

Cylchlythyr | Circular

Reaching Wider Programme Guidance

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To: Reaching Wider Partnerships
Regulated institutions in Wales
Other interested parties
Response by: 12 October 2018
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This circular provides information on the Reaching Wider Programme and invites Reaching Wider strategies from Partnerships and Reaching Wider plans from regulated institutions.

If you require this document in an alternative accessible format, please email info@hefcw.ac.uk.



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Introduction

1. This circular provides information on the Reaching Wider (RW) Programme and invites Reaching Wider strategies from Partnerships and Reaching Wider plans from regulated institutions.
2. This circular will be of interest to Reaching Wider Partnerships and their members, including the Open University in Wales, regulated institutions, planners and Heads of Widening Access, as well as other widening access-related partners and potential partners.
3. This guidance has been informed by a RW Programme Review and a consultation seminar¹. From 2018/19 the RW Programme has a new funding structure, with funding provided jointly from HEFCW and regulated institutions. More information about the RW Programme Review and funding structures is provided in **Annex A** and Section One: Reaching Wider Programme funding.
4. Information is provided in three sections on: HEFCW's Reaching Wider Programme, including the policy context and the 2017/18 RW review outcomes; guidance to Reaching Wider Partnerships on submitting RW strategies; and guidance to regulated institutions on submitting plans.
5. We recognise that we are publishing RW Programme guidance before we begin, with Welsh Government officials, to develop a widening access Programme of Action and before having completed our second, more detailed consultation on national measures for higher education. We will take account of the impact of these and other emerging policy developments to ensure that the Reaching Wider Programme remains fit for purpose in the long-term and it makes an effective contribution to widening access policy.

SECTION ONE

The Reaching Wider Programme

The Reaching Wider Programme background

6. Widening access to higher education is a long-term agenda requiring sustained commitment and investment to tackle barriers to entry, progression and success in HE. HEFCW established the Reaching Wider Programme in 2002/03 as a Wales-wide, collaborative, long-term, widening access programme to break down the barriers and widen access to higher education and higher-level skills for people of all-ages from priority groups.
7. From the RW Programme's inception, HEFCW has recognised the challenges and cost of measuring the RW outcomes and impact, particularly where Partnerships engage with younger learners, the majority of whom are some

¹ The RW consultation seminar presentation is available on our website.

years from HE entry points. We are aware that RW annual sample data sets are unavoidably small, targeting and data collection has changed slightly over the Programme period, there are no control groups, and the causality of linking HE progression from a specific RW intervention is almost impossible to prove.

8. We have previously used a widening access-related Corporate Strategy measure as an indication of the RW Programme's contribution to widening access. The most recent measure ([Corporate Strategy 2013-17](#)) focused on improving access and progression to HE of people in locations where such opportunities are low, including the Heads of the Valleys:
 - T1. Widening Access: 'A 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 bottom quintile of wards in the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation or in Communities First cluster areas, from 20.0% in 2011/12 to 22.4% in 2016/17 (a rise of 11.8%)'.
9. During the 2013-17 Corporate Strategy period, there has been annual improvement in progress towards this target with 2016/17 HESA data showing a rise to 22.3% (22.4% excluding FEIs).
10. Given the challenges of measuring the impact of widening access, including RW, we have commissioned regular external evaluations, namely:
 - i. [Evaluation of the widening access activities and the Reaching Wider Initiative in Welsh Higher Education Institutions](#) by Arad Consulting Ltd (2007);
 - ii. [A review of Welsh institutional widening access strategies 2006/07 to 2008/09 and the Reaching Wider funded proposals 2008/10](#) by the Higher Education Academy (led by HEA core staff) (2009);
 - iii. [Review of widening access and Reaching Wider strategies in Wales](#) by the Higher Education Academy (led by HEA consultants Michael Hill and Sue Hatt) (2012);
 - iv. [Access to Higher Education in Wales: A Report to the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales²](#) by WISERD (Wales Institute of Social & Economic Research, Data & Methods) (2015);
11. The WISERD evaluation focused on school, college and HE linked datasets, as similar progression datasets are not available for mature HE entrants. These datasets are not currently available to HEFCW or institutions. Further work is required to understand adult/part-time HE and the WA implications of adult HE participation. As new datasets and linked data becomes available we will review their potential to inform widening access performance.

² The WISERD evaluation included consideration of the Reaching Wider Programme and Partnerships.

12. In addition, WISERD developed [guidance](#) (2016) to support WA and RW activity evaluation. We strongly encourage Partnerships and institutions to use the evaluation toolkit in the guidance.

The Reaching Wider Programme Review 2017/18 and consultation

13. HEFCW undertook a review of the RW Programme in 2017/18 to inform future funding decisions. The RW Review Group made recommendations to Council, which were accepted.
14. The Review Group membership and its recommendations are attached as **Annex A**.
15. HEFCW held a consultation seminar in May 2018 to inform the development of this RW Programme guidance³. Delegates were asked to consider a range of RW-related issues, including as they related to equalities, Welsh language and Welsh medium HE and the Well-being of Future Generations goals and ways of working. Both Universities and Reaching Wider Partnerships were represented. Issues raised included:
 - the importance of aligning the RW Programme with Welsh Government widening access priorities;
 - ensuring that Partnerships and institutions work collaboratively to secure effective student transition opportunities with individuals aged 16-18 years;
 - the potential for a 'basket of measures' monitoring approach;
 - the benefits of sustained, long-term approaches, including to mentoring;
 - the positive potential for more intensive engagements with fewer individuals;
 - the importance of impartial information, advice and guidance; and
 - ensuring sufficient time for new strategies and plans to be developed.
16. In response to these steers, in developing this guidance we have:
 - aligned the RW Programme with WG priorities, including as set out in our [remit letters](#)
 - strengthened the guidance and revised the funding model to secure greater collaboration between Partnerships and institutions;
 - revised the measures to include people of all ages from the bottom two WIMD quintiles and, for Partnerships to focus within this group, on groups under-represented in HE, including people that Partnerships and institutions may find 'hard to reach'⁴;
 - revised the 'national offer' of targeted provision to recognise the benefits of mentoring and information, advice and guidance;
 - continued to recognise the importance of intensive engagements with learners; and
 - revised the strategy/plan submission date to October 2018.

³ The consultation seminar presentations are available on our website.

⁴ Further information on measures and priority groups etc is set out below see Section One: The Reaching Wider Programme 2018/19 to 2020/21, Purpose and priorities.

Legislative and policy context

17. The HEFCW's legislative framework, of relevance to the Reaching Wider Programme, includes: the [Equality Act \(2010\)](#); the [Well-being of Future Generations Act \(2015\)](#), the [Higher Education \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) and the Welsh Language Standards (2018). We have published our [Strategic Equality Plan and annual equalities reports](#), our [Well-being Statement and objectives](#). Shortly, we will be publishing our first Well-being of Future Generations annual report. In refreshing the RW Programme from 2018/19, we have taken account of our duties under this legislation, including impact assessing RW policy developments.
18. HEFCW has, and will continue to, align the RW Programme with existing and emerging widening access-related policy developments. Currently, policies impacting on the RW Programme include:
 - i. The Welsh Government is consulting on its White Paper, [Public Good and a Prosperous Wales](#), on plans for a post compulsory education and training commission. The RW Programme underpinned by partnerships of universities, colleges and schools can contribute to meeting gaps in education and training by supporting progression, lifelong learning and success.
 - ii. The phasing out of the Welsh Government's Communities First Programme by March 2018. Alignment of RW with the geographically based anti-poverty programme has been a priority since 2002/03.
 - iii. The WISERD WA evaluation finding that the bottom quintile of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD), a widening access/RW priority group, was now at the same level as those from the quintile above and, therefore, there needed be a focus on both bottom WIMD quintiles, equating to 40% of the WIMD population⁵. WIMD was previously used by the Welsh Government in developing and monitoring the Communities First Programme and, thus, provides continuity with RW targeting.
 - iv. [HEFCW's 2018-19 remit letter](#) references the WISERD WA evaluation and the Welsh Government's expectation that we take account of the evaluation recommendations in developing a widening access programme of action for higher education (remit letter paragraph 5.1). The RW Programme will contribute to the programme of action and other remit letter RW-related priorities including HE/school engagement (remit letter paragraph 9.2) and civic mission (remit letter paragraph 12.1)⁶.
 - v. HEFCW's remit letter confirms that the Welsh Government considers part-time study as a key driver of social mobility for students of all ages. In developing RW provision, we expect RW strategies and funded plans

⁵ WISERD evaluation, finding 1, p.16.

⁶ The RW Review Group took account of the recommendations of the HEFCW-commissioned [WISERD Widening access evaluation](#) (2015)

to take account of part-time study opportunities and progression pathways to flexible learning.

- vi. HEFCW remit letters continue to require us to meet conditions of grant relating to having 'regard to regional coherence in exercising [HEFCW's] functions to allocate funding to providers of higher education'. We remain committed to the RW Programme's regional structures.
- vii. The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol is developing its widening access Welsh medium strategy. The Reaching Wider Programme will contribute to widening access to Welsh medium higher education, in the context of RW priorities, set out in the section below ('The Reaching Wider Programme 2018/21'), to ensure that the Welsh Government achieves its target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

The Reaching Wider Programme 2018/19 to 2020/21

19. The HEFCW Reaching Wider Programme will:

Purpose and priorities

- i. widen access to level 4 HE provision in all modes, locations and with a range of providers;
- ii. reduce barriers to entry, and raise educational aspirations and success at level 4 higher education provision, for priority groups;
- iii. prioritise people of all-ages living in the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)⁷. Within the WIMD bottom two quintiles, Partnerships and institutions will prioritise hard to reach groups of different ages within their region;
- iv. prioritise looked after children⁸, care leavers⁹ and carers¹⁰. Partnerships will work regionally to support these groups while institutions will work Wales-wide.

Approach and activities

- v. continue to be a Wales-wide, long-term, HE/FE regional, collaborative, all-age, widening access programme;

⁷ The most recent WIMD was published in **2014**. A selection of indicators used within WIMD are updated in between full index updates, but HEFCW will use the 2014 version for monitoring.

⁸ Given the definition of care leaver below, we propose using a similar definition for a 'looked after' child, that is: having been in care for 3 months or more.

⁹ HESA definition of care leaver, for use by Welsh HEIs, is the UCAS definition self-declaration as in care for 3 months or more. This definition should also be used by non-UCAS applicants.

¹⁰ HESA carer definition: "A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support".

- vi. align its priorities with HEFCW's national measures for higher education as they relate to widening access;
- vii. contribute to Welsh Government priorities, including the well-being goals and sustainability principle of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- viii. secure regional, co-funded, collaborative working, including with organisations linked to priority groups, particularly further education colleges;
- ix. focusing on transition points between: primary and secondary school; secondary school and/or sixth form, further education college; between school or college and higher education; and the transition points adults encounter in returning to learn.
- x. secure coherence between Partnerships and across Wales;
- xi. deliver a 'national offer' of activities¹¹ for people of all-ages focused on:
 - attainment-raising activities;
 - mentoring to provide academic, social and emotional support to prepare for level 4 HE; and
 - increasing awareness of level 4 subjects, modes of study, locations and financial support available, including through information, advice and guidance.

The national offer of activities will include a range of delivery modes, including outreach, on campus and in Welsh and/or English as appropriate.

Reaching Wider Programme structure

- 20. To deliver the RW priorities, from 2018/19 the Reaching Wider Programme has been reviewed and supported by new funding streams. The new structure is set out diagrammatically in **Annex B**.

Reaching Wider brand

- 21. RW Programme funded activity should use the RW Programme brand.

Reaching Wider Programme performance monitoring

- 22. In finalising performance measures and monitoring, we will take account of the WISERD widening access evaluation recommendations, including as they relate to the RW Programme and Partnership monitoring. We will consider further how the WISERD performance-related recommendations might be broadened to take account of RW participants of all ages and progression to

¹¹ The national offer should take account of a range of delivery modes, including Welsh medium provision.

level 4 study¹². The WISERD recommendations acknowledge the resource implications of evidencing impact. We recognise the need for proportionate approaches to evidencing outcomes and will aim to use published data to reduce the burden of reporting.

23. We will confirm the measures and monitoring approaches for the RW Programme and Partnerships. Institutions' contributions will be monitored through an annual report for 2018/19 fee mitigation-funded plans and through the fee and access planning monitoring process from 2019/20 onwards.
24. Institutions' contribution to the RW Programme will increase the rate of participation in higher education of young people and adults from the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD), plus looked after children, care leavers and carers. We will monitor institutions' enrolment and retention data to inform our understanding of institutions' performance in widening access to and through higher education for people from the bottom two WIMD quintiles.
25. We will align RW Programme performance monitoring with the HEFCW National Measures which are currently subject to further consultation and we will report on the RW Programme.

Reaching Wider Programme funding

26. [The Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance Arrangements in Wales](#) (2016) by Sir Ian Diamond stated that 'there is a strong case for funding, probably on a joint basis with HE provider or consortia of HE provider, to promote and incentivise aspiration-raising and the social aspects of widening access'¹³.
27. From 2018/19 there will be two funding streams for the Reaching Wider Programme. A HEFCW allocation to RW Partnerships and RW Programme match-funding from regulated institutions. The total funding supporting the Reaching Wider Programme from 2018/19 will be £3.4m.
28. HEFCW will allocate to the Reaching Wider Programme £1.7m in 2018/19. HEFCW expects to fund RW Partnerships in this strategy period with £1.7m annually¹⁴, to provide continuity and sustainability. The three individual Partnership allocations are set out in **Section Two**.
29. HEFCW placed a condition of funding related to the RW Programme on £10m fee mitigation funding announced by the Cabinet Secretary in October 2017.

¹² The WISERD evaluation recommendations focus on school and college measures, relating to young people's progression and participation in HE and school performance. We recognise that schools do not have a HE progression performance measure and there are a range of academic and vocational post-16 opportunities available to young people.

¹³ Page 64, paragraph 9.13.2.

¹⁴ Subject to Council's annual approval of budgets.

The condition requires regulated institutions to invest a proportion of the mitigation funding (17%: £1.7m) in RW Programme-aligned activities.

30. In addition, from 2019/20, funded institutions are expected to commit, through their fee and access plans, the equivalent collectively of £1.7m for RW Programme collaborative provision to match HEFCW's £1.7m for RW and secure long-term financial sustainability. As 2018/19 fee mitigation funding has a RW condition placed on it, we reserve the right to withhold or clawback fee mitigation funding where there is not a commitment to support the RW Programme from fee and access plan investment, with the same amount as the fee mitigation allocation, from 2019/20. Should an institution's allocation to support RW not be set aside in a 2019/20 fee and access plan, an equivalent amount could be withdrawn from the Reaching Wider allocation for that institution's partnership in 2019/20. Individual institution allocations are set out in **Section Three**.

Reaching Wider evaluation

31. HEFCW will continue to commission widening access evaluations, to include the Reaching Wider Programme, to inform our development and monitoring of widening access policy and provision.

SECTION TWO

Reaching Wider Partnership strategies 2018/19 to 2020/21

32. Reaching Wider Partnerships' strategies should articulate a clear direction of travel, setting out priorities and levels of ambition. Strategies should align with regulated institutions' plans. In addition, strategies are the mechanism by which we: understand strategic intentions, and regional planning and delivery; allocate grant funding; account for public funding; conduct strategic dialogues; and respond to the Welsh Government and others on issues related to RW performance and progress. Partnerships' strategies are the means by which their steering groups allocate funding to meet strategic objectives and assess progress and performance.
33. We will provide a grant agreement for lead institutions including setting out our expectations of, and ways of working with, Reaching Wider Partnerships.
34. We expect strategies to inform our funding decisions by assuring us that Partnerships:
 - are aligned to relevant Welsh Government and HEFCW widening access-related priorities;
 - will contribute to HE regional widening access planning and delivery;
 - will align with individual institutional widening access strategic developments and fee and access plan commitments;

- take account of institutions' Strategic Equality Plan commitments; and
- provide value for money and additionality to partner and other regional targeted widening access provision.

Reaching Wider Partnerships' priority groups

35. Partnerships' priority groups in the bottom two quintiles (40% of the population) of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) are:
- young people in the final years of primary school to Key stage 4;
 - adults over 21 years of age without level 4 qualifications; and
 - looked after children, care leavers and carers in all age groups in their region.
36. Effective targeting by Partnerships must take account of additional, individual circumstances in addition to the home postcode of young people and adults. Within the bottom 40% of WIMD postcodes, Partnerships should work with schools and partners to identify and work with people facing potential barriers to accessing level 4 study. We set out our definition of 'hard to reach groups'¹⁵ in the previous RW Strategy guidance. Partnerships may have evidence that other individuals within the bottom two WIMD quintiles should be supported, such as those: with challenging mental or physical health; dealing with bereavement or complex family/ living circumstances; without a family tradition of HE. Strategies should define and provide evidence of the 'hard to reach' groups they will engage with, how they will prioritise these groups, including the activities to engage them.
37. Prioritisation will require long-term engagements with schools and other partners and the involvement of partners and participants to ensure provision is relevant and secures effective pathways to further learning and skills opportunities.
38. Partnerships must work with schools and other groups with large proportions of individuals from the bottom two WIMD quintiles. This may result in working with schools and groups based in the WIMD bottom two quintile areas or outside these areas. RW's priority should be to work with people from WIMD bottom quintile areas wherever they work or study. Strategies should set out how and why Partnerships are working with named schools and communities to target RW resources effectively. Looked after children, care leavers and carers are based in all schools and colleges are across all communities and engaging with these groups will required different approaches to targeting.

¹⁵ See [W14/19HE](#), p.12. Hard to reach groups include people of all ages: from workless households; experiencing 'in work poverty'; in receipt of educational maintenance allowances (EMAs), eligible for free school meals; carers including those with a care background, ex-offenders, young parents (under the age of 18); young, white, working class males and people with protected characteristics.

Well-being of Future Generations and the five ways of working

39. Reaching Wider Partnerships have the potential to impact on their regions, communities and on future generations. The Well-being of Future Generations Act identifies five ways of working to avoid repeating past mistakes, working together more effectively and tackling long-term challenges. The five ways of working¹⁶ should inform Partnerships' approaches and we will look to see them reflected in strategies.

Reaching Wider Partnerships' funding

40. HEFCW's funding contribution to the Reaching Wider Partnerships will be maintained at £1.7m. To reflect the inter-relationship between Reaching Wider Partnerships and their partner institutions we have aligned RW Partnerships' funding with that of the fee mitigation funding received by its partner institutions.
41. In 2018/19, and subject to partner regulated institutions continued match-funding, the RW Partnership allocations will be:

Partnership	RW allocation
South East Wales	£885,881
South West Wales	£429,622
North and Mid Wales	£384,496
Rounded total	£1.7m

42. As well as reflecting the size of institutions involved in the RW Partnerships, the new funding methodology, from 2018/19, continues to take account of Partnerships' allocations over the period of the RW Programme which has moved towards greater alignment between Partnership budgets and the areas of deprivation in their region. Previously, areas of deprivation have been Communities First areas and Communities First clusters and the bottom WIMD quintile. From 2018/19 priority areas are the bottom two WIMD quintiles.
43. As in previous years, the Reaching Wider allocations may be subject to change in-year. We will inform Partnerships and institutions of any changes as soon as possible.
44. Where one or more partner institutions fails to meet commitments to match-fund the Reaching Wider Programme through fee mitigation and/or fee and access plan investment, HEFCW may reduce a Partnership's funding.

¹⁶ Well-being of Future Generations five ways of working: long-term, prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement.

45. RW allocations in this strategy period are subject to the submission of satisfactory RW strategies and annual monitoring reports. The first tranche will be paid in October 2018 on submission of strategies. The second tranche, in March 2019, will be paid subject to satisfactory strategies. We reserve the right to clawback funding in the event of unsatisfactory annual monitoring reports (AMS).
46. HEFCW funding should support appropriate levels of core RW staffing at no more than the full-time equivalent staffing level in 2017/18. Our expectation is that HEFCW funding will continue to sustain a reasonable, stable core of staff resources. However, we recognise that some institutions have provided staff resources and we welcome this and encourage its continuation. Institutions' RW contributions may be used to fund RW staff.
47. RW Partnerships must allocate the majority of their annual activity budget to long-term interventions, as set out in their strategies. Partnerships must provide a rationale for this investment and specify the amount and percentage of investment.
48. Partnerships may budget no more than 5% of their HEFCW core annual allocation for contingency funding. Partnerships must specify the conditions where it may use contingency funding for HEFCW approval or otherwise.
49. Partnerships sometimes support RW activities from additional external funding streams. We welcome this approach and expect Partnerships to inform us of developments at an early stage and before any agreements are progressed. We will want to understand the funding implications and intended outcomes of the use of such resources and we would appreciate their inclusion in the strategy and in annual monitoring reporting.

Information to support Partnerships' strategy development

50. **Annex C** provides more detail on developing the strategy, including the information we require. It also requires critical reflection on the outcomes of the previous strategy period, guidance on articulating the strategy and on framing intended outcomes.

Strategy assessment

51. We will support strategies which are clearly:
 - informed by the outcomes of the Partnership's assessment of its 2015/16 to 2017/18 Reaching Wider strategy;
 - evidence-based and embedded within HE regional strategic planning;
 - aligned with partner regulated institution's activities ensuring progression pathways through to level 4 HE provision;
 - robust plans informed by learner demand and labour market intelligence;
 - genuine, effective, multi-agency approaches;
 - ambitious responses to delivering the Reaching Wider Programme;

- coherent portfolios of provision providing opportunities for progression to, and success in, further and higher education;
- underpinned by strategic outcomes which demonstrate impact and measure change at Partnership level;
- underpinned by effective ways of working¹⁷;
- effectively managed, including processes for: ensuring accountability, managing risk, addressing safeguarding issues; protecting data; assessing performance and providing strategic direction;
- informed by impact assessment, including as this relates to equality legislation, the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) goals and sustainability principles and Welsh language standards.

Strategy submission

52. Please submit the Reaching Wider Partnership strategy by **Friday 12 October 2018**. The Partnership strategy must be submitted with all partner regulated institutions' plans to support the RW Programme.

- By email, an electronic Microsoft Word version of the Reaching Wider strategy to rachel.ogorman@hefcw.ac.uk; and
- A copy of the Chairs' and partners' electronic signatures confirming their support of the strategy

53. Strategies should be submitted to Rachel O'Gorman (rachel.ogorman@hefcw.ac.uk), telephone: 029 2085 9733.

SECTION THREE

Reaching Wider regulated institutions plans 2019/20 to 2020/21

54. We see regulated institutions' RW plans as documents which articulate their commitments to under-represented groups and equality of opportunity, in line with fee and access planning. Plans should align with other institutional strategic documents such as Strategic Equality Plans, as well as with regional RW Partnership strategies. Given the regional context of most of the RW priorities, we expect institutions to take account of other key regional strategies and related developments.
55. Reaching Wider Plans will account for the strategic use of the fee mitigation funding for 2018/19 and equivalent 2019/20 fee and access plan investment.
56. Reaching Wider plans are the mechanism for institutions to set out their RW Programme-related widening access and outreach intentions; contribution to

¹⁷ The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) encourages five ways of working: long-term, prevention, integration, collaboration, involvement.

regional planning and delivery, including alignment with their Reaching Wider Partnership; account for public funding; and respond to the Welsh Government expectations and HEFCW priorities on widening access.

57. We expect institutions' plans to assure us of alignment with:
- regional RW Partnership strategies;
 - fee and access plan commitments to support groups under-represented in HE, contribute to equality of opportunity and the promotion of higher education, including attracting applications from groups under-represented in HE¹⁸.
 - widening access outreach provision;
 - Strategic Equality Plan or similar commitments, as appropriate;
 - relevant Welsh Government and HEFCW WA-related priorities;
 - regional planning and delivery priorities as they relate to widening access;
 - approaches to providing value for money and additionality to partner and other regional targeted widening access provision.

RW priority groups for institutions and under-representation in HE

58. Institutions' contribution to the Reaching Wider Programme will enable them to contribute to supporting groups under-represented in higher education, specifically:

within the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation:

- post-16 young people.
- adults without level 4 qualifications, to provide progression to level 4 provision.

and Wales-wide:

- looked after children, care leavers and carers in all age groups.

59. Fee and access plan commitments may already support the groups above, wherever they live. Reaching Wider Programme aligned funding should be used to support only young people and adults in their RW region.
60. Effective support for people under-represented in higher education will require long-term, sustained engagements. Collaborative working with Reaching Wider Partnerships and other partners is essential to secure relevant progression routes to level 4 study.

¹⁸ See [HEFCW fee and access plan guidance 2019/20](#)

The Reaching Wider Programme and institutions' funding contributions

61. Institutions' contributions to the RW Programme from 2018/19 should be:

Institution	Completed registrations 2016/17 (all cohorts)	Pro rata allocation (£)	2018/19 17% of funding for conditional RW element (£)	From 2019/20 Fee and access plans RW contribution (£)
University of South Wales	12,292	1,864,486	316,963	316,963
Aberystwyth University	5,739	870,508	147,986	147,986
Bangor University	6,184	938,007	159,461	159,461
Cardiff University	15,267	2,315,743	393,676	393,676
University of Wales Trinity Saint David	5,664	859,132	146,052	146,052
Swansea University	10,949	1,660,776	282,332	282,332
Cardiff Metropolitan University	6,796	1,030,837	175,242	175,242
Wrexham Glyndŵr University	2,565	389,067	66,141	66,141
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	423	64,162	10,908	10,908
Grŵp NPTC Group	48	7,281	1,238	1,238
Total	65,927	10,000,000	1,700,000	1,700,000

62. Where an institution fails to meet commitments to match-fund the Reaching Wider Programme through fee mitigation and/or fee and access plan investment, HEFCW may reduce a Partnership's funding. We expect fee and access plan investment in RW to be the same amount as the 2018/19 fee mitigation RW investment. We reserve the right to claw back the conditional element of the fee mitigation funding where institutions fail to submit satisfactory plans or fail to meet their funded commitments in 2018/19.

63. Institutions' RW Programme funding should support additional outreach activities to attract potential applications from RW priority groups. Effective outreach, underpinned by appropriate information, advice and guidance supports retention and completion by ensuring applicants are well-informed about, and prepared for, level 4 study. While RW Programme funding *does not* support retention-related activities, institutions should consider how they will continue to support RW Programme priority groups through fee and access plan and/or other investment to ensure the success and employability of these students.

64. Reaching Wider Programme match-funding should be used innovatively and in line with RW Partnership provision. General marketing and recruitment activity which is not sufficiently targeted is likely to be provision that the institution would have funded from its general fee income or fee and access plan investment more broadly.

65. We will report to Welsh Government on the use of fee mitigation funding and fee and access plan funding to support the Reaching Wider Programme.

Information to support institutions' development of RW Programme plans

66. **Annex D** provides more detail on developing RW plans in line with fee and access plan requirements, including the information we require.

The assessment of institutions' RW Programme plans

67. Satisfactory plans should be:
- evidence-informed and embedded within HE regional strategic planning, including as this relates to WIMD bottom two quintile communities in their RW Partnership region;
 - aligned with Partnership's activities ensuring progression pathways through to level 4 HE provision;
 - underpinned by effective ways of working¹⁹;
 - ambitious responses to delivering the Reaching Wider Programme;
 - coherent portfolios of targeted outreach provision providing opportunities for progression to, and success in, further and higher education;
 - underpinned by clear targets to monitor and measure change;
 - aligned with fee and access plans and sustainable in the longer-term;
 - underpinned by institutional processes for: ensuring accountability, managing risk, addressing safeguarding issues; protecting data; assessing performance and providing strategic direction;
 - informed by impact assessment, including as this relates to equality legislation, the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) goals and sustainability principles and Welsh language standards.

Assessing the impact of our policies

68. We have carried out an impact assessment screening to help safeguard against discrimination and promote equality. We also considered the impact of policies on the Welsh language, and Welsh medium level 4 study 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. We invited consultation seminar delegates (May 2018 seminar) to consider the impact of our policy developments. Contact equality@hefcw.ac.uk for more information about impact assessments.

¹⁹ The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) encourages five ways of working: long-term, prevention, integration, collaboration, involvement.

HEFCW's Reaching Wider Review membership and recommendations

The Review Group were members of the Student Achievement and Opportunities Committee (SOAC), a sub-group of HEFCW's Council.

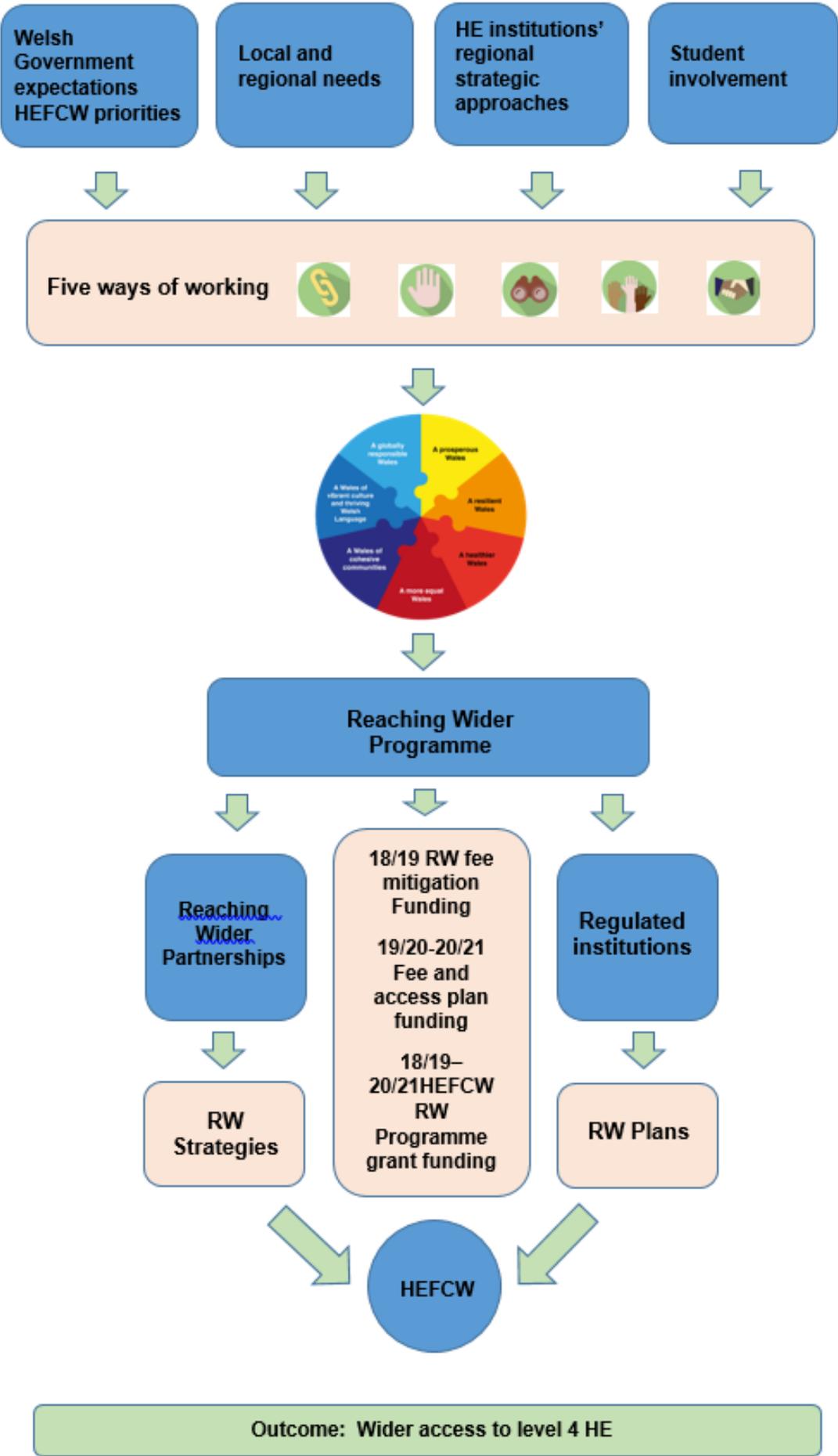
- Dr Arun Midha, Council member (Chair);
- Professor Chris Taylor, co-author of the [Access to Higher Education in Wales](#) Welsh Institute of Social and Economic Research and Data Methods (WISERD) commissioned by HEFCW;
- Susan Gwyer-Roberts, during the review, Head of Caldicot Secondary School;
- Jake Smith, Vice-President of postgraduate students, Cardiff University;
- Rob Humphreys, former Director of the Open University in Wales and a former SOAC member²⁰.

Recommendations

- i. the RW Programme should focus activity on target groups living in the bottom two quintiles of (WIMD) and within these two quintiles, RW target groups should be young people in the final years of primary school to Key stage 4 (age 16), adults over 21 years of age without level 4 qualifications. Care leavers and carers of all ages were a priority group, wherever they lived in Wales;
- ii. the RW Programme performance measures should contribute to increasing the rate of participation in HE of young people and adults from the bottom two quintiles of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) and align with HEFCW's national measures for higher education;
- iii. the RW Programme should promote access to level 4 HE provision in all modes, locations and with a range of providers;
- iv. HEFCW should provide strong steers to the RW Partnerships and to institutions to ensure funding, including match-funding, is targeted and aligned to RW Programme priorities;
- v. RW Partnerships should work regionally and collaboratively, including with organisations linked to target groups, particularly further education colleges;
- vi. HEFCW should encourage institutions to focus RW-related (fee mitigation/fee and access plan) funding on post-16 young people and adults without HE-level qualifications more broadly to provide progression to HE;
- vii. current governance models be retained and strengthened in 2018/19 with the potential for transition over time to new governance models, if appropriate;
- viii. the RW Programme should continue to be subject to regular, national, external evaluation; and separately in relation to widening access
- ix. HEFCW officers would consider further how institutions might work with all schools in Wales to promote HE and demonstrate more fully their contribution to equality of opportunity and civic engagement.

²⁰ Rob Humphreys had been confirmed by Welsh Government as a future Council member.

Annex B



Annex C

Reaching Wider Partnership strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21

Lead partner institution name:	
Partners' name and addresses:	

	Lead partner RW Chair contact	Lead partner institution RW manager contact
Contact name:		
Job title:		
Telephone number:		
Email address:		

Reaching Wider Partnerships' strategies - guidance note

In developing Reaching Wider strategies, Partnerships should take account of HEFCW's Reaching Wider Programme guidance circular. Reaching Wider Partnerships' strategies should provide relevant, recent information and verifiable data. If the information and data provided are not sufficiently clear, or it is difficult for HEFCW to reconcile with other information it holds, HEFCW will contact partnership for further information and/or clarification to enable us to understand the strategy more fully.

1. Partnerships' strategies should be high-level, concise, accessible statements that respond fully to the Reaching Wider guidance circular and provide information, including as set out in the following sections.

Section one: Background and context

2. The first section related to the development of the strategy should set out:
 - i. an executive summary of the strategy;
 - ii. the Partnership's mission and purpose as it relates to RW priorities in its region, including the role in, relationship with, and contribution to partners' and others' regional widening access strategy developments;
 - iii. details of alignment with relevant Welsh Government expectations and HEFCW priorities as they relate to widening access;
 - iv. the strategic aims and objectives for the three-year strategy period which underpin the mission and purpose;
 - v. the evidence underpinning the aims and objectives, including evidence of learner demand/ learners as partners, labour market information and equality and diversity-related priorities;
 - vi. a commitment to ways of working to secure long-term, prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement approaches²¹;
 - vii. management and governance structures which secure continuity and sustainability and ensure partners' trust and commitment, provide leadership for, and drive cultural change in, the Reaching Wider Partnerships including confirming the Partnership Chair;
 - viii. equality and diversity-related policies and practices which will ensure fair and transparent practice and deliver equality of opportunity, including confirming that impact assessments have been undertaken and any findings responded to;
 - ix. alignment with widening access approaches of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, including how the Partnerships will take account of Welsh language and Welsh medium study considerations;
3. As in previous years, we expect this first part of Section one of the strategy to be published with a list of partner numbers and key contact details. For our purposes and accessibility this section should be concise (6-7 sides of A4).
4. The second part of the strategy, including the rest of the background and context section and the remaining sections should be submitted to us in confidence and should:

²¹ See the [Well-being of Future Generations ways of working](#) for further information approaches to effective working.

- i. provide an annexed critical assessment of the impact and outcomes of the previous strategy period, 2014/15 to 2017/18, including how the assessment findings and outcomes inform the development of the strategy from 2018/19;
- ii. outline the alignment between proposed Partnership developments and broader regional widening access developments, including HE regional developments as set out in regulated institutions' RW plans and other partners' approaches;
- iii. clarify the distinction and relationship between Reaching Wider, and institutional widening access and/or marketing and recruitment activities and confirm where activities, staff or other resources will be co-funded;
- iv. set out the intended outcomes and outputs over the strategy period;

Section two: Regional coherence

5. This section of the strategy should set out:
 - i. how the strategy aligns with, and contributes to regional needs and priorities as set out by partner institutions and others, as these relate to the RW priorities;
 - ii. which regional WIMD bottom two quintile areas they will work with and where they will work outside these areas and why;
 - iii. who partners will be. This should include regulated institutions, other HE and FE partners and named schools and colleges, Schools Consortia, third sector bodies, community groups, local authorities, employers, trade union or other groups;
 - iv. how activities will be effectively targeted to ensure RW Programme priority groups, including 'hard to reach groups' benefit most from RW investment;
 - v. how under-represented groups and communities will be involved in developing provision to meet regional needs;

Section three: Outreach activities and targets

6. **Appendix 1** provides a template for setting out initial targets. Additionally, please provide information on outreach activities and targets within the strategy narrative. We will work with Partnerships to develop a basket of measures to demonstrate performance and progress.
7. Partnerships' strategies should set out:
 - i. costed outreach activities delivered in 2018/19 to 2020/21, and provide information including:

- ii. how targeted provision will contribute to improving opportunities for progression to, and success in, learning and skills development post-16, for young people from priority groups, and progression to level 4 HE for adults without level 4 qualifications;
 - iii. in line with the RW national offer:
 - details of the provision for people young people in the final years of primary school to Key stage 4 (age 16), adults over 21 years of age without level 4 qualifications living in the WIMD bottom two quintiles;
 - details of the provision to support looked after children, care leavers and carers.
 - iv. the processes to collect information and data on activities to evidence progress towards targets, outputs and outcomes, such as Upshot and/or other data management systems.
8. As in previous strategy periods, Reaching Wider Partnerships must not use HEFCW grant funding to deliver qualifications themselves.

Section four: Funding

9. Partnerships' strategies should set out:
- i. in **Appendix 2** details of investment and expenditure against HEFCW grant allocation and any other allocations received;
 - ii. funding received from regulated institutions as part of their RW Programme plans to support the RW Partnership directly and any conditions for its use;
 - iii. additional funding received from partners other than from Reaching Wider Programme plans;
 - iv. additional funding received from external agencies.

Section five: Governance

10. Partnerships' strategies should set out:
- i. the outcomes of a review of governance structures in the previous strategy period (2014/15 to 2017/18);
 - ii. a list of partner organisations and their addresses;
 - iii. structures in place to ensure effective governance, including annexing to the strategy RW committee structures, committees membership and terms of reference;
 - iv. processes for reporting on and monitoring performance and progress towards meeting targets and strategy delivery;

- v. processes for ensuring effective management of financial resources, audit and risk; protecting data; addressing safeguarding issues. Please provide this information in relation to the lead partner and explain how these processes will be implemented effectively across all partners, as appropriate;
- vi. the Chair of the Partnership, on behalf of the lead partner institution, should sign and return with the strategy a grant agreement between HEFCW and the Partnership²².

Section six: Authorisation of the Reaching Wider Partnership proposal for submission to HEFCW

- 11. Section five should be submitted to HEFCW with the Reaching Wider Partnerships' strategies:

²² The HEFCW/Partnership grant agreement will be emailed to lead partner institutions once finalised.

Signatories to the Reaching Wider Partnership Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21

<p>As the Chair of the Reaching Wider Partnership, I confirm that my institution will remain the lead partner for the regional Reaching Wider Partnership in this strategy period and that my organisation supports this strategy.</p>	Chair's signature:
	Chair's name and role within the lead institution:

<p>As a named partner of the Reaching Wider Partnership I confirm that my organisation supports this regional strategy and the Partnership.</p>		
Organisation name	Organisation signatory	Position in the organisation – senior manager able to confirm the organisation's commitment to the Reaching Wider Partnership.
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

Appendix 1

Reaching Wider Partnership learner/activity targets

	2018 /19 target No of eligible attendees	2018 /19 target No. session hours	2018 /19 target No. sessions to be delivered	2019 /20 target No of eligible attendees	2019 /20 target No. session hours	2019 /20 target No. sessions to be delivered	2020 /21 target No of eligible attendees	2020 /21 target No. session hours	2020 /21 target No. sessions to be delivered
	WIMD quintiles 1 & 2	The number of planned session hours	Total number of individual sessions delivered	WIMD quintiles 1 & 2	The number of planned session hours	Total number of individual sessions delivered	WIMD quintiles 1 & 2	The number of planned session hours	Total number of individual sessions delivered
Key Stage 2									
Key Stage 3									
Key Stage 4									
Further Education									
Family parental engagements									
Other adults, please specify									

Reaching Wider Partnership learner/activity targets

	2018 /19 target No. of attendees	2018 /19 target No. session hours	2018 /19 target No. sessions to be delivered	2019 /20 target No. of attendees	2019 /20 target No. session hours	2019 /20 target No. sessions to be delivered	2020 /21 target No. of attendees	2020 /21 target No. session hours	2020/ 21 target No. sessions to be delivered
		The number of planned session hours	Total number of individual sessions delivered		The number of planned session hours	Total number of individual sessions delivered		The number of planned session hours	Total number of individual sessions delivered
Looked after children									
Care leavers									
Carers									

Partnership investment and expenditure against HEFCW grant allocation and any other allocations received

Expenditure
Operational Costs

Budget heading	Funding allocation (£) 2018 /19	Funding allocation (£) 2019 /20	Funding allocation (£) 2020 /21
Staff development			
Consumables			
Marketing, printing and publicity			
National RW offer activities costs			
Other Partnership activities costs			
Contingency – no more than 5% of the total allocation – please specify the conditions of use.			
Other, please specify			
Total annual operational expenditure			

Partnership details of investment and expenditure against HEFCW grant allocation and any other allocations received

Income

Income heading	Income (£) 2018 /19	Income (£) 2019 /20	Income (£) 2020 /21
RW Partnership allocation			
Additional funding available to the Partnership, for example from partners, successful funding proposals, etc.			
Total annual income	£		

Institutions' Reaching Wider Programme plans 2018/19 to 2020/21

Institution name:	
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	Main contact	Alternate contact
Contact name:		
Job title:		
Telephone number:		
Email address:		

Reaching Wider Programme institutions' plans - guidance note

In developing Reaching Wider plans institutions should take account of HEFCW's Reaching Wider guidance circular which requires Reaching Wider plans to provide relevant, recent information and verifiable data. If the information and data provided are not sufficiently clear, or it is difficult for HEFCW to reconcile with other information it holds, HEFCW will contact institutions for further information and/or clarification to enable us to understand the plans more fully.

Section One: Background and context

1. In this section, institutions should set out their response to section three of the HEFCW Reaching Wider guidance circular, including:
 - i. the rationale and evidence-base for their plans, including how the plans are embedded within HE regional strategic planning;
 - ii. how plans align with fee and access plan commitments to support equality of opportunity and enhance the regional Partnership's strategy.
 - iii. how plans' development have been informed by impact assessment, including as this relates to equality legislation and Welsh language

standards and whether plans have been informed by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) goals, sustainability principles and ways of working.

Section two: Regional coherence

2. Institutions should set out:
 - i. which regional WIMD bottom two quintile areas they will work with.
 - ii. who partners will be. This may include named schools and colleges, third sector bodies, community groups, local authorities, employers, trade union or other groups.
 - iii. how activities will be effectively targeted to ensure RW Programme priority groups benefit most from RW investment.
 - iv. how under-represented groups and communities will be involved in developing provision to meet needs; and
 - v. how this aligns with the RW Partnership strategy.

Section three: Outreach activities and targets

3. Institutions should set out costed outreach activities delivered in 2018/19 separately from costed activities delivered in 2019/20 and 2020/21, and provide information including:
 - i. how targeted outreach provision will provide opportunities for progression to, and success in, further and higher education;
 - ii. the provision for people living in the WIMD bottom two quintiles;
 - iii. the provision to support looked after children, care leavers and carers;
 - iv. how activities will provide seamless progression routes from RW Partnership provision and progression to, and success in, level 4 provision in further and higher education, including;
 - v. how RW-related activities will be sustained in the longer-term;
 - vi. the number of participants to be engaged;
 - vii. the additionality plans will provide to the RW Partnership and fee and access plan provision;
 - viii. a brief description of activity costs for 2018/19 and separately for 2019/20 and 2020/21;
 - ix. Targets for 2018/19 and separately for 2019/20 and 2020/21 to demonstrate the level of ambition and contribution towards widening access to level 4 HE. **(see Appendix 3)**

Section four: Governance

4. Institutions should confirm:
 - i. the governance, reporting and monitoring structures to ensure effective ways of working, delivering, and monitoring progress towards meeting targets and liaison within regional Partnerships. Institutions should set out the named representative on the RW Steering Group and how relevant institutional committees are informed of, and inform, RW Partnership developments.

Section five: Authorisation of the institutions' Reaching Wider Programme plan supported by 2018/19 fee mitigation funding and fee and access plan funding for submission to HEFCW

2018/19 to 2020/21 Reaching Wider Programme Plan to HEFCW	
Vice-Chancellor's authorised signature:	
Date of Vice-Chancellor approval:	
Date:	

