

Student Charter Guidance

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Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
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Introduction

1. This document provides revised guidance on developing and reviewing Student Charters. It applies to all HEFCW regulated or HEFCW funded institutions in Wales.
2. In the guidance we have identified a set of principles which should be considered by institutions, Students' Unions and the student body when reviewing the Student Charter. We have also outlined our expectations for the use of the Student Charter in practice, including oversight of the process for reviewing the Charter.
3. Institutions and Students' Unions will need to take account of this guidance in their Student Charters from the 2022/23 academic year.

Purpose and Principles

4. All regulated institutions in Wales are required to have a Student Charter in place as part of the [Quality Assessment Framework for Wales](#). Funded institutions are also required to have Student Charters in place, and to meet the expectations set out by HEFCW in the [Terms and Conditions](#) of funding.
5. The Student Charter should set out the mutual expectations, rights and responsibilities of institutions and their students, with appropriate links to further information, designed to support the student's learning experience. It is not a legal document, nor should it be used as a repository for key institutional policies and procedures.
6. The Student Charter should be a high level document which is applicable to the diverse student body and takes account of the needs of the individual student, including those with protected characteristics. It should provide signposts and links to more detailed information, such as regulations, student support, and course information.
7. The Student Charter guidance was originally developed to take account of the outcomes of the Student Charter Group (SCG) in England, which produced a report and recommendations for the development of Student Charters in January 2011¹. We continue to endorse the recommendations of the SCG, and have reflected these in a set of principles for developing Student Charters which are outlined below:
8. The Student Charter should:
 - be a meaningful document which aligns to the institutional strategic direction and the needs of individual students.
 - be developed in partnership by the institution and the student body and reflect the nature of the partnership approach between students, staff and institutions in Wales.

¹ [Student Charter Group: final report \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- be informed by views from students and staff across the institution including those studying at other partners via sub-contractual arrangements
- clearly articulate the mutual expectations, roles and responsibilities of institutions and the student body.
- encompass all students of the institution, including those studying at other partners via sub-contractual arrangements.
- be accessible, including via a range of formats, for current and prospective students and communicated widely to students at all locations including at partner providers to ensure the whole student body is aware of it.
- signpost students to appropriate information which supports their learning experience.
- take account of the goals, ways of working and sustainable development principle of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.

Expectations

9. Our expectations for the development, review and use of Student Charters are outlined below. This is not an exhaustive list and may be amended in future as needs change.
10. We reserve the right to engage with institutions and Students' Unions on the use of Students Charters in line with our regulatory approach and as part of the Quality Assessment Framework for Wales.
 - The Student Charter should be reviewed on an annual basis. Where this review includes the Students' Union as the representative group, sabbatical officers should ensure that they are able to represent the views of the diverse student body in discussing and recommending changes to the Charter, taking account of student views and working with student representatives as appropriate. Institutions should support students and sabbatical officers to be able to do this.
 - Assurance that the Student Charter has been reviewed should be provided by the governing body to HEFCW on an annual basis.
 - The senior management team must be engaged with the development of the Student Charter and the review process.
 - Higher education institutions should have a single document which covers the whole institution and student body, including those undertaking HE study at partner institutions such as further education institutions.
 - Regulated or funded further education institutions (FEIs) should develop their own Student Charters for their HE students. FEIs offering sub-contractual provision should ensure that students are made aware of the higher education institution Student Charter which applies to them during their duration of study with the institution.
 - The Student Charter should be promoted by the institution and the Students' Union to the student body.
 - The Student Charter should be a short and concise document, with high level statements about:
 - the institution's commitment to fostering safe and inclusive environments as an essential element of its provision;

- the institution's commitment towards equality and diversity;
- the institution's commitment to promoting student well-being and health, including mental health and supporting suicide-safer approaches;
- how the institution addresses its responsibilities under the Welsh Language Act, taking account of the Welsh Language Standards and promoting study through the medium of Welsh;
- the institution's engagement with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, including a link to the Coleg's website;
- how the student interests are protected, eg in cases where a course or institution ceases to exist;
- confirmation that the institution complies with their responsibilities under consumer protection law, as set out by the Competition and Markets Authority, including the provision of information on the cost of study;
- how students can complain about academic matters, including information on any support regarding complaints, and on raising issues with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator and HEFCW, as appropriate.
- Where appropriate, the Charter should provide links to further information, which are expected to include as a minimum:
 - The processes in place which demonstrate the commitment to fostering safe and inclusive environments;
 - The institution's recent well-being and health strategy as well as further information on the support available and how to access it, including reference to third sector bodies where appropriate;
 - Information on how students may access financial support;
 - Signposting to where students may find information on opportunities to study through the medium of Welsh (eg on course web pages);
 - Information on opportunities, where appropriate, for assessing student performance in Welsh, regardless of the language of tuition;
 - Signposting to where students may find information on global study opportunities, placements or other initiatives offered by the institution.