



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

**Information pack for applicants**

**Higher Education Funding Council  
for Wales (HEFCW)**

**Appointment of Chair**

**Closing date:  
21 February 2020 at 1600**



**The Commissioner for  
Public Appointments**

# Higher Education Funding Council for Wales

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## **Making an application**

Thank you for your interest in the appointment of a chair to the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW). The new chair will provide leadership and strategic direction to the Council in supporting HEFCW executive in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities as the regulator and funder of higher education in Wales. The attached Annexes provide details on the role of the chair and the person specification, the role and responsibilities of HEFCW and the selection process.

To make an application please visit the Welsh Government public appointment website here:

<https://cymru-wales.tal.net/vx/lang-en-GB/mobile-0/appcentre-3/brand-2/candidate/jobboard/vacancy/7/adv/>.

To apply for this role, click on the vacancy for the appointment of chair and click on 'Apply' at the bottom left hand corner. The first time you apply for a post, you will need to complete a registration form for the Welsh Government's online application system. You will only need to register once, and you will be able to keep yourself updated on the progress of your application, and any other applications you make, via your registered account.

Once you've registered, you'll be able to access the application form. To apply you will need to upload a personal statement and CV to the 'Reasons for applying' section of the online application form.

### **Personal Statement**

The personal statement is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria set out in the person specification. How you choose to present the information is up to you. However, you should aim to provide detailed examples that demonstrate how your knowledge and experience matches each of the criteria, and which describe what your role was in achieving a specific result. It will also benefit the selection panel if you can be clear which particular evidence you provide relates to which criteria. Providing separate paragraphs in relation to each criterion is common practice.

### **CV**

Please ensure your CV includes brief details of your current or most recent post and the dates you occupied this role. Please identify any past or present Ministerial appointments.

**Please limit your personal statement and CV to two pages each. Your application may be rejected if you exceed this limit.**

## Higher Education Funding Council for Wales

### Indicative timetable

Closing date: **21 February 2020**  
Shortlisting: 1 April 2020  
Interviews: 6 May 2020

### Diversity Statement

The Welsh Government believes that public bodies should have board members who reflect Welsh society - people from all walks of life - to help them understand people's needs and make better decisions. This is why the Welsh Government is encouraging a wide and diverse range of individuals to apply for appointments to public bodies. Applications are particularly welcome from all under-represented groups including women, people under 30 years of age, black, Asian and minority ethnic people, disabled people, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

### Guaranteed Interview Scheme - Positive about Disability

The Welsh Government operates a Positive about Disabled People scheme and welcome applications from people with disabilities. The scheme guarantees an interview to disabled people if they meet the minimum criteria for the post. The application form also enables you to detail any specific needs or equipment that you may need if invited to attend an interview.

### Contacts:

For further information regarding the selection process, please contact:

Public Appointments  
Public Bodies Unit  
Email: [publicappointments@gov.wales](mailto:publicappointments@gov.wales)

For further information regarding the role of HEFCW and the role of Chair please contact Colette Eley in the WG sponsor team:

Tel: 03000 250523  
Email: [colette.eley@gov.wales](mailto:colette.eley@gov.wales)

or Dale Hall, HEFCW Council Secretary:

Tel: 029 2085 9665  
Email: [dale.hall@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:dale.hall@hefcw.ac.uk)

If you need any further assistance in applying for this role, please contact:  
[publicappointments@gov.wales](mailto:publicappointments@gov.wales).

For further information about Public Appointments in Wales, please visit  
[www.gov.wales/publicappointments](http://www.gov.wales/publicappointments).

## **Appointment of a Chair of the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales**

### **Role description and person specification**

#### **Role and responsibilities**

The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 provides for the Council to have a membership of between 8 and 12 members, including the Chair and the CEO.

The Chair is expected to work closely with HEFCW Members, the Chief Executive and other HEFCW officials in providing strategic direction and giving advice and encouragement to the HEFCW in the fulfilment of its statutory responsibilities and in the initiation, development and implementation of policy. They will be party to key decisions concerning the Council's strategy.

The Chair will ensure that authoritative and timely advice is provided to the Welsh Government Ministers and officials and will provide feedback to the sector itself.

#### **Person Specification**

The Chair will provide strong and effective leadership and demonstrate an ability to work in partnership and build consensus. They will have the ability to test opinion and challenge current thinking. The Chair must also be able to deal confidently with Welsh Government Ministers and officials and the Heads and Chairs of Higher Education Institutions. The Chair must uphold, and will be widely perceived to uphold, the highest standards of integrity and impartiality, and be able to maintain respect for the work of the Council.

In appointing members of the Council, the Welsh Ministers are required by section 62(4) of the 1992 Act to:

(a) have regard to the desirability of including persons who appear to have experience of, and to have shown capacity in, the provision of higher education or to have held, and to have shown capacity in, any position carrying responsibility for the provision of higher education and, in appointing such persons, have regard to the desirability of their currently being engaged in the provision of higher education or in carrying responsibility for such provision, and

(b) have regard to the desirability of including persons who appear to have experience of, and to have shown capacity in, industrial, commercial or financial matters or the practice of any profession'.

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The Minister will take account of these requirements in making the Chair appointment. The Welsh Government would therefore welcome applications from candidates with a successful track record in industry, commerce, employer representation, or the practice of a profession. Whilst desirable these qualities are not essential to the post.

### Essential Criteria

In addition to the above person specification, the following criteria are considered essential to the post:

- knowledge and understanding of higher education and of the challenges it faces in the UK and international context;
- knowledge and understanding of the wider post-16 education and training sector and an understanding of the interaction with higher education;
- empathy for students, their experience and life chances;
- political awareness and an ability to develop political networks;
- a clear understanding and commitment to equality and diversity and a willingness to challenge discriminatory practices; and
- a good understanding of governance; and
- ability to manage relationships with senior executives to deliver organisational goals

A successful candidate who has formerly worked for one of the Welsh higher education institutions will not represent the interests of that institution whilst on the Council, but will be expected to take an impartial and holistic view of the challenges facing the whole of the Welsh HE sector.

To be considered, you must be able to demonstrate that you have the qualities, skills and experience to meet all the essential criteria for appointment.

### Welsh Language

The ability to communicate in Welsh is welcome but is not essential to this post.

### Key facts about the post

Location:	Meetings are generally held at HEFCW's offices in Bedwas, Caerphilly, South Wales, although will occasionally be held at other locations throughout Wales.
Time Commitment:	Around six days per month. At least six Council meetings are held annually.
Tenure of office:	Initial appointment of three years renewable for a further term depending on need and performance
Remuneration:	£24,264 pa plus reasonable travel and other reasonable expenses.

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This may be the last Chair to be appointed to lead the HEFCW Council as the Welsh Government is currently progressing its plans, including new legislation, to establish a new Commission for Tertiary Education and Research. The Commission will be responsible for regulating and funding the whole post-16 education and training sector in Wales. Currently, it is envisaged the new Commission will be operational with effect from April 2023.

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### **Eligibility**

Applicants should be persons who conduct themselves at all times in a manner which will maintain public confidence.

Candidates should note that being a member of HEFCW in receipt of remuneration is a disqualifying post for membership of the House of Commons under the House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975, Schedule 1, Part III and the National Assembly for Wales under the National Assembly for Wales (Disqualification) Order 2015 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/1536/contents/made>.

Due to the strength of the conflict of interest, and to avoid misperceptions about the integrity of Council decisions, current employees of Welsh HEIs are not eligible to apply.

### **Conflict of Interests**

You will be asked to declare any private interests which may, or may be perceived to, conflict with the role and responsibilities as Chair of HEFCW, including any business interests and positions of authority outside of the role in HEFCW.

Any conflicts of interest will be explored at interview. If appointed, you will also be required to declare these interests on a register which is available to the public.

### **Standards in Public Life**

You will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct. All successful candidates will be asked to subscribe to the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies in Wales, you can access this document at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-conduct-for-board-members-of-public-bodies>.

## The role and responsibilities of HEFCW

### Background

The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (“HEFCW” or “the Council”) is a Welsh Government sponsored body established in May 1992 under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 (“the 1992 Act”).

It is the body responsible for the regulation of higher education in Wales, under powers contained in the Higher Education (Wales) Act 2015, and administers funds made available by the Welsh Government to support education, research and associated activities at nine universities in Wales, including the Open University in Wales. It also provides funds for prescribed higher education courses at further education colleges.

In 2019-20 HEFCW will manage a budget in excess of £152m.

HEFCW is also subject to the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.

HEFCW’s Annual Report and Accounts for 2018-19, its Corporate Strategy for 2017-2020 and a copy of the Minister for Education’s Remit letter for 2019-20 are available on HEFCW’s website [www.hefcw.ac.uk](http://www.hefcw.ac.uk).

### Council’s Role

HEFCW’s principal tasks currently are twofold:

- to regulate higher education in Wales through the approval and monitoring of institutions’ fee and access plans; assessing the quality of HE in regulated institutions; and scrutinising the performance of HE through a framework for the organisation and management of the financial affairs of regulated institutions; and
- to distribute funds made available by the Welsh Government for the provision of education, supporting research and other eligible activities by higher education providers in Wales.

HEFCW also provides expert advice to the Welsh Government and the sector. Its Chief Executive is the designated Accounting Officer, having a specific responsibility relating to the use of public funds made available by the Welsh Government.

HEFCW’s Corporate Strategy 2017-20 sets out the priorities HEFCW will consider in pursuing its vision for a sustainable, accessible and internationally excellent higher education sector in Wales.

HEFCW’s vision is to sustain internationally excellent higher education in Wales, for the benefit of individuals, society and the economy in Wales, and more widely.

Its mission is to:

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- Fund higher education in Wales
- Regulate higher education providers in Wales
- Influence higher education with evidence-based advice and strong partnership working
- Work in partnership with students
- Operate effectively as an organisation.

## The selection process

The advisory assessment panel will assess candidates' CVs and personal statements to determine who it believes best meet the criteria for the role, and who will be invited to interview. The panel will rely only on the information you provide in your CV and statement to assess whether you have the skills and experience required. Please ensure that you provide evidence to support how you meet all of the essential criteria.

The selection panel will be chaired by Huw Morris, Director, Skills Higher Education and Lifelong Learning (SHELL), Welsh Government and will also comprise a Senior Independent Panel Member and sector representatives. The other panel members will be Julie Lydon, Vice Chancellor, University of South Wales and Robert Lloyd-Griffiths, Director Wales, Institute of Directors.

Your application may be "long-listed", subject to the volume of applications received, before it is passed to the shortlisting panel for consideration. You should be aware that in this situation, your application might not be considered in full by all of the panel.

We anticipate that during early April, the panel will have decided who will be invited for interview in May 2020.

The panel will select for interview only the strongest applicants who it feels have demonstrated that they best meet the criteria set out in the person specification. However, if you have applied under the guaranteed interview scheme and you meet the minimum essential criteria for the post, then you will also be invited for interview.

If you are invited to interview and if the interview date is not already provided in this information pack, we will aim to provide you with as much notice as we can of the interview date. If you are unable to make the arranged interview date, we will endeavour to re-arrange it but it might not be possible due to time constraints within the appointment timetable or selection panel availability.

You will receive email communication from the Application Centre to let you know whether or not you have been invited to be interviewed. It is our intention that interviews will take place in Cardiff.

If invited to interview, the panel will question you about your skills and experience, asking specific questions to assess whether you meet the criteria set out for the post.

Candidates who the panel believe are 'appointable', will be recommended to the Minister for Education who will make the final decision. The Minister may choose to meet appointable candidates before making a decision. If she does, she will meet all candidates and in the presence of the panel chair or their nominated representative. There will be a time gap between interview and a final appointment decision being made. Candidates who have been interviewed will be kept informed of progress.

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**As the appointment of chair to HEFCW is regarded as a ‘*Significant Appointment*’ by the Commissioner for Public Appointments the Minister’s preferred candidate will (following an interview in front of the Advisory Assessment Panel) be invited to appear before the Children, Young People and Education Committee of the National Assembly for Wales to take part in a pre-appointment hearing.**

Departmental officials will support the preferred candidate throughout the pre-appointment scrutiny process.

If you are successful, you will receive a letter appointing you as chair of the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, which will confirm the terms on which the appointment is offered.

If you are unsuccessful at interview, you will be notified by Welsh Government. We appreciate it takes a lot of time and effort to apply for roles and that feedback is a valuable part of the process. As a result, the letter will provide the details of who you may approach for feedback on your interview and application, if you so wish

### **Queries**

For queries about your application, please contact [publicappointments@gov.wales](mailto:publicappointments@gov.wales).

### **If you are not completely satisfied**

Welsh Government will aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, please contact [publicappointments@gov.wales](mailto:publicappointments@gov.wales).