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Cylchlythyr | Circular

Wales Studies

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To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales
Principals of directly-funded further education colleges in Wales
Response by: 23 November 2018
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This circular asks directly funded higher education institutions and further education institutions to provide information on the proportion of Wales studies within higher education to inform a launch by The Learned Society of Wales to celebrate and support Wales studies.

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



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
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Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn y Gymraeg | This document is also available in Welsh

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg neu yn Saesneg | We welcome correspondence in Welsh and in English

Introduction

1. This circular asks directly funded higher education institutions and further education institutions to provide information on the proportion of Wales Studies within higher education to inform a launch by The Learned Society of Wales to celebrate and support Wales Studies (formerly known as Welsh Studies).

Background

2. In 2012/13 HEFCW received its remit letter from Welsh Government that requested HEFCW to “continue to focus on the delivery of Welsh medium learning and the disciplines of what might be called Welsh Studies, including both the study of Welsh history and literature, culture, society and politics in both languages” amongst other subjects of specific importance. HEFCW carried out a survey with institutions on the proportion of provision which included Welsh studies. HEFCW subsequently held an event on Welsh studies in November 2013. The outcomes of this were published in [circular W14/29HE](#).
3. Circular W14/29HE also confirmed that The Learned Society of Wales would take forward the concept of Welsh studies, encompassing both teaching and research. This would be done in partnership with the sector and other interested parties, with a view to exploring how Welsh Studies might most appropriately be defined as a broad subject area and how it could best be safeguarded and developed within individual higher education institutions and on a sector-wide basis.
4. The Learned Society has convened a Wales Studies Steering Group. This pan-Wales network of individuals and institutions, aims to celebrate and support activities which centre upon research, across all the disciplines, and its necessary infrastructure, into Wales as a subject area, including the flourishing of fine and performative arts. It includes nearly all of the major national and regional institutions engaged in research, research-support and the promotion of the fine and performative arts with a Wales facing focus.
5. The Steering Group plans to launch a brochure in April 2019 highlighting examples of work done, in progress, and future imperative projects requiring investment, with the ultimate objective of encouraging the establishment of an all-party group of national Members to take an interest in, ownership of, and promote these aspects within Wales and beyond.
6. The Steering Group advised that it would be useful for HEFCW to carry out a follow-up survey to determine whether provision had increased in the above areas during the past six years.

Scope of the survey

7. As in the previous survey, we are asking institutions directly for this data to be able to provide a picture of the current position. We will then be able to compare this data with the data collected from the first survey. We have undertaken preliminary work on this to minimise the burden on institutions by providing this data.
8. While the survey is again primarily concerned with taught provision, we would request that institutions provide an indication of how research profile and activity within relevant disciplines contributes to research and scholarship within Wales Studies.
9. We have decided to use the same subject areas from the previous survey to obtain comparable data. However, we recognise that further provision may now be available that encapsulates what could be covered by “culture, society and politics” in the content of Wales Studies.
10. The survey allows for institutions to make reasonable judgements as to the extent of Wales Studies that is or is not included in their provision. We have, however, taken the view that language awareness and bilingualism can be regarded as part of Wales Studies for the purpose of the survey.
11. Given the requirement for comparable data, we will focus on specific subject areas that we consider could have significant Wales Studies content. However, we recognise that institutions may have additional provision that they consider would also fall within this survey. You are therefore asked to consider whether any additional provision falls within the remit of this survey and to provide information as appropriate.
12. In line with the previous survey, we have identified the following subjects as being the most likely to include Wales Studies:
 - Politics
 - Geography
 - Law
 - Tourism
 - Linguistics
 - English Literature
 - Welsh Language and Literature
 - Celtic Studies
 - History
 - Music
 - Drama/Theatre/Film
 - Education

For ease of reference we will refer to the above subjects as the “**main subjects**”. Other subject areas identified by institutions for the purpose of the survey will be referred to as “**other subjects**”.

13. We confirm that Wales Studies is not primarily focussed on the language of delivery. We expect to see reference to Wales Studies in provision delivered in both English and Welsh, and recognise that some modules delivered through the medium of Welsh may have minimal or no Wales Studies component.
14. We have recognised two elements to the survey:
 - a. Identifying specific modules which have a Wales Studies context
 - b. Commentary by institutions on subject areas and various disciplines where Wales Studies forms part of the curriculum.
15. We have decided not to include the Open University in the module survey. This aligns with the approach taken in the previous survey. Please refer to paragraph 35 for how we advise the Open University to contribute to the survey.
16. This survey has included directly funded further education institutions (FEIs) that deliver higher education provision. We note that FEIs were not provided with a module list in the previous survey as they did not submit HESA data at that time. For this survey we would expect that the FEIs delivering HE provision submit appropriate responses.

a. Module survey

17. We have looked at module titles of provision extracted from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data for 2016/17 for the following Joint Academic Coding System (JACS) codes, which reflect the main subjects. We have used these as a starting point. Some JACS codes have changed since the last survey in accordance with JACS 3.0 and this is reflected below:
 - L200 to L290: Politics
 - L700, L711, L720 to L727: Geography
 - M100, M110 to M112, M200: Law
 - N800, N830 to N832, N870: Hospitality, Leisure, Tourism and Transport
 - Q100 to Q190: Linguistics
 - Q200, Q210: Comparative literary studies
 - Q300, Q310, Q320 to Q323, Q330, Q390: English language and literature
 - Q560 to Q561: Welsh language and literature
 - Q910, Q920: Translation
 - V100 to V490: History and Archaeology
 - W300, to W390: Music
 - W400 to W490: Drama, Theatre
 - W510, W540, W550, W590: Dance
 - W600 to W690: Cinematics and Photography
 - W800, W810, W820, W830, W890: Imaginative writing

As previously noted we do not wish to place undue burden on institutions and thus we have sought the following main subjects as a starting point to be highly likely to include Wales Studies content. We acknowledge the inclusion of Wales Studies might not be clear where a module covers a broad range of topics or a generic topic and that the subject content may vary by individual institution.

18. We expect institutions to use a robust approach rather than the approach taken in paragraph 17 in determining provision which includes Wales Studies. Modules with Wales or Welsh in their title or a title in the Welsh language have not automatically been selected for our list. We have applied the same decision-making process to English language titles in considering whether they have a Wales Studies context.
19. We ask that, for each module considered to have an element of Wales Studies, you indicate the representative proportion of what constitutes this. We will provide each institution with a table (Table A) for each module where the proportion can be indicated. We have split the proportions into three categories: below 50%, 50% to 75% and above 75%. We recognise that some modules have ceased since the previous survey, which used data from 2011/12, and that you may have new modules available since 2016/17. You may wish to add any new modules to the list separately.
20. We will provide each institution with an extracted Wales Studies module list (**Table A**), as well as a list including modules we did not include (**Table B**).
21. **Annex A** details the general principles we have applied in selecting modules, in accordance with a more specific approach to JACS codes.
22. We have noted Education as one of the key subject areas for institutions to look into in detail. However, we have not included Education in the module list. Further information is available at paragraphs 27-29.

b. Commentary on Wales studies

23. The commentary on Wales Studies provision will be divided between the two categories of “**main subjects**” and “**other subjects**”.
24. If institutions consider that their overall institutional mission and culture contribute to supporting Wales Studies, we would like you to include and a short supporting paragraph in your response.

Main subjects

25. For each of the main subjects, where they occur in your curriculum, please provide a commentary, covering such points such as:
 - The place of Wales Studies within the overall provision of the subjectFor example:

- the contribution towards students' understanding of the history, literature, culture, society and politics of Wales;
- its relevance to an appropriate curriculum;
- whether the Wales Studies element is essential or desirable and the extent to which it is compulsory; and
- the steps taken to maintain or enhance the Wales Studies aspect.
- Popularity with students
For example:
 - the attractiveness of modules where programmes are wholly Wales Studies focussed;
 - the number of students studying Wales Studies modules; and
 - whether students favour modules that include an element of Wales Studies.
- Welsh medium provision
For example:
 - the balance between Welsh language and English language Wales Studies provision;
 - whether Wales Studies provision is primarily undertaken through the Welsh language; and
 - whether Wales Studies provision is primarily available through the Welsh language.
- Research
For example:
 - the extent for which research activity has a focus on Wales Studies; and
 - its contribution to research and scholarship in the quality in the discipline overall, as well as to Wales specific research.
- The **challenges** which you face in maintaining or enhancing Wales Studies provision in the immediate or longer term
- **Other factors** that you may wish to draw to our attention

26. The above list should be used as a guide to give a view of an assessment of the scope, strengths, challenges that Wales Studies will face in the sector and the potential achievements.

27. Please keep responses brief, at no more than two sides of A4.

Education

28. We have not included Education in the module list for reasons explained above. Aspects of education cover a wide range of provision which may, or may not, refer to Wales Studies to a greater or lesser degree. It would be difficult therefore to determine the meaningful modules without the curriculum context. However, we recognise the importance of including this subject area within our survey.

29. The “Cwricwlwm Cymreig” remains a key requirement of training for initial teacher education (ITE) for school teaching. We consider that it would

reflect provision from Wales Studies. However, it would be useful for ITE providers to advise how this requirement is fulfilled.

30. We recognise that a similar focus to the Cwricwlwm Cymreig will be included in other provision that includes education within a school setting. We expect that training for other settings within education would include or require an understanding of bilingualism, and may require an awareness or understanding of the Welsh historical, political, legal and cultural context. We would be grateful if institutions could include in their response a specific reference to how Wales Studies is reflected in their education portfolios. It may be useful to identify particular modules with reference to Wales Studies.

Celtic Studies

31. We understand that normally the delivery of provision of Celtic language and literature is via institutions' Welsh departments. Therefore please include a specific reference to how the Wales Studies is incorporated into Celtic Studies, and to what extent.

Other subjects

32. We note that the list of modules provided is not a complete list and invite institutions to provide us with a brief commentary on where you consider other provision contains Wales Studies. Please bring provision with a particular strong focus on the Wales' Studies content to our attention.
33. Other subjects that may contain Wales Studies have been set out against their JACS codes in **Annex B**. We expect institutions to advise where they consider the content in these areas to be "not significant" or "not relevant".

Cross-curricular or interdisciplinary programmes

34. We have mainly focussed on specific subject areas for the purpose of this survey. However, we recognise that students may study a joint or combined degree that includes Wales Studies in more than one discipline. Therefore it would be helpful for institutions to advise whether the provision of Wales' Studies is delivered through specific interdisciplinary programmes.

The Open University in Wales

35. We have not included the Open University in this module survey, as its courses are delivered at a UK level. However we recognise that certain programmes and modules will include content from the Wales' Studies provision that should be included within this survey's findings. We therefore

invite the Open University to provide us with an appropriate commentary on its contribution to Wales Studies. We would encourage making reference to specific modules.

Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

36. We continue to work closely in partnership with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and will share the findings of this survey during liaison meetings this year.

Timetable

37. We will send out module lists (Tables A and B) to individual institutions by email to the Vice-Chancellor and institutions' data contacts by 26 October 2018.
38. We would be grateful if you could send your responses by email to Savanna Jones (savanna.jones@hefcw.ac.uk) by 30 November 2018.

Further information / responses to

39. For further information, contact Savanna Jones (tel 029 2085 9737; email savanna.jones@hefcw.ac.uk).

Selection of modules

We will send to each institution a list of their modules, in the main subjects, where we consider there is Wales Studies content (**Table A**) and a list of the modules where this is not likely (**Table B**).

In preparing **Table A**, we have included modules where the titles indicate clearly that they cover Wales Studies or that some Wales studies content seems likely.

As noted in the paragraph 11 of the circular, we may have excluded modules that include Wales Studies content, and presented them in Table B. We would invite institutions to indicate in **Table B** any modules they deem to include Wales Studies.

We recognise that there may be modules that include a very small Wales Studies element, therefore the institution may prefer to deal with this in a narrative way through its commentary.

Modules including extended projects, special subjects dissertations, work experience, etc, have not been included in general, unless it is clear from the titles that these contain Wales Studies. Postgraduate research modules have also been excluded, although we would invite institutions to advise on the content of Wales Studies in their individual commentary.

Politics (L200 to L290)

Modules with a British or UK context have been included. Excluded modules include those concerned with international matters and on Europe/European Union, and modules on particular topics or aspects of the discipline. We have included modules with a title including Wales Studies content.

Geography (L700 to L711, L720 to L727)

We have generally included modules under the codes above, as the module titles recognise core areas of the discipline which can be expected to include British and Welsh geography within these.

Law (M100, M110, M112, M200)

We have included modules where the titles indicate that they are likely to cover the legal system in England and Wales. Modules which deal with particular aspects of the law, eg, contract law, company law have been excluded.

Hospitality, Leisure, Tourism and Transport (N800, N830 to N832, N870)

Generally, in looking at these codes modules which appeared under these codes covering leisure and sports management etc have been excluded. Our focus has been on tourism in the Welsh context.

Linguistics (Q100 to Q190)

Generally we have included modules where the title indicates a focus on the Welsh language or bilingualism. We recognise that these modules cover an extensive range of topics and there may be variation in the content of Wales Studies in individual institutions.

English literature (Q300, Q310, Q320 to Q323, Q330, Q390)

Generally only modules which have a specific reference to Wales, Welsh or Anglo-Welsh literature have been included. We recognise though that within the study of particular periods or genres, Welsh authors and poets, etc, can be expected to be included.

Welsh language and literature (Q560, Q561)

We have included the majority of modules here, except perhaps for some generic Welsh medium modules on study skills or personal development, etc, which are not likely to include specific Wales Studies content.

Translation (Q910, Q920)

Generally we have only included modules involving Welsh as one of the languages. However, we recognise that modules dealing with generic principles or specialised aspects of translation may include reference to the Welsh language/context.

History and Archaeology (V100 to V490)

We have included Welsh history modules as well as modules that cover periods of British or European History as we would expect an element of Welsh history to be included. We have taken a similar approach with archaeology.

Music (W300 to W390)

Many of the modules under these codes cover instrumental studies, composition, orchestration etc or did not otherwise suggest a Welsh studies context or component. These modules have been excluded.

Drama/Theatre/Dance/Photography/ Miscellaneous creative arts (W400 to W490, W500 to W590, W600 to W690, W800 to W90 and W900)

Generally, only modules where the Wales studies content is fairly evident have been included. For Welsh medium modules, we have considered these in the context of the overall range of modules offered by an institution. We have often excluded these where they seem to mirror English modules which we have also excluded. However, we appreciate that some of the modules in both English and Welsh may include Wales Studies content.

Imaginative writing (W800 to W890)

We have only included Welsh medium creative writing modules. However, we recognise that there may be some English medium modules which incorporate a Wales or Welsh context.

A Medicine and Dentistry
B Subjects Allied to Medicine

Within these disciplines, students may need understanding of the legal and political context in Wales, including devolution and its implications for the organisation of the health service. Cultural and language awareness as well as bilingualism in relation to the Welsh language may also be included.

C Biological Sciences

Fieldwork or special studies examples, may, involve Welsh locations or situations, which in turn require students to have an understanding of the historical, legal and political context in Wales. Aspects of Psychology may require cultural and language awareness in relation to the Welsh language.

D Veterinary sciences, agriculture and related subjects

Within these disciplines, students may require an understanding of the legal, political, cultural and historical context in Wales, including devolution, particularly for agriculture, forestry, environmental management, heritage management, etc.

K Architecture, building and planning

The cultural or historical context of Welsh environments and case studies, as well as a knowledge of the legal and political implications of devolution for planning and development etc., may be involved in the above disciplines.

L Social Studies

Aspects of Wales Studies could occur in the above subject grouping, beyond politics and geography which were identified as main subjects, for example, in economics and sociology. Social policy in particular can be expected to require an understanding of the cultural, legal and political context in Wales. Welsh language familiarisation and awareness can be required for professional qualifications within social work and related areas.

P Mass Communication and Documentation

Information services (including library, museum and archive studies) and Journalism may include aspects of Wales Studies, particularly if the course is preparing students to work in these professions in Wales.