

# Cylchlythyr | Circular

## Consultation on HEFCW's role in Educational Oversight

**Date:** 10 December 2020  
**Reference:** W20/41HE  
**To:** Heads of regulated higher education providers in Wales  
Heads of institutions which have been specifically designated by HEFCW for student support  
**Response by:** 29 January 2021  
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This circular provides a consultation on HEFCW's role as Educational Oversight body for regulated higher education providers in Wales and alternative providers that have courses specifically designated for student support in Wales. Responses are requested by **29 January 2021**.

If you require this document in an alternative accessible format, please email [info@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:info@hefcw.ac.uk).



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## Introduction

1. This circular provides a consultation on HEFCW's role as Educational Oversight body for regulated higher education providers in Wales and alternative providers that have courses specifically designated for student support in Wales. Responses are requested by **29 January 2021**.

## Background

2. The Educational Oversight body is the body that has responsibility for undertaking assessments to confirm that all of the sites of an education provider wishing to be a sponsor meet acceptable educational quality standards.
3. Sponsors must maintain their Educational Oversight for all their sites throughout the duration of their Tier 4 licence. The sponsor must notify its Educational Oversight body of its plans to begin teaching at a new site, take any steps required by the body to maintain its Educational Oversight, and provide evidence of this if required by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).
4. The sponsor must ensure that any teaching partner, exceptional arrangement or site it wishes to add to its Tier 4 licence meets the Educational Oversight requirements set out in this guidance.
5. HEFCW has had previous confirmation from the Home Office that the [Quality Assessment Framework for Wales](#) meets the Home Office requirements for educational oversight. This means that regulated institutions in Wales meet the quality requirements for Tier 4 status.
6. Following advice from HEFCW's Quality Assurance Committee, in 2019 HEFCW requested to be named the Educational Oversight body for both regulated and specifically designated providers in Wales applying for a Tier 4 licence, confirming that we would liaise with the QAA as appropriate.
7. We proposed that the QAA should remain the Educational Oversight body for institutions which are neither regulated by HEFCW nor specifically designated in Wales.

## HEFCW's role in Educational Oversight

8. The [revised Home Office Guidance on applying for a Tier 4 licence](#) was published in October 2019.
9. The Home Office guidance states that the Educational Oversight body will carry out a review/ inspection of bodies. In Wales this is addressed through the requirement on the Quality Assessment Framework for institutions to commission an external quality assurance review from a body on the

European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education at least every six years. Universities in Wales have opted to obtain this from the QAA. Regulated institutions are required to provide us with a range of information, including evidence of an external quality assurance review, in order to enable us to approve (or otherwise) their Fee and Access Plan. Specifically designated institutions are also required to undertake a QAA review in order to demonstrate that they meet the appropriate quality requirements.

10. HEFCW's Quality Assessment Committee advised that it would be useful for HEFCW to publish guidance on our role in Educational Oversight to clarify these issues, together with the means by which we have oversight of specifically designated provision.
11. The draft procedures are provided at **Annex A**.

## Questions

12. We would welcome views on the following:

Q1	Do the procedures fully capture HEFCW's role in relation to Educational Oversight? If not, please provide details.
Q2	Are there any gaps in the draft procedures? If so, please provide details.
Q3	Is further clarity needed on any aspect of the procedures? If so, please provide details.
Q4	Will the procedures have any effect (either positive or adverse), on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and/or treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language. If so, how could the procedures be amended to ensure positive effects (or increased positive effects) on these areas?
Q5	Do these proposals have any positive or negative impacts or unintended consequences in terms of equality and diversity and the Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act's seven wellbeing goals, Sustainable Development Principle and five ways of working?
Q6	What positive or adverse effects will these proposals have on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and</li><li>• treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?</li></ul>
Q7	Could these proposals be changed to increase positive effects, or decrease adverse effects on:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and</li><li>• treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?</li></ul> |
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## Responses

13. Please send responses to Dr Cliona O'Neill (tel 029 2085 9731; email [cliona.oneill@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:cliona.oneill@hefcw.ac.uk)) by 29 January 2021.

## Assessing the impact of our policies

14. We have carried out an impact assessment to help safeguard against discrimination and promote equality, taking account of our duties under the Equality Act (2010) and the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) (2011). We have also considered the impact of policies on the Welsh language, and Welsh language provision within the HE sector in Wales and potential impacts towards the goals set out in the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 including our Well-Being Objectives. Our initial assessment has shown that there would likely be no negative impacts as a result of this policy implementation. Contact [equality@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:equality@hefcw.ac.uk) for more information about our impact assessments.