

Corporate Strategy

2010-11 - 2012-13



HEFCW Corporate Strategy 2010-11 – 2012-13

Contents

Introduction	1
Influencing Factors	3
Our Vision	6
Our Mission	7
Our strategic framework	8
Key Strategic Themes	9
Widening Access.....	9
Student Experience	12
Skills.....	15
Knowledge Transfer	18
Research	20
Enabling Themes	22
Reconfiguration and Collaboration	22
Governance.....	24
HEFCW as an organisation.....	26
Measures and Targets	27

Introduction

*For our Future*¹, the Welsh Assembly Government's strategy for higher education, published in December 2009, sets a clear framework for the development of higher education in Wales within which we will work in delivering this Corporate Strategy. Our primary aim within the planning horizon will be to work with higher education providers in Wales to deliver *For our Future* and the structure of our Corporate Strategy is based on its key themes.

As is made clear in *For our Future*, higher education already plays a key role in the social and economic well being of Wales and delivers benefits more widely in the UK and beyond. But *For our Future* emphasises that there is much more to be done. We agree, and add that the pressure to improve the performance of higher education is heightened by the economic context within which publicly funded education will find itself for the next several years. Against this background, strengthening its contribution to social justice and to supporting a buoyant economy will be a significant challenge for higher education in Wales not least because, to meet fully the needs of Wales, higher education in Wales will have to balance its responsiveness to local demands with a need to remain competitive on an international stage.

We welcome the fact that we have been tasked by the Welsh Assembly Government to deliver *For our Future*. We will engage with providers of higher education, and a range of other stakeholders, to ensure that the twin priorities of social justice and supporting a buoyant economy are at the core of government funded higher education in Wales. We will work to develop a higher education system in Wales where all who are able may benefit from higher education, where the student learning experience is of high quality and where graduates are equipped for the world of work and their roles as citizens. The contribution of higher education to Welsh culture will be significantly enhanced through the major development of Welsh medium education which will result from the establishment of the Coleg Ffederal. We

¹ wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/policy_strategy_and_planning/feandhe/forourfuture/?lang=en

aim to develop a higher education system which delivers more productive relationships between higher education providers and organisations in public and private sectors and in local communities. We also intend to deliver improved research performance which both underpins world class excellence and more effectively supports the knowledge economy alongside cultural and social renewal. Through this strategy, we aim to position higher education to make a significant contribution to the Assembly Government's emerging Economic Renewal Programme, particularly in respect of the generation and exchange of knowledge and in the development of higher level skills in the Welsh workforce.

This document represents our *For our Future* Action Plan which, together with our annual operating plans over the period, will deliver the Assembly Government's strategy, as measured by the outcome targets included in the document and summarised in Annex A. Our aim is to achieve a set of high level indicators which, although not comprehensive, will together give an overall sense of the delivery of *For our Future*. In addition, to these system-level measures, we will monitor a range of measures at institutional level which will ensure that we pick up issues of concern about delivery at an early point.

It will not be possible to achieve what is needed unless we change how higher education is run and delivered. We set out in this strategy our view of what the higher education system in Wales needs to achieve in the coming years, what specific targets will enable progress to be monitored, and what the conditions of success (including structural considerations) are likely to be. We will progressively transfer funding into a new Strategic Implementation Fund that will focus on delivery of our core objectives. We will establish a regional dimension to the delivery of teaching and other elements and, where appropriate, establish budgets to support these developments. The role of staff in the higher education sector is crucial and needs to be developed. The quality of governance and management also needs continual development and improvement in the face of the changing environment.

This new *system* approach to Welsh higher education is a major challenge for the sector and for us. In developing this new strategy, we have reviewed the progress

made against our previous strategy. We recognise elements which have been achieved successfully and others where progress has not been so clear. In particular, broad structural change, and embedding a deep culture of collaboration, with some notable exceptions, remains work in progress. Rising to this challenge, while sustaining provision in a difficult financial context, will not be easy for providers. Securing the necessary progress and change, while successfully delivering existing commitments, will also be a serious challenge for providers and HEFCW. In addressing these challenges, we are committed to ensuring that the higher education system in Wales is excellent, sustainable, and meets the needs of Wales at the beginning of the 21st century. Further information about the size and nature of the higher education system in Wales can be found in the *About HE in Wales* section of our website, www.hefcw.ac.uk .

Addressing these challenges requires governors and senior management to position their institutions to deliver for Wales for the long term, and to embrace and embed a culture of collaboration including, where appropriate, mergers. This is not a time for 'business as usual'.

Influencing Factors

For our Future defines the twin priorities for higher education in Wales as enhancing social justice and supporting a buoyant economy. We fully support these priorities. It is critical, though, to recognise, and work with, their interdependence. To get the best contribution from higher education to Welsh Assembly Government priorities, we need a coherent and mutually reinforcing approach.

In this strategy, we reflect the complex ways in which higher education activities contribute variously to both priorities. Research, for example, contributes directly to the development of a buoyant economy through knowledge exploitation. A strong economy, though, is a pre-requisite to the provision of resources through which the more endemic sources of social inequality can be tackled. Higher level learning can improve the skills levels in society, thereby enhancing economic productivity, but is also a key factor in equipping people to play a full part as citizens. In this way it

contributes to improvements in the quality of life including through the provision of medical and health training.

In addressing the twin priorities of social justice and a buoyant economy we identify five key strategic themes, each of which contributes to both. We also identify two enabling themes on which clear, focused action is required to secure optimum progress on the five strategic themes. In each of these we recognise the need to enable international excellence in higher education in Wales.

The five key themes are: Widening Access, Student Experience, Skills, Knowledge Transfer and Research. Progress on each will require further work in respect of Reconfiguration and Collaboration and Governance.

The economic context within which this strategy will be delivered will be challenging. Irrespective of future decisions by the Welsh Assembly Government over higher education budgets, including possible controls on student numbers, pressures in other parts of the public and private sectors are likely to reduce the resources available to the sector over the lifetime of this strategy. Demographic change will also have significant consequences. Under these circumstances, we need to focus our resources more sharply on Welsh Assembly Government priorities: more strategic use of core funding will be required, through our new Strategic Implementation Fund. Institutions will have to become even more effective in securing additional income streams, including from overseas. In order to deliver for the needs of Wales, they will need to be successful in increasingly tough international competition for students, for staff and for other funding, particularly research contracts. We recognise too the interdependence between the ability to win these additional income streams and the use made of our core funding.

In order for the sector to demonstrate excellence and be competitive on the international stage, it will remain important for higher education institutions (HEIs) to continue to take advantage of international opportunities and both illustrate what they can contribute to these wider agendas and importantly, apply the lessons learned back in Wales.

This strategy has been informed by consideration of how far the aims of our previous strategy have been met. A full analysis of progress will be placed on our website. As might be expected from such an extensive range of targets, progress has been mixed. We need to note, too, that data constraints mean that we are assessing progress towards the *Reaching Higher* targets for 2010 some years before any 2010 data become available. Generally, however, the sector has managed to remain financially secure, and there have been few governance concerns over the period. Widening access performance has been good, as has the quality of the student experience, although student retention merits improvement. Whilst some issues remain, research performance in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) has broadly held up well in comparison with the rest of the UK. The number of students studying through the medium of Welsh has increased, as has recruitment of international students. Direct economic contribution has also been good relative to UK norms.

But there is no room for complacency. We need further improvement across all these areas in order to deliver *For our Future*. This need is clearest in respect of research, where Wales does not secure its proportional share of research council income and has too many research teams that lack scale and scope. Too many of our universities are small by UK standards, raising challenges over competitiveness and sustainability².

Over the period of this Strategy we will introduce and implement progressively our Strategic Implementation Fund. This will underpin our approach to the strategic use of core funding, including the regional dimension.

Against the policy context of *For our Future* and the current economic and demographic situation, and informed by an analysis of progress over recent years, we set out below our high level strategy for HEFCW, and for higher education, for

² www.wao.gov.uk/assets/englishdocuments/Collaboration_between_HE_institutions_Eng.pdf

the medium term. This strategy will be supported by more detailed annual operating plans.

Our Vision

We wish to develop and sustain internationally excellent higher education in Wales, for the benefit of individuals, society and the economy, in Wales and more widely.

We believe that there are too many higher education institutions in Wales for optimal effectiveness under contemporary conditions. If we were designing a higher education system for Wales today, it would be unlikely to match the present picture. Most of our HE institutions are below the UK median in income, and this affects their capacity to take risks, withstand shocks, and remain innovative into the longer term.

We also wish to see closer working between providers, with a culture of collaboration deeply embedded across the sector and with other partners, to build critical mass, share services and improve income generation.

A number of responses to the consultation on the draft strategy suggested that it needed to be more radical in terms of investing in strength and building a substantially smaller number of strong international players in higher education. We agree with those responses.

Over the period of this Strategy, we want to see:

- Development of a system of higher education in Wales, with universities and further education colleges working together in an integrated fashion;
- More coherently organised provision in each region of Wales, for the benefit of local learners and employers;
- Research performance at international standards of excellence, organised within and between institutions in ways that are sustainable, and strongly linked to users and other beneficiaries;
- Substantially fewer institutions;

- A clear understanding of how each institution contributes to the system as a whole, individually and through collaboration, regionally, nationally and internationally;
- All institutions being financially sustainable into the medium term future.

Our Mission

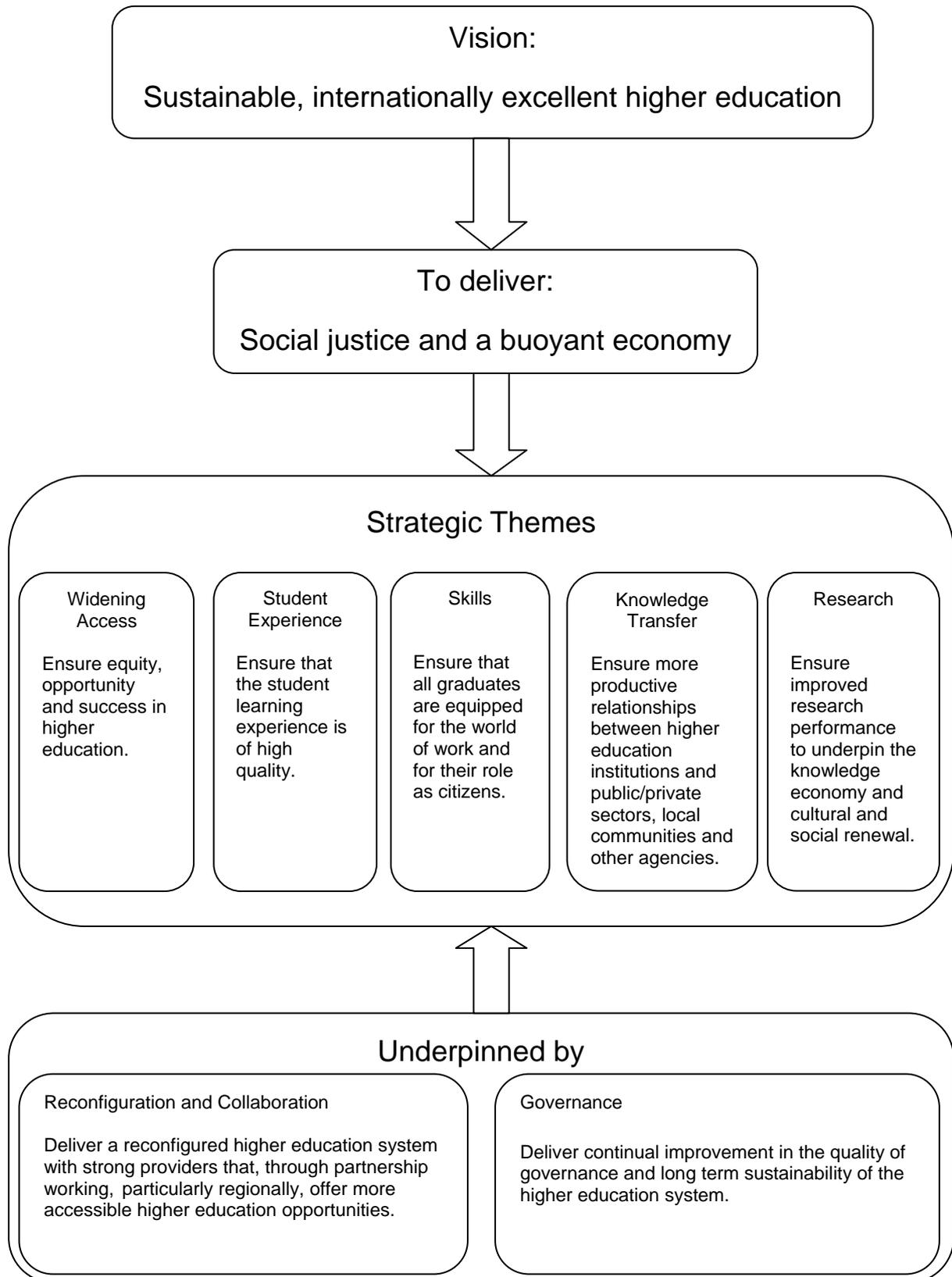
We strategically use resources from the Welsh Assembly Government and others to:

- *secure higher education learning and research of the highest quality;*
- *make the most of the contribution of higher education to the culture, society and economy of Wales;*
- *Ensure high quality, accredited teacher training across Wales.*

In order to

- *Enhance social justice;*
- *Support a buoyant economy*

Our strategic framework



Key Strategic Themes

Widening Access

Ensure equity, opportunity and success in higher education.

Social justice is a key Welsh Assembly Government priority. Higher education has an important contribution to make to this aim in terms of widening access. The Welsh sector continues to perform well against UK performance indicators in this area but we want to see a continuing drive for further improvement, more deeply embedded within the Assembly Government's wider framework for lifelong learning, including the transformation agenda. During the period of this strategy we will refocus our approach to widening access, including the Reaching Wider Initiative. We will drive strategic approaches to widening access for all ages through revised funding arrangements, including through premium payments. We will encourage higher education providers to improve the evidence base, including data collection, to inform their strategies and to demonstrate impact and success. There will be a particular emphasis on part-time (including innovative approaches to flexible and work-based) provision, fair access, including access to the professions, and retention – with an emphasis on helping students to complete their learning objectives successfully. We will also align our focus on under-represented communities with the Welsh Assembly Government's Communities First programme, to address inconsistencies in access and opportunity for those from areas of multiple deprivation in Wales.

A fundamental new element in this corporate strategy is the requirement for a regional dimension to the planning and delivery of higher education. This approach will enhance progression to, and through, higher education, by the end of the strategy period. It will require strong partnership working, including with Further Education and other post-16 providers. We will work with partners to support the Universities Heads of the Valleys Institute and other existing regional approaches to widening access. We will review the structures of our Reaching Wider partnerships to further align with our regional approach. We will work with Welsh Assembly

Government officials to rationalise student bursary arrangements, including through fee plan arrangements.

In the area of Widening Access we will work particularly towards the following *For our Future* expectations:³

- Participation is maximised through different and more flexible ways to experience higher education, including through part time study
- Inconsistencies in access and opportunity are addressed
- Refocus our approach to widening access to higher education.

Outcomes:

To measure improved access and progression for people in locations where such opportunities are low, including the Heads of the Valleys:

1. **A 10% rise in the proportion of all Welsh domiciled students studying higher education courses at higher education institutions and further education institutions in Wales who are domiciled in the Welsh Communities First Areas from 15.6% in 2008/09 to 17.2% in 2012/13.**

To measure the increase in the number of students who successfully complete their learning objectives:

2. **A 2.7%% rise in the module completion rate for undergraduate enrolments in Welsh higher education institutions from 87.6% in 2008/09 to 90% in 2012/13.**

³ All the *For our Future* expectations listed under each Strategic Theme are taken directly from the expectations given in bold in *For our Future* or, in three cases, quoting from the text.

We will also monitor sector performance against other widening access indicators, including the recruitment of disabled students; those from ethnic minorities; age profile; care leavers; socio economic class; male participation; and other relevant UK Performance Indicators.

Student Experience

Ensure that the student learning experience is of high quality.

Welsh higher education already delivers an excellent student experience. National Student Survey results for Wales indicate high levels of satisfaction⁴. Similarly high levels of satisfaction have been found in surveys of the international student experience in Wales. These results demonstrate the priority placed in Wales on the quality of the student experience. They also reflect close working with students as partners in their learning experience *For our Future* puts a particular emphasis on the student voice. We will continue our partnership working with the National Union of Students Wales, and others, through the Wales Initiative for Student Engagement (WISE) and supporting the 'Have Your Say' campaign. Through our approach to quality enhancement, we will encourage institutions to continuously enhance the student experience for the diverse student population, including through the National Student Survey and our support for sector agencies which are able to provide UK wide approaches to working with the Welsh higher education system. To achieve this, we will implement our recently published mechanisms for supporting the enhancement of learning opportunities⁵. We will also evaluate our Technology-Enhanced Learning strategy⁶ to reflect new and innovative forms of learning and we will continue to support Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship through sector networks.

During the period of the strategy we will work to establish the Coleg Ffederal to extend the range of Welsh medium provision. We will support the Welsh Assembly Government's international strategy and ensure that higher education institutions

⁴ unistats.direct.gov.uk/

⁵

www.hefcw.ac.uk/documents/publications/circulars/circulars_2010/W10%2002HE%20Mechanisms%20for%20Supporting%20the%20Enhancement%20of%20Learning%20Opportunities.pdf

⁶ www.hefcw.ac.uk/documents/publications/circulars/circulars_2008/W08%2012HE%20circ.pdf

contribute effectively to the Bologna process and linked European developments, including through Wales Higher Education Brussels. We will also work with providers to encourage innovation in programme design and modular approaches to improve the flexibility of provision, building on the existing advantages of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW) and our credit-based funding method. We will continue to meet our statutory responsibilities for initial teacher training.

In terms of the Student Experience, we will work particularly towards the following *For our Future* expectations:

- Continuing efforts are made to deliver an excellent student experience
- Enable study through the medium of Welsh to take place in a wider range of programmes and locations in Wales
- Ensure that the student voice strengthens higher education.

Outcomes:

To measure 'continuing efforts are made to deliver an excellent student experience' and ensuring that 'the student voice strengthens higher education':

- 3. The three year rolling average score for Wales in the National Student Survey 'overall satisfaction' question will be equal to, or greater than the comparative score for the UK.**

To measure 'study through the medium of Welsh to take place in a wider range of programmes and locations in Wales':

- 4. The number of Welsh domiciled students at Welsh higher education institutions and further education institutions undertaking some element of their course through the medium of Welsh will rise from 4,667 in 2008/09 to 5600 in 2012/13.**

To measure the internationalisation of higher education in Wales, by continuing to see Wales outperform UK-wide movement in the recruitment of overseas students:

5. **The percentage growth in the number of overseas students attending higher education courses in Welsh higher education institutions will be equal to, or greater than, the comparable figure for UK higher education institutions (excluding London and the South East).**

We will also monitor institutional performance in other ways, including through the National Student Survey results; and Quality Assurance Agency Institutional Review outcomes.

Skills

Ensure that all graduates are equipped for the world of work and for their role as citizens.

The report of the *Review of Higher Education in Wales* (the Jones review), published in 2009, noted that some areas of Wales have ‘significantly lower than average skill levels and fewer local opportunities to access higher education.’ During the period of this strategy we want to see an increase in skills levels across Wales at CQFW level 4 and above and closer working between higher education providers and employers to meet business higher level skills needs including for those already in the workforce. This will include support for the continued development of provision to promote entrepreneurial skills, in partnership with the Welsh Assembly Government’s Department of Economy and Transport.

To those ends, we will support the delivery of *Skills that Work for Wales* working with the sector, Sector Skills Councils and employers. Our flagship employability initiative, Graduate Opportunities Wales (GO Wales), will continue to work with higher education institutions to offer graduate placement opportunities and to roll-out our new Graduate Academy and Freelancer programmes. We will also encourage increased work-based learning at higher education level and further opportunities for work placement, alongside more established careers advice and guidance. This will include promoting greater diversity and flexibility in programme design and delivery to match need and demand, including through increased use of CQFW and the accreditation of prior experiential learning. We will also place more emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) provision, building upon our partnership with HEFCE in its STEM Programme. Within the Assembly Government’s *Making Languages Count* strategy, we will build upon encouraging early progress with the promotion of Modern Foreign Languages.

A key vehicle for taking forward our objectives will be the Foundation Degree. We have been asked by the Welsh Assembly Government to develop a new Foundation Degree policy, and we will take that forward in alignment with the sector’s new European funded foundation degree provision and related developments in the

Universities Heads of the Valleys Institute, including in higher education institutions and further education colleges. Foundation degrees will be a key element in our regional approach.

In the area of Skills, we will work particularly towards the following *For our Future* expectations:

- A greater proportion of the population achieves higher level skills
- Develop greater diversity and flexibility in programme design, duration and delivery to match need and demand
- Improved part-time learning opportunities are offered
- Employability is a key outcome of the higher education experience
- Strengthen the contribution of higher education to workforce development.

Outcomes:

To measure 'employability is a key outcome of the HE experience':

- 6. The proportion of leavers obtaining first degrees from full-time courses who were employed, studying or both six months after leaving, will be equal to, or greater than the UK proportion by 2012/13.**

To measure the extent to which more people in Wales, including in the Heads of the Valleys, experience higher education and are 'equipped with higher level skills':

- 7. The absolute participation rate within Welsh higher education providers of students in the five Universities of the Heads of the Valleys Institute unitary authorities will rise by 8% to the current national average by 2012/13 (from 2.5% to 2.7%).**

To measure the extent to which 'improved part-time learning opportunities are offered':

- 8. The total number of part-time students studying higher education courses in higher education institutions and further education institutions in Wales will rise from 54,714 in 2008/09 to 59,000 in 2012/13.**

We will also monitor the achievement of qualifications (credit) at level 4 and above; the proportion of the workforce with qualifications at level 4 and above; STEM and modern foreign language (MFL) recruitment; Destinations of leavers from higher education (DLHE); Destinations of leavers from higher education longitudinal survey; and relevant UK Performance Indicators.

Knowledge Transfer

Ensure more productive relationships between higher education institutions and public/private sectors, local communities and other agencies.

Higher education institutions already play a key role in supporting economic development in Wales. However, more needs to be done to meet the needs of employers and to ensure that the knowledge developed in higher education can be made accessible for development in the business community.

We will drive forward our work with the sector, alongside activity led by the Welsh Assembly Government, to secure closer working with business and increased commercialisation of research. We will support the development of a more effective portal for higher education services targeted at employers. We will also work with higher education providers on a regional basis to develop their links with employers, and their cultural and civic roles.

In the area of Knowledge Transfer we will work particularly towards the following *For our Future* expectations:

- The economy is supported by strengthened and systematic knowledge exploitation
- The cultural and civic role of higher education is enhanced.

Outcomes:

To evidence 'knowledge transfer and exploitation of intellectual property in ways which can impact on Welsh economic transformation'

- 9. The number of spin-off companies still active which have survived at least three years will increase by 10% from 252 in 2008/09 to 277 in 2012/13.**

We will also monitor a basket of indicators from the Higher Education Business and Community Interactions Survey (HEBCIS), including measures of collaborative research; contract research; consultancy; facilities and equipment related services by non HEIs; courses for business and the community (CE and CPD); regeneration and development programmes; Intellectual Property related income; licences and related income; spin-off activity and income; and GO Wales monitoring outcomes.

Research

Ensure improved research performance to underpin the knowledge economy and cultural and social renewal.

Our key aim during the plan period, through strengthening the quality and quantity of the research base, will be to secure sustainable excellent research in higher education in Wales. We will direct funding accordingly. This will mean a consolidation of funding and support around strong, research active universities, and support for research collaborations which will increase access to Research Council and other sources of external funding, and with a particular emphasis upon the four Assembly Government priority areas of Digital economy; Low carbon economy (including climate change mitigation/adaptation issues); Health and biosciences; Advanced engineering and manufacturing.

We will increase strategic support for postgraduate research and aim to increase the size of the postgraduate community in Wales, recognising the importance of postgraduates to the future of the Welsh economy. We will expect higher education institutions to take an increasingly strategic approach to their management of research, not least in preparation for the introduction of the Research Excellence Framework, and to developing research agendas jointly with potential users.

In all this activity, we will also recognise the role of research in a wide range of fields in supporting social justice and cultural and social renewal.

In terms of research, we will work towards the following *For our Future* expectations:

- Research activity thrives and is effective
- Increase the impact of university research, through targeting support on areas of strength and national priority, and promoting collaboration.

Outcomes:

To encourage more effective research through focussing investment on areas of strength:

- 10. The annual percentage growth in income from Research Councils, from its 2008/09 base of 4.8% of the UK total, will be equal to, or greater than, the comparable figure for UK higher education institutions (excluding the 'golden triangle' of Oxford, Cambridge and London).**

We will also monitor Postgraduate Research Student numbers; research income from sources other than Research Councils; and the amount of public research funding gained as a proportion of HEFCW quality research (QR) funding allocated against UK comparators.

Enabling Themes

Reconfiguration and Collaboration

Deliver a reconfigured higher education system with strong providers that, through partnership working, particularly regionally, offers more accessible higher education opportunities.

For our Future expects a step change in performance of higher education in Wales. This includes the development of a significant regional dimension to delivery. We will seek regional strategies from higher education providers, working with local education providers and employers, to ensure that local and regional needs and priorities are better identified and met.

In this document we have said what we believe the higher education system in Wales needs to achieve in the coming years, what specific targets will enable progress to be monitored, and what the conditions of success are likely to be.

- Embedding a culture of collaboration, working together more productively, and eradicating unnecessary competition will be essential to ensuring that the higher education system remains sustainable in a strongly competitive UK and international context.
- Overall we think that too many of our universities are too small by UK standards, and that we have too many institutions, raising challenges over competitiveness and sustainability. Collaboration alone is unlikely to be a sufficient response.
- We will review our funding methodologies to ensure that they support the delivery of *For our Future* priorities, including the introduction of the Strategic Implementation Fund and a new approach to capital funding.

In terms of Reconfiguration and Collaboration we will work particularly towards the following *For our Future* expectations:

- A regional dimension to planning and delivery of higher education
- Increased collaboration among higher education providers and between higher education and other providers .

Outcomes:

Purpose: To encourage further reconfiguration of the higher education sector including ‘institutional mergers and collaborations, where this will underpin strength, capacity, and availability of high quality higher education’.

- 11. At least 75% of the Welsh higher education institutions will have an annual income in excess of the UK median (36% in 2008/09), with no institution to be in the lower quartile by 2012/13 (4 in 2008/09).**

Governance

Deliver continual improvement in the quality of governance and long term sustainability of the higher education system.

We recognise the essential role of governors in setting the strategic direction of autonomous institutions and in holding executive teams accountable for the performance of institutions. This requires governing bodies to support executive teams in moving beyond the constraints of current, essentially historical, sector structures and practices and adopting a holistic view of how the higher education system can best meet the needs of Wales, as well as taking account of UK and international factors which impact on their operation.

We will continue to take forward our new strategic engagement process with higher education institutions, one aim of which is to strengthen governance across the sector. In doing so, we will continue to encourage development in line with *One Wales: One Planet*, the Welsh Assembly Government's Sustainable Development Scheme. We will fund collaborative work to support institutions in their efforts to improve leadership and management, gaining from UK-wide approaches. During the period of the strategy, we will contribute to, and build from, the results of the review of governance in higher education announced by the Minister in March 2010, with a view to building on existing good practice, identifying current and future developmental needs and promoting or encouraging new programmes of development and frameworks of support.

In the area of Governance we are working particularly towards the following *For our Future* expectations:

- Promote the role of higher education providers as Corporate Citizens
- Review institutional governance in higher education.

Outcomes:

To encourage improving effectiveness of governing bodies in guiding the strategic direction of their institution.

12. No higher education institution to be classified as 'high risk' under HEFCW institutional risk review processes.

We will also monitor sustainability trigger metrics; Estate Management Statistics; and carbon management

HEFCW as an organisation

HEFCW is an Assembly Government Sponsored Body with statutory responsibilities to administer funds made available by the Welsh Assembly Government to support education and research by higher education institutions in Wales, and certain higher education courses at further education colleges. We also accredit providers of initial teacher training for school teachers and commission research to improve the standards of teachers and teacher training.

We also have statutory responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity, including performance in the higher education sector, freedom of information and data protection.

We can deliver our policy objectives and provide an effective service to the Welsh Assembly Government, the higher education system and other stakeholders only if we provide an environment in which our staff can realise their full potential.

We rely on four main mechanisms for assessing the degree to which we have met our objectives:

- Welsh Assembly Government performance reviews and monitoring;
- Investors in People
- Stakeholder Surveys
- Staff Surveys.

During the period of this strategy we will conduct a further stakeholder survey, building on the outcomes of the first survey we conducted in 2007-08 and we will respond to the Welsh Assembly Governance Review of HEFCW, which was conducted in 2009-10.

Measures and Targets

1. A 10% rise in the proportion of all Welsh domiciled students studying higher education courses at higher education institutions and further education institutions in Wales who are domiciled in the Welsh Communities First Areas from 15.6% in 2008/09 to 17.2% in 2012/13.
2. A 2.7% increase in the module completion rate for undergraduate enrolments in Welsh higher education from 87.6% in 2008/09 to 90% in 2012/13.
3. The three year rolling average score for Wales in the National Student Survey 'overall satisfaction' question will be equal to, or greater than, the comparative score for the UK.
4. The number of Welsh domiciled students at Welsh higher education institutions and further education institutions undertaking some element of their course through the medium of Welsh will rise from 4,667 in 2008/09 to 5600 in 2012/13.
5. The percentage growth in the number of overseas students attending higher education courses in Welsh higher education institutions will be equal to, or greater than, the comparable figure for UK higher education institutions (excluding London and the South East).
6. The proportion of leavers obtaining first degrees from full-time courses who were employed, studying or both six months after leaving will be equal to, or greater than, the UK proportion by 2012/13.

7. The absolute participation rate within Welsh higher education providers of students from the five Universities of the Heads of the Valleys Institute unitary authorities will rise by 8% to the current national average by 2012/13 (2.5% to 2.7%).
8. The total number of part-time students studying higher education courses in higher education institutions and further education institutions in Wales will rise from 54,714 in 2008/09 to 59,000 in 2012/13.
9. The number of spin-off companies still active which have survived at least three years will increase by 10% from 252 in 2008/09 to 277 in 2012/13.
10. The annual percentage growth in income from Research Councils, from its 2008/09 base of 4.8% of the UK total, will be equal to, or greater than, the comparable figure for UK higher education institutions (excluding the 'golden triangle' of Oxford, Cambridge and London).
11. At least 75% of the Welsh higher education institutions will have an annual income in excess of the UK median (36% in 2008/09), with no institution to be in the lower quartile by 2012/13 (4 in 2008/09).
12. No higher education institution to be classified as 'high risk' in accordance with HEFCW institutional risk review processes.