

Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance Arrangements in Wales

Call for evidence

November 2014

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Background

On 18 November 2013, the Minister for Education and Skills announced that he had asked Professor Sir Ian Diamond, current Vice Chancellor of Aberdeen University, to chair a Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance Arrangements in Wales. On 19 February 2014 the Minister issued a Written Statement announcing the establishment of an expert Review Panel to support Professor Diamond in this endeavour and the terms of reference for the review. The terms of reference are attached at Annex A (see page 18). Details of Review Panel members are included in Annex B (see page 20).

The Review commenced in April 2014. In autumn 2015, Professor Diamond will produce a factual summary of the evidence he and his review team have collected as part of their work. His final report, including final recommendations, will be issued to the Minister by September 2016.

The final recommendations will reflect the need to ensure a world-class Welsh higher education system which supports jobs and growth. In addition, Welsh Government priorities for the Review include:

- widening access – ensuring that any future system has widening access as its core objective, is progressive and equitable
- supporting the skill needs of Wales
- strengthening part-time and postgraduate provision in Wales
- long-term financial sustainability.

Professor Diamond and the Review Panel are required to conduct a wide-ranging review and to produce a final report that provides clear advice and costed recommendations for the future funding of the HE sector and student finance arrangements in Wales. The recommendations contained in the final report will need to be deliverable, affordable and sustainable.

This call for evidence is a crucial part of the review process and HE funding debate. The Review Panel would welcome the submission of views and evidence from individuals and organisations. Your response will form an important part of the evidence base for Professor Diamond's final report and recommendations for the future of higher education funding in Wales.

Information on current funding and support arrangements can be found at:

www.hefcw.ac.uk/publications/circulars/circulars.aspx
www.studentfinancewales.co.uk
www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/practitioners.aspx

If you would like to speak to someone regarding the call for evidence please contact:

e-mail: HEReview@wales.gsi.gov.uk

A note from Professor Sir Ian Diamond



Higher education is a force for good. Nations which invest in higher education benefit from the high skills that graduates bring to the economy and from research which can impact both on growth and the well-being of citizens. In addition, higher education transforms lives and can make major inroads into reducing inequality through being an important driver of social mobility. In Wales, higher education is a vital component of the Welsh Government's drive for jobs and growth and a society which promotes equality, health and well-being for all its citizens.

Yet in today's challenging financial climate it is important that every penny is spent wisely and I was delighted to be asked by the Welsh Government to Chair a Review of Higher Education. Our aim is to provide innovative recommendations which will meet the ambitious vision described above while at the same time being financially sustainable for the public purse and enabling a successful higher education system across Wales.

It is vital that we, as a group, are informed by the views of as many stakeholders as possible. We want to be sure that all of your views are taken into account as we form our recommendations. I would therefore urge everyone to consider and respond to the questions in this call for evidence, either individually or as part of an organisational response.

The Review Panel is very much looking forward to reading your thoughts and thank you in advance for taking part and helping to shape the future of higher education funding in Wales.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Diamond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "D" at the beginning.

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

Call for evidence

Purpose

The purpose of this call for evidence is to capture your views and any supporting evidence that will inform the Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance Arrangements in Wales.

Instructions

You are invited to complete the enclosed questionnaire. Depending on your area of interest you may wish to respond to **one or more** of the questions posed.

The questionnaire can be completed by an individual or on behalf of an organisation. Please record your views against each question you wish to answer. Where possible please give reasons for your answers to help Professor Diamond and the Review Panel understand your views in full.

Please take time to complete the respondent details section. This will assist with the analysis of the call for evidence.

The questionnaire can be completed either electronically or as a hard copy. Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

Alison Bryant
Higher Education Funding Review Team
Higher Education Division
Department for Education and Skills
Welsh Government
Freepost NAT 8910
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3BR

Or e-mailed to: HEReview@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Please return your completed questionnaire no later than 27 February 2015.

Additional information or links to available evidence and research that informed your views can be included with your response. Please submit this along with your completed questionnaire. A space is provided at the end of this document to record any additional items.

If you have any queries about the call for evidence questionnaire please contact the review team on:

e-mail: HEReview@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Respondent details

To help with our analysis please let us know who completed this response.

Name	Carys Fisher
------	--------------

Are you responding in a personal capacity or on behalf of an organisation?

I am responding in a personal capacity []
I am responding on behalf of an organisation [x]

Contact details (optional)

Position/job title (where relevant)	Policy Executive
Name of organisation (where relevant)	UCAS
Contact address	c.fisher@ucas.ac.uk
e-mail address	c.fisher@ucas.ac.uk

In the event that there are any queries about your response, are you willing to be contacted by a member of the review team? Yes [] No []

If responding in a personal capacity, are these the views of:

- a current HE student? []
a former HE student? []
someone considering enrolling in HE in Wales? []
or elsewhere in the UK? []
a member of the HE sector teaching or support staff? []
an interested member of the community? []
Other: please specify

HE admissions shared service.

If a current or former HE student:

- Have you received student support funding to study in Wales []
Have you received student support funding to study elsewhere in the UK []

If responding on behalf of an organisation, which of these best describes your organisation:

Private sector [] Public sector [] Third sector []

Other: please specify

Registered charity.

If your organisation is a company/employer:

- is it based in Wales? [] is it based elsewhere in the UK? [x]
does it employ graduates? [] does it sponsor HE students? []

Please provide details of type of organisation/business sector classification:

UCAS provides information, advice and admissions services to nearly 700,000 applicants to

over 370 UK higher education providers (HEPs) each year. These applicants make over 2.5 million applications to higher education (HE) courses. UCAS services support applications for full-time HNCs, HNDs and foundation degrees as well as undergraduate and some postgraduate degrees.

Questionnaire

Q1. To what extent do current student finance/support arrangements (student grants and loans) meet the needs of HE students, support the delivery of high-quality HE provision and provide value for money?

The Review Panel is interested in hearing about the strengths and benefits of current arrangements as well as any weaknesses or issues.

Very well [] Well [] Not very well [] Don't know []

Please provide a reason(s) for your answer and where available, supporting evidence.

UCAS is responsible for managing admissions to higher education (HE) in the UK. The data UCAS possess relate to progression to UK HE and therefore it is not within our scope to comment on the appropriateness or fairness of the Welsh funding model.

The evidence we provide will detail the progress made in relation to widening participation (WP) and cross-border flows in recent application cycles and is drawn from published resources, such as the End of Cycle Report 2014¹.

UCAS considers one of the main benefits to the learner of the Welsh funding model is that the current fee arrangements enhances student choice and provides greater opportunity for Welsh student migration as it does not discriminate between UK destinations.

This funding policy has supported the progression of Welsh learners outside of Wales. Evidence of this is derived from the End of Cycle Report 2012². The increase in tuition fees saw overall young application rates fall after a long pattern of annual increases, making young people around 5 per cent or so less likely to apply than expected. On the other hand, in 2012, demand from Welsh-domiciled applicants remained fairly steady. However, a further dynamic is that a greater proportion of 18 year olds in Wales applied to institutions outside of Wales in 2012 than to institutions within Wales for the first time since 2004. In 2014, 40% of Welsh domiciled learners were accepted outside of Wales.

Data from the 2015 cycle suggests that this proportion may increase. The UCAS January 15 deadline statistical release shows that the number of applications from Welsh domicile applicants to Welsh institutions has declined by 3%, whereas the number of applications from Welsh domicile applicants to English institutions has increased 4%³.

So, notwithstanding the benefits of such grants in enabling progression to HE, UCAS acknowledges that Wales is unique in its set-up and understands the financial pressure generated by the system, which have led to this review. That said, UCAS understands that due to the balance of cross-border flows, the HE sector in Wales continues to receive more

¹ The full report can be found here: <https://www.ucas.com/sites/default/files/2014-end-of-cycle-report-dec-14.pdf>

² The full report can be found here: <http://www.ucas.com/sites/default/files/ucas-end-of-cycle-report-2012.pdf>

³ The full report can be found here:
https://www.ucas.com/sites/default/files/insts_mr_january_150115.pdf

income from England than HEFCW pays to English institutions in the form of grants.

Q2. Do you think that the Welsh Government policy of supporting Welsh domiciled students to study elsewhere in the UK is sustainable and/or desirable in the long term?

Sustainable: Yes [] No [] Desirable: Yes [] No []

There has been a lot of debate in the run-up to the Review about cross-border flows of HE students in and out of Wales and about the sustainability of the Welsh Government's decision to provide financial assistance (in the form of a fee grant) to Welsh-domiciled students that study at universities elsewhere in the UK. The Review Panel is keen to hear stakeholder views regarding this particular policy position.

Please provide a reason(s) for your answer and where available, any supporting evidence.

UCAS is not in a position to respond specifically to such a question. However, it is at the heart of connecting learners to HE and embodies its mission of helping applicants make the right choices, for the right reasons and with the right outcomes. With this in mind, the Welsh policy of supporting learners in their HE choices, regardless of the location of the institution offers greater freedom of choice.

Moreover, the fact that this funding does not limit the number of Welsh and EU students that can study in Wales, but determines the funds available for tuition fee grants creates a more fluid system, facilitating autonomy of decision-making at institutional level.

Enabling student migration across UK borders is important in encouraging diverse student populations at UK HE providers.

In addition, the *status quo* would seem to benefit the UK wider communities, as students are more likely to make their choices on educational as opposed to fee-related grounds. Welsh students choosing to study elsewhere in the UK contribute to the socio-political environment in which they then inhabit.

This Welsh arrangement is unique in nature, contrasting with similar arrangements operated by Scottish and Northern Irish governments, which offer beneficial financial arrangements to learners who choose to progress to an HE provider within their country of domicile.

UCAS analysis shows that applicants changed the country of institution they applied to in response to the different fee arrangements across the UK. The pattern of changes in application rates between countries in 2012 is consistent with a change of behaviour in response to fee differentials. Application rates from Wales to England, where applicants were largely protected from the increase in tuition fees, continued to increase as they had in previous cycles. In contrast, the application rates from Northern Ireland and Scotland to England, where they would be subject to different fee arrangements, fell⁴.

UCAS' End of Cycle Report 2014 data illustrates that the cross-border flow from Wales to England is greater than the equivalent flows from Scotland and Northern Ireland to England. 8,090 students from Wales, in contrast to 1,525 and 3,480 from Scotland and Northern

⁴ UCAS End of Cycle report 2012. Figures 15 and 16.

Ireland respectively, started studying at English universities and colleges in September 2014, which is the second largest overall flow.

Equally, and perhaps most pertinently, this is *smaller* than the flow of students leaving England to study in Wales, which is the largest flow at 10,680 students. Thus, the HE sector in Wales receives more income from England than it pays to English institutions in the form of grants.

UCAS has produced a map⁵ following publication of its interim assessment of students accepted to UK higher education in 2014, which illustrates the flow of students between UK countries. We would be happy to discuss with the panel how UCAS data and analysis can further inform the thinking of the review.

Q3. To what extent does the current HE sector funding system support high-quality provision and deliver value for money?

The Review Panel is interested in hearing about the strengths and benefits of current arrangements as well as any weaknesses or issues.

Very well [] Well [] Not very well [] Don't know []

Please provide a reason(s) for your answer and where available, supporting evidence.

UCAS is not in a position to respond specifically to such a question. Nonetheless, quality of HE must always remain paramount. To this end, any changes to the funding model should not be at the expense of quality of the overall student experience.

Across the border in England, the growth of a HE 'market' through the increase in tuition fees and the gradual removal of student number controls has brought with it an amplified focus on the student experience and quality. Moreover, data from the National Student Survey 2014 indicates record levels of satisfaction among undergraduates, with rates hitting a 10-year high⁶. Thus, and notwithstanding recent changes, the UK continues to represent a first class destination for HE.

The Welsh Government has asked the Review Panel, in particular, to consider funding mechanisms that impact positively on:

- widening access – ensuring that any future system has widening access as its core objective, is progressive and equitable
- supporting the skill needs of Wales
- strengthening part-time and postgraduate provision in Wales
- long-term financial sustainability.

The following questions consider these components.

⁵ <https://www.ucas.com/sites/default/files/interim-assessment-infographic.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/ltpublicinfo/nss/data/2014/>

Q4. To what extent do current HE sector funding and student finance arrangements support measures to widen access and improve participation in HE? Are there any alternative arrangements that you would like to see?

Very well [] Well [] Not very well [] Don't know []

Please provide a reason(s) for your answer, and where available, supporting evidence. If the response is 'Not very well', please provide details of any alternative arrangements that you would like to see.

UCAS' response to this question, and those that follow, refers to sector funding and the non means-tested grants offered to Welsh domiciled applicants studying at UK HE providers and EU domiciled applicants that go on to study in Welsh institutions.

2014 admissions cycle

The End of Cycle Report 2014 analyses the entire application cycle and provides the most detailed understanding to date of admissions to HE. The 2014 report includes information about the entry rate of students by background and type of qualification held, as well as entry rate by income background and ethnic group. The data contained within thus provides significant insight into widening access and participation in HE.

Overall acceptances to HE

In the 2014 cycle, 512,400 applicants were placed in higher education through UCAS, the first time the service has placed over half a million people. There were 16,800 more applicants placed in 2014 than in 2013, an increase of 3.4 per cent.

The increase in acceptances is a result of a similar increase in applicants (3.3 per cent to 699,700), which is indicative of the demand for HE⁷.

Entry rates in Wales

Entry rate is the number of acceptances in an UCAS application cycle divided by the estimated base population. Wales (27.1 per cent) is among the UK regions with the lowest entry rates for 18 year olds in 2014.⁸ Moreover, Wales has seen one of the lowest proportional increases in 18 year old UK entry rates between 2006 and 2014 (8 per cent).⁹

Entry rate by background

UCAS 2014 data illustrates that disadvantaged 18 year olds are more likely than ever to enter HE across the UK. In fact, 18 year olds from disadvantaged areas in Wales are around 34 per cent more likely to enter HE compared with entry rates five years ago.

Moreover, whilst advantaged 18 year olds in Wales are still much more likely to enter HE than those living in the most disadvantaged areas, the relative difference has decreased between 2006 and 2014. So, whilst entry rates for all POLAR groups have increased over the period since 2006, the highest rates of increase in Wales, as in the rest of the UK, are seen in the most disadvantaged groups.

⁷ Appendix A, Figure 1

⁸ Appendix A, Figure 2

⁹ Appendix A, Figure 3

For instance, the 2014 Daily Clearing Analysis report (published 15 days after A level results day)¹⁰ reveals a 17% increase in placed Welsh applicants from the most disadvantaged areas (Quintile 1) versus a 1% increase in placed Welsh applicants from the most advantaged areas (Quintile 5) relative to 2013.¹¹

UCAS divides institutions into high, medium and low Tariff institutions based on the average levels of attainment of their accepted applicants (summarised through UCAS Tariff points) in recent cycles. The entry rate to higher Tariff providers for disadvantaged 18 year olds has increased for England, Scotland and Wales in every cycle since 2011 and, for each of these countries including Wales, takes the entry rate in 2014 to the highest recorded level.

Entry rate by sex

Across the UK, the entry rate for women remains higher than the application rate for men. In Wales specifically, 11,615 women were accepted into HE in 2014, whereas 8,550 men applied to HE in the same year.

2015 admissions cycle

Applicants who apply prior to the 15 January deadline account for the majority (typically 85%) of all UK domiciled applicants in a cycle and almost all (typically 97%) of 18 year old UK domiciled applicants. Their numbers can be used to measure trends in demand for this type of higher education.

The 15 January statistical release shows that application rates for Welsh applicants choosing to study at English institutions have further increased, whilst numbers choosing to study at Welsh institutions have decreased. This is reflective of a trend, which has seen an increase of 20% in Welsh domiciled applicants applying to English HE providers since 2010.

Qualification reform

Beyond the issue of funding models, qualification reform is a significant factor in shaping the HE environment. From this point of view, UCAS suggests that the panel consider the impact of changes to Level 3 qualifications, which facilitate progression to HE.

Over the next few years three variations of the Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Level may be seen in applications from learners in Wales with the fully reformed, more rigorous Welsh Baccalaureate developed for first teaching in 2015 (first award 2017). In addition, three tranches of revised AS and A levels will be taught from September 2015.

Q5. To what extent do current HE sector funding and student finance arrangements support measures to widen access to HE provision through the medium of Welsh? Are there any alternative arrangements that you would like to see?

Very well [] Well [] Not very well [] Don't know []

Please provide a reason(s) for your answer, and where available, supporting evidence. If the response is 'Not very well', please provide details of any alternative arrangements that you would like to see.

UCAS is not in a position to respond specifically to such a question. However, UCAS' undergraduate admissions service, UCAS Teacher Training and UCAS postgraduate

¹⁰ Full report can be found at: <https://www.ucas.com/sites/default/files/29-aug-14-polar2-all.pdf>

¹¹ Appendix A, Figure 4

admissions service (including help text) are all available to applicants through the medium of Welsh and UCAS received a total of 119 undergraduate applications in Welsh for the Apply 2014 cycle.

Q6. To what extent do current HE sector funding and student finance arrangements support measures that respond to the skills needs of Wales? Are there any alternative measures that you would like to see?

Very well [] Well [] Not very well [] Don't know []

Please provide a reason(s) for your answer, and where available, supporting evidence. If the response is 'Not very well', please provide details of any alternative measures that you would like to see.

No comment.

Q7. Does the current system of HE sector funding and student finance arrangements provide an appropriate balance of funding to support full-time undergraduate, part-time undergraduate and post-graduate study? If you think it does not, how might you change this balance?

Yes [] No [] Don't know []

Please provide a reason(s) for your answer, and where available, supporting evidence. If the response is 'No', the Review Panel would be interested to hear your views on what would be an appropriate and sustainable balance.

No comment.

Q8. What does a top-class HE system look like and what would be the implications of not having a top-class HE system in Wales?

This is deliberately broad. Your response will inform the Review Panel's thinking about the type of HE system that the final recommendations are designed to support. The question may be considered from an economic development, innovation and research, community, social, cultural, quality, structural, financial, student, employer or any other perspective you think appropriate. In forming your response, examples of good practice that you wish to draw to the Review Panel's attention would be welcome.

No comment.

Q9. What does a top-class HE sector funding system look like?

(It would be helpful if when forming your response consideration could be given to any related aspects identified within the terms of reference.)

No comment.

[Large empty rectangular box]

Q10. What would you see as the components of a top-class HE student finance/support system? (It would be helpful if when forming your response consideration could be given to any related aspects identified within the terms of reference.)

No comment.

Q11. Do you think that current HE sector funding and student finance arrangements in Wales are sustainable? If you do not think so what are the components of the current scheme that you would omit or change?

Yes []

No []

Don't know []

Please provide a reason(s) for your answer and where available, supporting evidence.

No comment.

Q12. Does the current system of funding HE provide for an appropriate mix of funding allocations to the HE sector (e.g. via HEFCW or Welsh Government funding allocations to higher education institutions (HEIs)) and subsidised loans and grants to students to ensure long-term sustainability? If you do not think the current system does this what

would be the implications of maintaining the status quo? And are there any changes you would like to see?

Yes [] No [] Don't know []

Please provide a reason(s) for your answer, and where available, supporting evidence. If the response is 'No', the review panel would be interested to hear your views on what alternative arrangements are required to deliver an appropriate and sustainable mix.

No comment

Q13. What challenges are institutions in Wales facing or likely to face that might affect their long-term sustainability or future direction and what measure can be taken by a) the HE sector itself; and b) the Welsh Government to address this?

Please provide supporting evidence, where available.

Firstly, qualifications in the UK are currently undergoing significant reform. Reforms to GCSEs and A levels will result in structurally different qualifications with the same name in different parts of the UK. Whilst in Wales, the AS will remain coupled to the A level and the GCSE A*-U grading scale will remain, across the border in England, the AS and A level will be decoupled with AS results no longer contributing to the final A level grade and GCSEs will adopt a new 1-9 grading scale.

Therefore, over the next few years it's likely that significant numbers of students will be applying to HE with new qualifications and new combinations of qualifications. HE providers are already reviewing their entry requirements and offer-making approaches to ensure applicants are not disadvantaged, but the challenges are clear.

Secondly, 2015-2016 will see the removal of student number controls in England, which the government believes will 'ensure that an estimated 60,000 more young people can go to university each year.'¹² This new freedom to recruit will doubtlessly create an ever more competitive environment for Welsh as well as English institutions.

UCAS' End of Cycle Report 2014 analysis indicates that the near absence of protection from market forces last year saw providers working harder than ever to recruit, with offer-making up 6 per cent. Moreover, UCAS data illustrates a growing polarisation between HE provider 'winners' and 'losers': 30 of the larger HE providers recruited at levels 15 per cent or more below 2011-12.

Thirdly, the UK, including Wales, is also experiencing a decline in the size of the 18 year old population and this is not estimated to recover until 2020. Such a demographic trend

¹² Autumn statement 2013:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/263942/35062_Autumn_Satement_2013.pdf

represents a challenge for HE providers, who will be looking to recruit from a smaller pool of 18 year old applicants.

Q14. A decade of financial austerity has been forecast with regard to public sector funding in Wales. A finite budget will be available to the Welsh Government and the Department for Education and Skills. The Review Panel will need to take this into account when making its final recommendations if they are to be deliverable, affordable and sustainable. The Review Panel will need to ensure that its recommendations for HE funding are set within the wider education context, and it will need to provide a very strong evidence base to support any recommendation that is likely to result in a redirection or increase of funding to HE. Given this position, and considering the education system as a whole:

Where should the highest priority be for any future redirection or investment of additional education sector funding?

Schools [] Further education [] Higher education []

Other [] Please specify:.....

Please provide a reason(s) for your answer, and where available, supporting evidence.

No comment

Q15. What changes could be made to existing HE arrangements (financial, structural or otherwise) that would enable a more efficient and effective targeting of HE funding to where it is most needed and would have the greatest impact?

Please provide a reason(s) for your answer, and where available, supporting evidence.

No comment.

Q16. It is estimated that the RAB charge for new students in 2014/15 is 34.6 per cent. Do you think this is appropriate?

(The resource accounting and budgeting (RAB) charge comprises the interest rate subsidy and the cost of loans to students that are not recovered.)

Yes []

No []

Don't know []

Please provide a reason(s) for your answer, and where available, supporting evidence. If the response is 'No', the review panel would be interested to hear your views on what is appropriate and what actions are necessary.

No comment

Proposals for reform and alternative higher education sector and student finance funding models

Professor Diamond and the Review Panel will identify and evaluate potential funding options after all evidence-gathering and stakeholder-engagement stages of the review process have been concluded. In the meantime, unless already specified, if you have any other proposals that you wish to share with the Review Panel at this time please provide details below.

Proposals for the reform of current HE sector funding arrangements or for the introduction of alternative funding models.

N/A

Please provide details of the objectives and outcomes that your proposals are seeking to achieve.

Do you envisage that your proposals will:

- i) deliver cost savings []
- ii) be cost neutral []
- iii) require additional financial investment []

Additional information

Please use the space below to record any other views or comments you would like to make in relation to the review.

Please provide the titles of additional information, evidence or research papers that you are submitting with your response. (Where appropriate, please include web links.)

End of Cycle Report 2014: <https://www.ucas.com/sites/default/files/2014-end-of-cycle-report-dec-14.pdf>

End of Cycle Report 2012: <http://www.ucas.com/sites/default/files/ucas-end-of-cycle-report-2012.pdf>

Daily Clearing Analysis: POLAR2: <https://www.ucas.com/sites/default/files/29-aug-14-polar2-all.pdf>

UCAS Analysis answers five key questions on the impact of the 2012 tuition fees increase in England: <https://www.ucas.com/corporate/news-and-key-documents/news/ucas-analysis-answers-five-key-questions-impact-2012-tuition>

Acknowledgements

On behalf of Professor Diamond and the Review Panel, thank you for taking the time to contribute to the Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance Arrangements in Wales.

Next steps

Responses to the call for evidence will be analysed and evaluated. The responses will help inform the next stage of the review and will form an important part of the evidence base for Professor Diamond's recommendations for the future of higher education funding and student finance arrangements in Wales.

How the views and information you give us will be used

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Professor Diamond and the Review Panel, together with Welsh Government staff who are supporting the review.

Professor Diamond may choose to publish a summary of the responses to this document and/or selected quotes. The responses may also be published in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the call for evidence was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However,

there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

Please tick here if you would prefer not to have your name and address published with the response:

Annex A: Review Panel terms of reference

The Review Panel will consist of a Chair and panel members that are expert and experienced in their field and have a deep understanding of matters relating to higher education (HE) sector funding and student finance arrangements.

Role

The panel is required to conduct a wide-ranging review of HE sector funding and student finance arrangements. It will begin its work in the Spring of 2014 and produce by September 2016 a report for the Minister for Education and Skills that provides clear advice and costed recommendations for the future funding of the HE sector and student finance arrangements in Wales.

The panel's recommendations will need to be deliverable, affordable and sustainable.

Focus

The review will focus on issues relating to:

- the promotion of social mobility and widening access to higher education
- the promotion of postgraduate learning opportunities in Wales and for Welsh-domiciled students
- the funding of higher education in the light of continuing constraints on public expenditure
- full-time and part-time tuition fees policy
- cross-border HE funding policy and arrangements
- student finance arrangements (including maintenance support for HE and FE students, with an emphasis on supporting learners from the lowest income backgrounds and most deprived communities in Wales)
- funding routes (annually managed expenditure (AME), near cash and non-cash)
- the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales' (HEFCW) role in the delivery of student finance
- student debt.

Key considerations

The review will need to consider medium- and longer-term policy options and funding, including any potential for savings incentive schemes to provide a more sustainable future model of HE funding and to help reduce levels of student debt.

The review will also need to consider:

- current legislation and options for reform
- the financial implications of any proposed models for Welsh Government, HM Treasury, students, HEFCW and the HE sector in Wales
- operational delivery systems involving HEFCW, the Student Loans Company, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and other UK bodies
- alternative policy approaches being adopted by other UK governments and internationally
- the cross-border implications of any policy changes proposed for Wales (including possible legislative competence issues)
- identified skills needs for Wales
- postgraduate provision and industry sector concerns and/or requirements
- the extent to which current policy and funding arrangements support widening access, and what more can be done
- related FE sector developments, for example HE in FE activity.

Approach

The panel will gather and evaluate available data, research and other evidence. The panel may need to commission research to address gaps in the available evidence base. Close engagement with stakeholders will be a necessity.

The panel will have due regard to the Welsh Government's broad priorities for HE in Wales as set out in the Welsh Government's *Policy statement on higher education* (June, 2013).

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/highereducation/policy-statement/?lang=en>.

Governance and working style

- Panel members will observe the seven principles of public life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and

leadership).

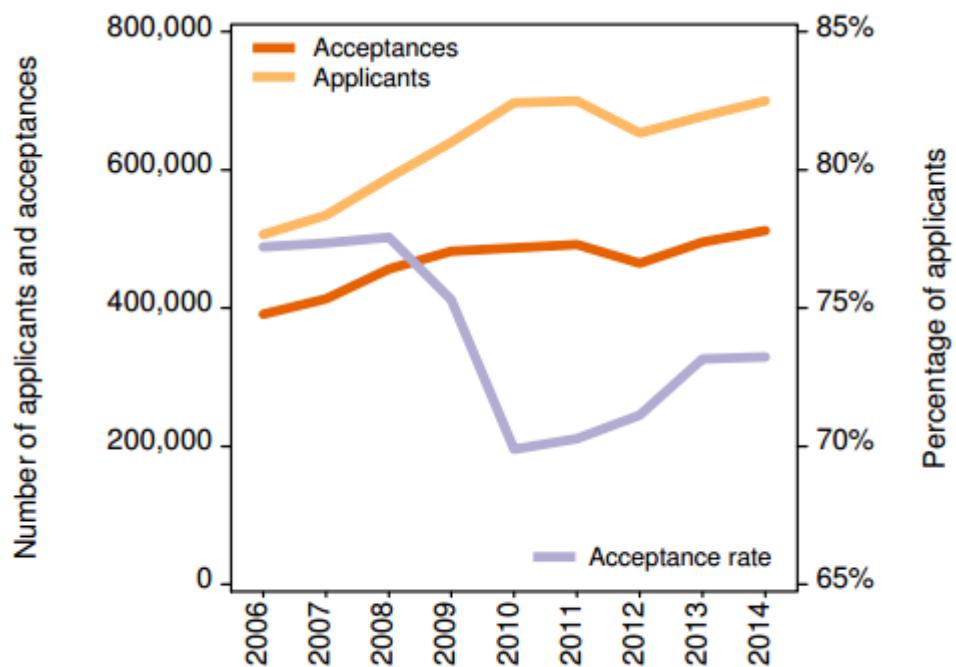
- Conclusions and recommendations should be evidence-based, impartial, well considered and robust.
- Records of Review Panel meetings and activities will be kept. Discussions will, however, be conducted with a protocol of confidentiality in order to promote genuine debate.

Annex B: Review Panel members

- **Professor Sir Ian Diamond (Chair):** Vice-Chancellor of the University of Aberdeen.
- **Professor Colin Riordan:** President and Vice-Chancellor at Cardiff University and Chair of Universities Wales (UW).
- **Rob Humphreys:** Director for Wales, Open University, and Vice Chair of Universities Wales (UW).
- **Beth Button:** President, National Union of Students (NUS) Wales.
- **Professor Sheila Riddell:** Director of the Centre for Research in Education Inclusion and Diversity, University of Edinburgh.
- **Dr Gavan Conlon:** Partner at London Economics and expert in the economics of education.
- **Glyn Jones OBE:** Chief Executive of Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and ColegauCymru board member.
- **Ed Lester:** Former Chief Executive of the Student Loans Company. Currently Chief Land Registrar and Chief Executive Land Registry.
- **Gary Griffiths:** Airbus UK, Head of Early Careers Programmes.
- **Professor Michael Woods:** Professor of Human Geography and Director of the Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences at Aberystwyth University.
- **Professor David Warner:** Former Vice Chancellor of Swansea Metropolitan University. Currently Senior Research Fellow at Harris Manchester College, Oxford.
- **Gareth Jones OBE:** Former headmaster of Ysgol John Bright and Plaid Cymru Assembly Member for Conwy and Aberconwy. Former Chair of the National Assembly for Wales' Enterprise and Learning Committee.
- **Dr David Blaney:** Chief Executive and Council Member of Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (official observer).

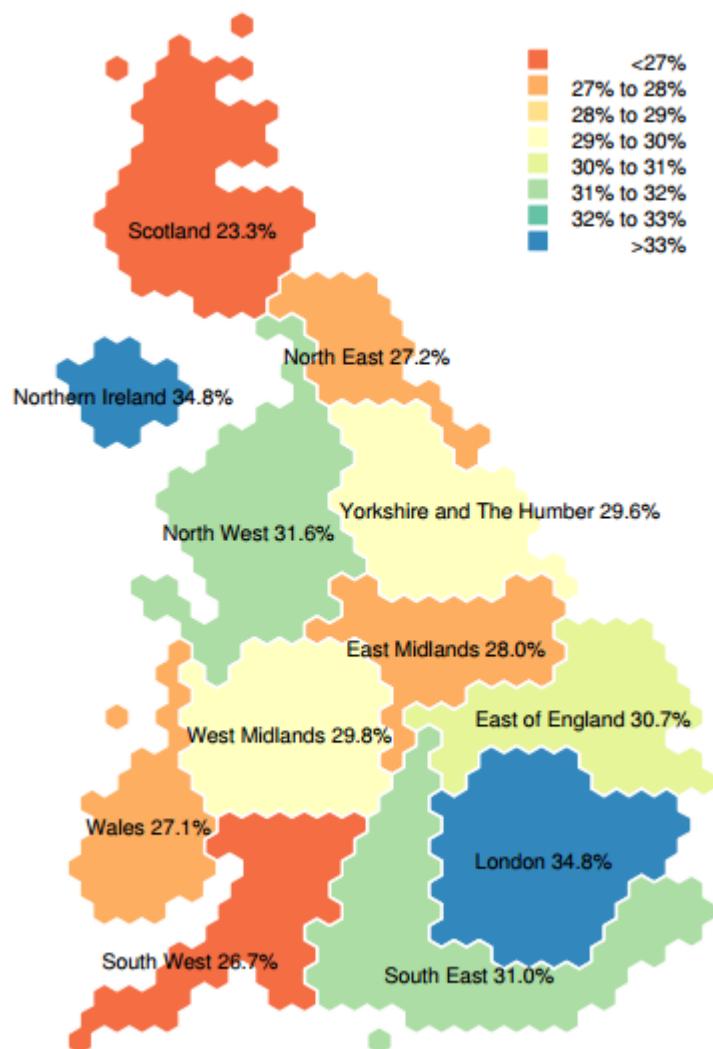
Appendix A

Figure 1: Applicants, acceptances and the acceptance rate



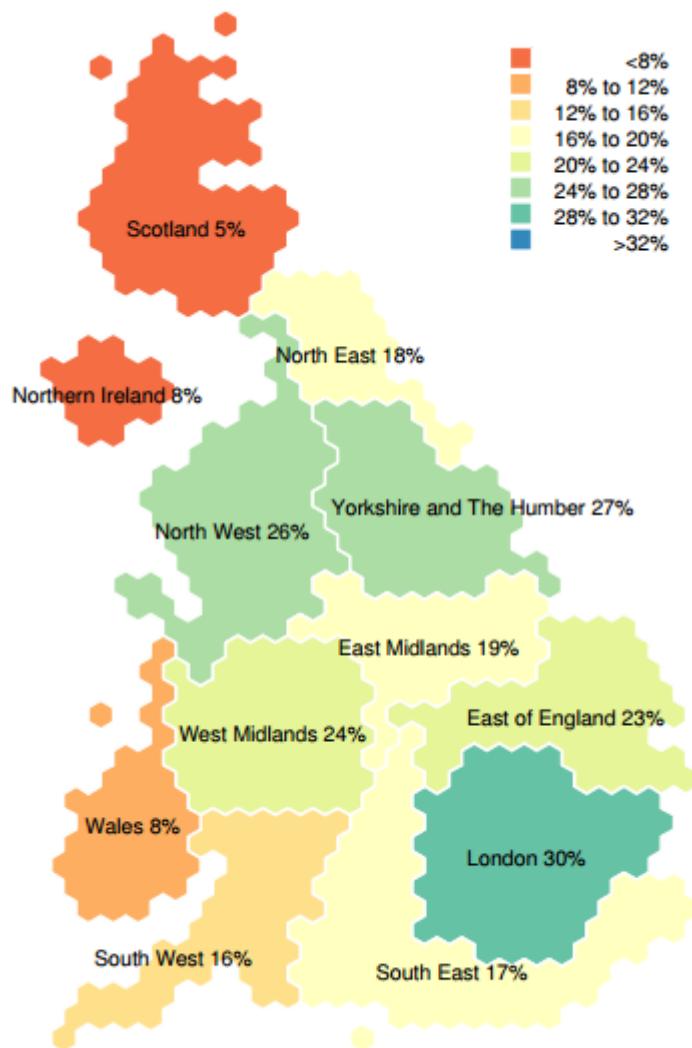
Source: Figure 7 from 'End of Cycle Report 2014'

Figure 2: Entry rates in 2014 for UK 18 year olds by region and country



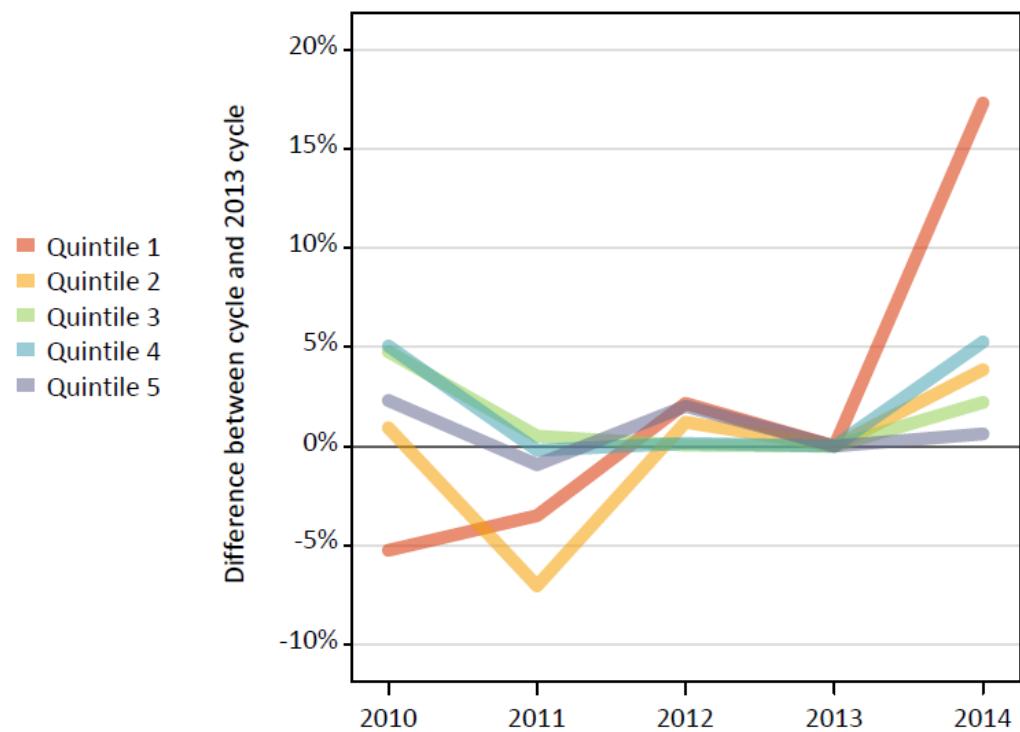
Source: Figure 15 from 'End of Cycle Report 2014'

Figure 3: Change in entry rates between 2006 and 2014 for UK 18 year olds by region and country



Source: Figure 16 from 'End of Cycle Report 2014'

Figure 4: Placed 18 year old applicants from Wales by POLAR2 quintile: 15 days after A level results day. Placed 18 year old applicants: change relative to 2013 cycle totals



Source: Figure P.19, Daily Clearing Analysis: POLAR2. Analysis at 00:05 on Friday 29 August 2014 (15 days after A level results day)