

(a) have regard to the desirability of including persons who appear to have experience of, and to have shown capacity in, the provision of higher education or to have held, and to have shown capacity in, any position carrying responsibility for the provision of higher education and, in appointing such persons, have regard to the desirability of their currently being engaged in the provision of higher education or in carrying responsibility for such provision, and

(b) have regard to the desirability of including persons who appear to have experience of, and to have shown capacity in, industrial, commercial or financial matters or the practice of any profession'.

The Minister will take account of these requirements in making appointments to the Council. You will need to demonstrate that you:

- are aware of the changing higher education sector and the challenges it faces in the UK and international context. ;
- have the ability to challenge current thinking and be an effective and persuasive communicator;
- the ability to act as an effective board member;
- a clear understanding and commitment to equality issues and challenging discriminatory practices when appropriate; and
- have an understanding of the importance of high standards in public life.

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The Welsh Government particularly wishes to include members with extensive experience in one or more of the following:

- experience in research intensive Higher Education Institutions;
- experience in a knowledge based private sector business with experience of graduate recruitment.
- experience of managing/ implementing organisational change.

A successful candidate currently or formerly working for Welsh higher education institutions will not represent the interests of that institution whilst on the Council, but will be expected to take an impartial and holistic view of the challenges facing the whole of the Welsh higher education sector.

In coming to final decisions on membership, the Minister for Education and Skills will be guided by the need to secure a balanced Council which reflects the varied challenges facing higher education in Wales.

Eligibility

Applicants should be persons who conduct themselves at all times in a manner which will maintain public confidence.

Candidates should also note that being a member of HEFCW in receipt of remuneration is a disqualifying post for membership of the House of Commons under the House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975, Schedule 1, Part III and the National Assembly for Wales under the National Assembly for Wales (Disqualification) Order 2010, Part 1 Schedule 1.

Membership

Under the 1992 Act, the Council is led by a Chair and consists of between 8 and 12 members, including the Chair and the Chief Executive.

Chair

The current Chair of HEFCW is Mr David Allen OBE.

Secretariat

The HEFCW Executive provides the Council secretariat.

Terms of Appointment

Appointments will be made by the Minister for Education and Skills on behalf of the Welsh Ministers.

Duration of Appointment

The appointments will be for an initial period of 3 years, renewable subject to satisfactory review, subject to a maximum of 10 years.

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Time Commitment

Members will be expected to be available to work a minimum of 1.5 days per month as HEFCW will meet at least 6 times a year.

Location of Meetings

The Council's meetings are usually held in Cardiff, but there will be occasions when meetings are required throughout Wales.

Remuneration

The post of member will be paid at £5,076 per annum. Members are regarded as holders of an office for tax and National Insurance purposes. Fees payable will, as a result, be chargeable to tax under Schedule E of the Taxes Act and subject to Class 1 National Insurance contributions. These liabilities will be deducted via the HEFCW payroll system and the net fee paid to the office holder. Fees are not subject to VAT.

Travel and other reasonable expenses that might be incurred in carrying out work on the Council can be claimed from the Council within the recognised limits. You may also be eligible to claim reimbursement for costs in relation to child care/care of the elderly/assistant carer, whilst carrying out work on behalf of the Council.

Assistance for Disabled Members

Where appropriate all reasonable adjustments will be made to enable members to effectively carry out their duties.

Induction Training

Successful candidates will be required to attend induction sessions that will be arranged soon after appointment.

Selection Process

This appointment is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments and made in accordance with the Commissioner's Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies. It is the policy of the Welsh Government to promote and integrate equality of opportunity into all aspects of its business including appointments to public bodies. Applications are welcomed and encouraged from all groups and we ensure that no eligible candidate for public office receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, or pregnancy and maternity. We particularly welcome applications from groups currently under-represented in public appointments such as women, disabled people and ethnic minorities. The principles of fair and open competition will apply and appointments will be made on merit.

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Starting date

Members will be appointed from April 2015.

Further Information and Queries

For further information on the application process and to apply, please visit www.wales.gov.uk/publicappointments or for queries contact the HR Helpdesk on 029 2082 5454 / hr-helpdesk@wales.gsi.gov.uk.

For further information about HEFCW you may wish to visit HEFCW's website: www.hefcw.ac.uk , or contact the Council on 029 2068 2280.

Application

Applications should be made by completing the on-line form. The Applicants Guidance Notes provide detailed guidance on completing the application and monitoring forms.

We hope you will find the on-line process simple to follow but we recognise that not everyone will be able to use it because of accessibility issues. We would strongly encourage you to make your application on-line but if you are unable to do so please contact the HR Helpdesk on 029 2082 5454 who will be able to provide a copy of the application pack in an alternative format.

Important Information about using the on-line application system

When using the on-line application system you should read the "Help and Instructions" which appears as an option on the first page of the application form after the log-in page. The instructions make the important point that you should use the "Save and Proceed" button at the bottom of the page in order to save any information you have inputted.

This is particularly important when you are completing the section on "Evidence of Suitability for Appointment". It is a good idea to click "Save and Proceed" after completing each of the separate questions in this section to ensure no information is lost. You can navigate back to the "Evidence of Suitability for Appointment" section after clicking "Save and Proceed" by using the menu on the left hand side of the page.

A note of caution – if you click on the "Reset Page" button you will lose all the information you have inputted since you last clicked "Save and Proceed".

Closing Date

The closing date for applications is **12 December 2014**. Application forms received after this date will not be considered. It is expected to hold interviews in the week beginning 16 February 2015.