

Cylchlythyr | Circular

Outcomes of the review on the additional costs of Welsh Medium Study at Higher Education Institutions in Wales

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To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales
Principals of directly-funded further education colleges in Wales
Response by: No response required
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This circular provides the outcomes of the London Economics (LE) Wales review on the additional costs of Welsh Medium Study at higher education institutions in Wales.

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Introduction

1. This circular provides the outcomes of the London Economics (LE) Wales review on the additional costs of Welsh Medium study at higher education institutions in Wales.

Background

2. Welsh Government has a [strategy](#) to achieve one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050. In the [stage one consultation](#) of HEFCW's teaching funding review, we confirmed that we would commission a new review on the additional costs of Welsh Medium study. The outcomes would inform any changes to how we fund Welsh Medium higher education provision, as part of the teaching funding review, to support progress towards the Welsh Government target.
3. In 2022, we commissioned LE Wales to undertake research on the additional costs of Welsh Medium study in higher education (HE) institutions. This report updated aspects of the work commissioned by HEFCW from [London Economics](#) in 2006. We asked LE Wales to provide evidence-based recommendations to HEFCW for potential approaches to the funding of Welsh medium HE provision, including identifying a reasonable uplift amount for use in a Welsh medium premium, where appropriate.
4. The final report was submitted to HEFCW in November 2022 and recommendations resulting from HEFCW's consideration of this report were agreed by the Council at its March 2023 meeting.

Outcomes of the LE Wales Report

5. The report from the review of the additional costs of Welsh Medium study can be found at **Annex A**.
6. The main conclusions of the review are as follows:
 - LE Wales concluded the median cost per student per credit of Welsh medium (WM) modules was considerably higher, at £19, compared to £9 for English medium (EM). This is mainly because WM cohorts tended to be smaller in size compared to EM cohorts which had increased in size since the 2006 review. At the time of the 2006 review the median cost per student per credit of WM modules was £19 compared to £17 for EM provision.
 - Typically WM modules have significantly lower number of students enrolled than EM modules, which means the average cost per student per credit is generally higher for WM provision.
 - Other factors that impacted on the cost of providing WM modules relative to EM modules include: whether modules were new; the mode of study and the subject area of study with science, technology, engineering, maths or medicine (STEMM) tending to be higher cost than other subjects, as these typically require a higher number of contact hours due to laboratories or other activities.

7. The review identified, as expected, that WM provision was generally more expensive for institutions to deliver. Our response to the outcomes of the review is below.

HEFCW funding for Welsh Medium provision

8. Welsh Medium provision continues to be a priority area which requires sustained additional funding if institutions are to be successful in contributing to the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy.
9. Given that we will be operating within a similar budget in 2023/24 as for 2022/23, the scope to make significant changes to our Welsh Medium funding is limited.
10. We have discussed the outcomes of the report with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, including how we can achieve a greater alignment of our respective funding to ensure a positive impact on opportunities for students to study through the medium of Welsh.
11. We considered the outcomes of the report as part of our wider review of teaching funding. We considered options for how Welsh Medium provision could be funded, which included its integration into the revised credit-based model considered in the review of teaching funding.
12. We also considered introducing WM premium funding for all full-time taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision. However, this would require considerably more funding than we currently have available.
13. As an interim measure, and to signal the direction of travel which is necessary to support Welsh Government priorities, we will expand the existing Welsh Medium premium (currently only available for part-time undergraduate credits studied through the medium of Welsh) to include full-time undergraduate credits that receive the expensive subjects premium or the higher cost subjects premium that are studied through the medium of Welsh. These subjects are as follows:
 - Medicine and Dentistry (non-clinical).
 - Science.
 - Engineering and Technology.
 - Mathematical Sciences, IT and Computing.
14. We will also increase the uplift used in the WM premium (currently 34%). We are modelling affordable options and will confirm the uplift when the funding allocations for 2023/24 are published.
15. Our budgetary processes are ongoing and we expect to confirm our final funding allocations for the 2023/24 academic year by the end of July 2023. Information on our funding assumptions for academic year 2023/24 will be circulated to HEFCW funded institutions in April 2023.

Further information

16. For further information, contact Hedd Boyles (hedd.boyles@hefcw.ac.uk).

Assessing the impact of our policies

17. We have carried out an impact assessment screening to help safeguard against discrimination and promote equality.
18. The impact assessment identified that the proposal to expand the Welsh Medium premium to include full-time students studying expensive and higher costs subjects through the medium of Welsh should have a positive impact on the Welsh Language and increase opportunities for individuals studying through the medium of Welsh. We will continue to work alongside the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to align our funding to maximise opportunities for students to study through the medium of Welsh, both now and in the future.