

Cylchlythyr | Circular

Supporting anti-racism in higher education: 2023/24 guidance and allocations

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To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales
Response by: 18 October 2024
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This circular provides guidance to support anti-racism, including details of HEFCW's £1m allocation for 2023/24 along with our match funding expectations.

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Introduction

1. The circular provides information on 2023/24 funding allocations, match funding expectations and monitoring requirements to support race equality and anti-racism in higher education. Our first guidance referred to 'race equality', but taking account of [Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#), in future, we will refer to this funding stream as anti-racism funding.
2. Universities will receive funding in one tranche in November 2023, though we reserve the right to withhold or clawback funding where we have concerns about performance, unsatisfactory progress or reporting.
3. This circular should be read together with [safe and inclusive higher education: supporting equality and diversity in higher education](#) (W23/06HE).
4. HEFCW's [remit letter 2023-2024](#) (paragraph 8) commends higher education's contribution to an anti-racist Wales. The Minister also sets out expectations for the sector to build on this work and 'to provide the platform for cultural change required for anti-racism to become embedded'.
5. The Welsh Government's [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#) current actions are for completion by September 2023. We may provide additional in-year guidance in 2023/24 should new goals and/or actions for higher education be published.
6. The Commission for Tertiary Education and Research will be established on 1 April 2024. We will work with universities and colleges in 2023/24 to take account of the implications of working in a post-16 education context and share relevant practice, as appropriate. HEFCW is a member of the Further Education Anti-Racist Wales Steering Group to help inform and support this transition.

The purpose of anti-racism funding

7. This funding is to prevent inequality, tackle racism and support anti-racist universities and sector, support culture change and contribute to delivering the Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan.
8. While this funding is framed in terms of race, universities should use it to take action on issues as they intersect with race, including, but not limited to identity-based harassment, refugees and asylum seekers, violence and abuse, and race, religion and belief. Universities UK has published two briefings on religion and belief which should inform race equality considerations: [Tackling antisemitism: a practical guide for universities](#) (June 2021) and [Tackling Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred: practical guidance for universities](#) (December 2021). These briefings are part of its wider [changing the culture](#) series which sets out evidence and recommendations in response to violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students and staff.

2023/24 allocations and conditions of funding

9. In 2023/24 universities' allocations:
 - i. are subject to universities committing to match fund allocations (as in 2022/23 and for 2024/25)
 - ii. use HESA 2021/22 student data which are based on the HESA standard registration population, reduced to a headcount i.e. if a student has more than one enrolment then they are counted once;
 - iii. use student data which includes the whole student body: all modes, levels, domiciles;
 - iv. are based on verified 2021/22 HESA data which has been verified by the university;
 - v. as is our usual practice, Royal College of Music and Drama student data is included with University of South Wales data and allocation; and
 - vi. will be made as one payment in November 2023, subject to receipt of 2022/23 anti-racism monitoring reports;

10. Our expectations for the use of match funding are that:
 - i. the HEFCW allocation should not result in any decrease in universities' existing resourcing of anti-racism developments, including their commitment to achieve a charter;
 - ii. universities commit additional resource to support anti-racism actions, over and above the HEFCW £1m total allocation;
 - iii. where any existing anti-racism activities or services are funded through fee and access plan or other sources, these activities and services may be increased by HEFCW or university match funding. Where this is the case, the university must make clear in all reporting and anti-racism monitoring how and to what level this funding has enhanced activities and services and may be subject to audit by us;
 - iv. the match funding and the HEFCW allocation leads to an increase in pace, and progress towards, tackling racism to become anti-racist universities, improving race equality, and the achievement of a charter mark;
 - v. match funding or HEFCW funding can be used to meet the costs of relevant membership subscriptions, externally facilitated training or other external expertise.

11. 2023/24 allocations are as follows:

Institution	2023/24 HEFCW allocation (with £50K floor)	2023/24 Sector matched funding (no floor)	2023/24 Total
	£	£	£
University of South Wales	157,559	158,029	315,588
Aberystwyth University	50,302	50,452	100,755
Bangor University	71,623	71,836	143,459
Cardiff University	230,696	231,384	462,080
University of Wales Trinity Saint David	101,853	102,157	204,010
Swansea University	151,760	152,212	303,972
Cardiff Metropolitan University	85,950	86,206	172,156
Wrexham University	50,000	47,168	97,168
The Open University in Wales	100,257	100,556	200,812
Total	1,000,000	1,000,000	2,000,000

Deliverables and monitoring for 2023/24

12. Our 2023-2024 remit letter expects HEFCW to “ensure sustained progress against achievement of the actions, in particular to ensure early action is taken to review existing policies, processes, and procedures and to address racial pay disparities, and in so doing improve the experience of ethnic minority staff and students in higher education”. Given this focus on action, our request for deliverables relate to action planning.
13. Deliverables in 2023/24 should build on the 2022/23 anti-racism action plans to be submitted to us in October 2023. For 2023/24 monitoring, this will include submitting to the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research in October 2024:
 - i. A progress update to include actions completed in 2023/24 (this can be an updated action plan);
 - ii. Information on actions and deliverables in 2024/25 including but not limited to meeting new Anti-racist Wales Action Plan deliverables, when they become available, and achieving a race equality charter by July 2025;
 - iii. A funding statement to account for the HEFCW allocation and university match funding.
14. We recognise that the university’s race equality charter action plan may provide a satisfactory account for the majority of this funding and provide us with sufficient assurance on management and governance structures, actions, annual milestones, pace, progress made and ambition. Where this is not the case we will ask for additional information.

15. Should Welsh Government set new expectations on higher education or the post-16 sector during the funding period, we may ask for additional monitoring information.

Monitoring dates and returns

16. The 2023/24 monitoring submission date is **Friday, 18 October 2024**.
17. Please return completed monitoring (**Annex A**) to us. Contact details for the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research staff will be provided following its establishment on 1 April 2024.

Assessing the impact of our policies

18. We have carried out an impact assessment screening to help safeguard against discrimination and promote equality. We anticipate a positive impact on race, sex, religion and belief.
19. We 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. Contact equality@hefcw.ac.uk for more information about impact assessments.

Further information

20. For further information, contact Savanna Jones (savanna.jones@hefcw.ac.uk).