



University and College Union
Undeb Prifysgolion a Cholegau

WALES
CYMRU

RESPONSE TO THE LEARNING COUNTRY 2 CONSULTATION

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1 Preamble

UCU, the University and College Union, is the main trade union in the UK representing teaching staff in further education and academic and academic-related staff in higher education. UCU was established on 1 June 2006 following the merger of the Association of University Teachers (AUT) and NATFHE. UCU represents further and higher education lecturers, managers, researchers and many academic-related staff such as librarians, administrators and computing professionals across the UK. UCU is the world's largest union for post-school academic and academic-related staff, with more than 110,000 members.

We believe that the expertise that we can bring to the relationship we hold with the National Assembly, collated from a range of expert opinion covering this sector of the learning and cultural economy, will be most advantageous in the next steps of developing the Learning Country in Wales.

- 2 With this in mind, and noting the historical cultures that the two former unions have brought together, before answering the questions contained within the consultation paper, we believe that we should make some brief, but important, additional observations. We trust that the Assembly will take cognizance of these matters.

Additional Observations

- 3 As a key observation, we believe that the Assembly is on the right track to develop a positive and inclusive learning society in Wales. However, we note with concern the *economistic* and *output driven* (means/end) manner in which the Learning Country 2 (henceforth LC2), is manifestly geared and structured. It is our contention that one cannot develop Higher Education and Post 16 education and training using the same criteria for growth. Clearly the missions of these distinct sectors require that LC2 recognises these differences and develops policy accordingly. This is a major constraint on the whole of the document.
- 4 The AUT made, in numerous submissions to the Assembly, their concerns with this form and type of 'agenda' a matter of public record. The core philosophy is simple and unambiguous: We believe in education for education's sake, such forms of education are impossible to quantify.
- 5 The philosophy of education that we promote – be it emotional, cultural, psychological, philosophical – is concerned with the development of the individual as a human being, aware of the complexities of the modern State and society and, crucially, their position within it (which, we note, the Citizenship agenda (4.14) is one small part of).
- 6 Educational positions which seek to constrain an individual's personal and emotional development through forms of education must be avoided. So, for example, the document refers to in (4.10) and (4.11) the need for "*employability*" to be a "*sustained key theme*", with career patterns "*becoming more flexible*" and with employers "*not being content with the quality of skills amongst school and college leavers*" (4.10). Whilst we recognise that many learners decide to pursue post 16 education and training and indeed higher education to achieve that goal of "*employability*" it is important that we do not damage the educational provision in Wales by assuming that "*employability*" is the goal of every learner. Continuing,

these constraints require the need to “pay greater attention to the demanding capabilities of team working”, “openness to new skills” (whatever this catchall phrase means), “entrepreneurial skills”, “customer responsiveness” and other traits considered important by business organizations and their representative organizational ‘arms’ (4.11).

- 7 Perhaps it is time for the Assembly to think about the requirements of the individual as a major starting point in developing its integrated educational sector(s), rather than that of impersonal and discriminatory business organizations? Even a cursory consideration of the state of “employability” in Wales reveals tensions that the LC2 does not even attempt to address, even though there is a commitment at cabinet level to address the equality agenda.
- 8 For example¹, we have seen a significant deterioration in the hourly pay gap between men and women in Wales to 12 per cent, which grows to 31 per cent when based on part-time employment (mostly occupied by women workers).²
- 9 For race discrimination, in particular the private sector which is, we are led to believe, at the ‘coal face’ and ‘cutting edge’ of promoting “high quality jobs” which “add high value” to the Welsh economy, the picture is the same, if not worse. As the most recent (2006) CRE report concluded in its assessment of discrimination and ‘opportunity’ for ethnic minority communities in Cardiff,

“Employers put themselves at a disadvantage by not using ethnic minority talents. The continuation of outmoded and inefficient practices clearly accounts for the greater difficulties people from ethnic minority communities face in getting jobs, but they also deprive employers of an important sources of skills and competence in a tightening labour market and an increasingly competitive product market.”³

- 10 Indeed, the LC2 itself notes the major problems and structural constraints facing pupils from ethnic minority communities (1.7). Given the above statement by the CRE, perhaps addressing the external organizational constraints imposed by business organizations is an important yardstick to judge governmental responsibility by, rather than, in effect, transfer the ‘risk’ to the individual who may then (wrongly) take the view that the educational process has, effectively, “failed them.” In short, at no point in the LC2 do the Assembly consider such remedial and legitimate measures.
- 11 Continuing this failure of intervention will not address some of the structural problems through which educational processes must ‘negotiate’. This is a serious oversight, given the LC2s focus on the ‘international context’ of the ‘Lisbon Agenda’, with aims that seek to “deliver stronger, lasting growth and create more

¹ As an example, and noting the neo-Orwellian language¹ that surrounds the description applied to business terminology (“high value-added businesses and high quality jobs” (7.4)), a number of questions come immediately to mind. Who defines what are “high value-added businesses” and “high quality jobs” and by whose/what criteria have these terms been agreed with all stakeholders (and where is the partnership in this)? And if the LC2 is comfortable with such scant yet ideologically loaded terminology, how then can it support such “value added” business relationships when the evidence is completely the opposite?

² See <http://www.eoc.org.uk/Default.aspx?page=17371>

³ CRE (2006), Missing opportunities Race equality and private sector employers in the Cardiff region.

and better jobs ... through the substantial modernization of Europe's education and training system(s) ... (1.10).⁴

- 12 Rather, this shift from the local and 'regional' to a supra-national and supra-macro political and economic elite network will completely miss the localization of policy and citizen involvement upon which, we believe, much of Wales' cultural and economic development must be developed as a foundation. Vast historical documentation describes this, from the growth of working-class education in the communities across South Wales – music, mathematics, political science – to the organization and emergence of adult education programmes in the North of the Country, for example, Coleg Harlech and the adult education movement of the 1970's.⁵
- 13 Indeed, there is much real and sustainable evidence that universities and colleges in Wales, for example, through outreach and localized research, develop and enhance activities of these types (socially/culturally/economically).⁶ The NATFHE submission to the Delegation of 16-19 provision Organisation proposals to Local Authorities Consultation 2006 argued strongly for the establishment of a genuine tertiary sector. However we are very concerned that the funding regime in post 16 education and training will adversely impact on the provision of education to those sectors of the community who are not accessing education for the sole purpose of achieving “*employability*.” If the disparity between colleges and schools, which is a direct consequence of the National Planning and Funding System, continues then the provision most affected will be adult education. We need look no further than our neighbours in England to verify that our contention can be sustained.
- 14 Taking now a particular focus on two matters raised in (1.7), Practitioners and Higher Education institutions, we have a number of general concerns, some of which will be discussed in more detail below. As a starting point, and not focusing on funding at this stage, we believe that the Assembly must develop a more positive public stance and supportive attitude towards higher education and its staff. Discussions with university staff always highlight the limited manner in which the Assembly appears to view higher education as whole and as a part of the educational framework in Wales. This is clearly indicated in (1.7) where, again, the focus is once more on “*reconfiguration and collaboration*”, a mantra which many of our members feel is limited and limiting. However there are clear differences of opinion between membership in the Pre 92 and Post 92 institutions. The Independent Review of Post 92 Institutions in South East Wales is a specific case which clearly illustrates this point. Members in the Post 92 institutions are now experiencing the consequences of their institutions not engaging with the recommendations of Cooke and Bull. Restructuring in at least

⁴ It would be interesting to discover the bureaucratic costs of this relationship, and whose agenda the 'Lisbon' accords actually promote? It seems far removed from some of the most economically and socio-culturally blighted communities and citizens in Wales.

⁵ For example, see essays in 'In Search of Enlightenment', Ed, Brian Simon.

⁶ On reflection, and worthy of consideration, is the contradiction between external planners and real, interactive historical communities. For example, creating greater institutional and geographical space and gaps between local areas, excluding local processes and the complexity of educational networks by planners realistically holds the inherent danger of creating the seeds of failure (through exclusivity) and distorting outcomes, paradoxically leading to a 'Janus-faced' promotion of new outcomes which then are set at a higher standard as a result of the perceived shortcomings of educational systems – and which form the thrust of the LC2.

one of the institutions is resulting in course closure and potential job loss- the “creeping marginalization” referred to by NATFHE in their submission to the Higher Education Review. The Assembly position also fails to take cognizance of the impact of research-based processes, such as the Research Assessment Exercise, which, rather than promote collaboration, promotes and exaggerates competition and inequity, in funding, staff and equalities.⁷ This includes discrimination in employment for women involved in the RAE. LC2 glosses over these structural problems.

- 15 In summary, and reflecting on the challenges discussed in (1.7), it seems apparent that since 2001 some of the tensions which we (albeit) briefly highlight in 1 – 14 above, are continuing, potentially reinforcing social barriers leading to attainment (outcomes) failure, including in this the tensions that emerge from discriminatory constraints affecting in different ways the diverse groups within Welsh civil society.

Specific Questions

Do you recognise and share the vision we have described learners' needs in the Wales of the 21st Century?

As we have outlined in our observations we do share the vision, however from our perspective it must recognise the different expectations that learners have across all of the educational sectors in Wales. A balance must be struck between the “employability/skills agenda” and that of education as a tool for individual self development. We don't believe that you have achieved the right balance. We have already commented on a number of the tensions within the LC2 which will, we believe, inhibit the ‘output’ driven agenda of the Assembly – though the aims are laudable. We have also raised concerns with the approach adopted which effectively holds the potential to disenfranchise individual learners. The sectors in Wales do not exist in a separate sphere outside the so-called ‘economy.’ It is vital that the sectors in Wales work in unity to enhance the educational potential of children, young adults and adult learners. In effect, this is what the document crucially misses. Without addressing the regulation of private sector business organisations (discussed above), or improving public sector work relations (where discrimination occurs frequently, for example, in higher education the proliferation of fixed-term contracts where many young academics, women and ethnic minorities are employed offering no stability to either their careers or the research missions of individual universities), then key elements of the positive, holistic approach being discussed will fall by the wayside – worryingly indicated by the data within LC2.

Further and higher education institutions have a key role to play in developing the cultural, social and technical skills and knowledge needed in Wales to meet the challenge of intensified global economic competition. However, in particular and related to the latter challenge, any developments in Wales must, as a precondition, harness the ‘local’ as opposed to the ‘global’ in creating the conditions which build on

⁷ So, for example, the former AUT union has found through the various RAEs that the process “has had a disastrous impact on the UK higher education system, leading to the closure of departments with strong research profiles and healthy student recruitment. It has been responsible for job losses, discriminatory practices, widespread demoralisation of staff, the narrowing of research opportunities through the over-concentration of funding and the undermining of the relationship between teaching and research.” See <http://www.aut.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1442> for further information.

the historical antecedents of Wales' educational 'cultures.' Driving supra-national and supra-macro agendas through such historical relations will not aid individuals or communities of learning. The 'global' must fit the 'local': not the reverse. Citizenship is a case in point.

Have we identified the opportunities and challenges correctly? Are there any important issues you think we have missed?

We would support your views as to the challenges faced by the Assembly government in pursuing the Learning Country, noting our immediate concerns already discussed and evidenced.

Further Education

Clearly there are issues in relation to the standards of quality in some sectors of post 16 education and training, however with the FE sector facing real terms cuts in funding under the new NPFS it is difficult to see how the sector can invest to improve quality when it is exercised by restructuring within institutions and job loss. There must be a clear and unambiguous statement within the Learning Country 2 to address the inequalities in funding faced by the FE colleges as a consequence of the introduction of NPFS-which was the solution from Learning Country 1 to the funding disparities between schools and colleges. The solution is clearly flawed and this must be remedied going forward.

Higher Education

Our starting point is to observe the statement in 8.1 of the LC2: that is, the commitment by the Assembly to work closely with the funding council. UCU believe that the Assembly, as the representatives of Wales, also need to work with the university sector.

We have already commented that the Assembly and the LC2 draft have, once again, 'bracketed' the university sector in a Procrustean framework that promotes "reconfiguration and collaboration" (8.5). The "challenge", as the Assembly sees it, is for Welsh universities "to adapt to global change and competition" ((8.2). Welsh universities have been doing this longer than the Assembly, if truth be told. We have also been involved with active partnerships, not just in Wales, but across the UK, Europe and the rest of the World. Higher education is, by its very nature, a global relationship – where local meets global. This therefore raises a legitimate question as to why the Assembly holds such a view? In summary, and as evidenced from the section included below (*Public spending on higher education in Wales*), during the period 1997/98 – 2004/05 there was a £2 million reduction in cash terms across the sector in Wales; the same period saw the recurrent government funding from grants and fees increase by only 3 per cent above inflation (see below). UCU also notes that for 2008-9 the National Assembly is planning a 2.5% cut in grant to the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (irrespective of the overall increase arising from both the Supplementary Income Stream and private fees). Furthermore, despite the additional income from student fee contributions, the unit of resource in Wales fell in real terms in the period 1997-8 to 2004-5. Finally, recurrent and capital grants for higher education in Wales, plus public and private tuition fee payments, have fluctuated since 1997-8 as a proportion of UK GDP, with the level at 2004-5 lower than in 1997-8.

Grant and fees

Recurrent funding for teaching and research in higher education in Wales over the period 1997-8 to 2007-8 has risen by 70%. Total recurrent grant for teaching and research, and capital items, has risen by 78%. (see table 1)

Over the period 1997-8 to 2004-5, total fee payments in Wales reduced from £65m a year to £63m in cash terms, despite the introduction in 1998-9 of private fee contributions by full-time undergraduates. Data on fee income from 2005-6 were not publicly available at the time of writing. (see table 2)

If private fee contributions are taken out of the equation, then recurrent government funding from grant and fees for higher education in Wales in 1997-8 to 2004-5 increased by only 3% above inflation. (see tables 3 and 4)

Top-up fees

What difference will variable HE tuition fees make in Wales when they are introduced in 2007-8? In Wales, total grant and fees – including top-up fees from 2007-8 - are estimated to increase by 7.1% in 2006-7, by 9.1% in 2007-8 and by 6.3% in 2008-9. Between 2005-6 and 2008-9, total grant and fees – including top-up fees - are estimated to rise by 22.5%, a rise of £132m over the three-year period. It should be noted that for 2008-9 the National Assembly is planning a 2.5% cut in grant to the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales. (see table 5)

Funding per student in Wales

There are different ways of looking at the level of funding provided for each full-time equivalent student – the unit of resource. The information presented here looks at recurrent grant from the UK and then Welsh Assembly governments to the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, and fees. Calculations of the unit of resource do not normally include capital spending. The first two columns only consider recurrent grant and tuition fee contributions from the government to 2004-5 (data on fees and student numbers are not publicly available after 2004-5). Between 1997-8 and 2004-5 the unit rose by 6.5% in cash terms, which meant a 9.3% cut in real terms. The third and fourth columns look at recurrent grant plus public and private fee contributions. Over the same period the unit rose by 14.7% in cash terms, and fell by 2.4% in real terms.

In conclusion, despite the additional income from student fee contributions, the unit of resource in Wales fell in real terms in the period 1997-8 to 2004-5. (see table 6)

Recurrent and capital grants for higher education in Wales, plus public and private tuition fee payments, have fluctuated since 1997-8 as a proportion of UK GDP, with the level at 2004-5 lower than in 1997-8.

In the light of this data, it seems apparent that the critical role that the Assembly expects of higher education is fundamentally undermined by the failure to adequately financially support the sector. The strong expectations that the Assembly discusses in LC2, for example “adapt to global change and competition”; “intensive effort into research and commercially exploitable activities”; “more partnership working and

collaboration”; “widening access, strengthen research, increase the sector’s contribution to the economic, cultural and civic life of Wales”; “progress in developing skills for students and employability” – all referred to in 8.2 – will only occur in a much more holistic and systematic manner when the sector in Wales receives stable and adequate funding overtime. We have consistently argued that the Unit of Resource and historical funding for the sector in Wales has undermined progress. What is quantifiable is the real work of excellence and value that our members have undertaken, which has seen real progress within the RAE, for example (noting the structural discrimination in funding streams within that UK framework),⁸ and in the expectations of students and communities. The real question that the Assembly should consider is: How is it that, in such a resource-starved sector, staff in higher education have delivered so much?

In response to the somewhat loose description that LC2 ‘offers’ for 2010 (“networks of excellence”), UCU has some major concerns with this ‘description.’ It offers no or limited stability to individual institutions and actually means nothing, in terms of scholarship and practice as they occur daily. It again appears that the failures of the LC1 strategy have been invoked, in part, against Welsh institutions. Nothing could be further from the truth. We have noted that there is much work that goes on between institutions in Wales, outside Wales, and globally – this is the very nature of academic research and scholarship – which has developed without the push and pull ‘levers’ of the HEFCW/Assembly programme – and within the fundamental financial constraints we discussed earlier. It again highlights the importance of funding streams which facilitate the ‘local’ relations, and not suffocate such processes where they occur. We commented earlier on the failure of the LC2 to correctly analyse the impact of the RAE on individual institutions. It is fine to promote collaboration – but not to then recognise the tensions of the exercise itself.

Collaboration/Networks and RAE competition

The great majority of recurrent funding for research in UK higher education is called QR (quality-related) and is allocated on the basis of departments’ results in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). Across the UK, university departments with an RAE rating of 1, 2 or 3 (the lowest) do not receive recurrent funding for research. There are some exceptions to this: in England, eligible departments with a 3a and 3b rating receive funding under the capability funding stream, worth £22 million in 2005-6. Capability funding is intended to ‘support research in emerging subject areas where the research base is currently not as strong as in more established subjects’⁹

The following subject areas are eligible: nursing; other studies and professions allied to medicine; social work; art and design; communication, cultural and media studies; dance, drama and performing arts; sports-related studies.

In Wales, from 2004-5 QR funding will only be allocated to departments achieving the highest ratings, of 4, 5 or 5*, in the 2001 RAE. In Wales, reductions in QR funding in 2004-5 are being compensated for to some extent by the introduction of the Research Investment Fund, which is to be allocated to departments with a rating of

⁸ AUT (2004) UK academic staff 2002-3 Gender and research activity in the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise

⁹ HEFCE 2003/10: para 36

3a in the 2001 RAE, or 3b if the latter represents an improvement on the 1996 RAE rating or a new rating in 2001.

Although in 2003 the Secretary of State for Education and Skills announced that funding for 4 rated departments in England would be 'held steady' in cash terms until the next research assessment exercise, that in effect means funding reductions in real terms over the next four or five years.

Between 1997-8 and 2005-6¹⁰ the allocation of recurrent funding for research (mainly under the QR stream) generally became more concentrated in the hands of a small number of HEIs. In England, the research funding share for the top 10% of research-earning HEIs rose from 56% to 59%; in Wales, the top research earner, Cardiff University, increased its share of total funding from 39% to 57%; in Scotland, the funding share of the top 10% of research-earning HEIs rose from 48% to 49%. Data for Northern Ireland's two research universities – Queen's University Belfast and University of Ulster – in 2005-6 were unavailable at the time of writing.¹¹ In all three countries, the top 50% of research earners accounted for almost 100% of allocated recurrent research funds. (see table 7)

Full economic cost of research

Lord Sainsbury, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Science and Innovation at the Department of Trade and Industry:

'If we are to put university finances on a sound basis ... it is vital both that universities know what is the full economic cost of their research and that funders accept an obligation to pay universities the full economic cost of the research they do.'¹²

From 1 September 2005, the UK Research Councils are funding the research that they support on the basis of paying 80% of the full costs of the research. As Lord Sainsbury has said: 'Universities need to recover FEC across the broad range of their activities ... the objective must be for all to pay a fair and proper value for the research they commission.'¹³

UCU welcomes the monies made available from the reconfiguration and collaboration fund intended to stimulate research potential. We must build on the capacity that these monies are creating to ensure that the HE sector in Wales is able to maintain an intellectual culture and prevent research becoming unduly concentrated in a few institutions.

We call for the restoration of real terms funding increases to 4-rated departments in Wales – particularly to maintain regional research capacity. We call for the 2008 RAE to be conducted in a fair and transparent manner and for the outcomes to be properly funded. In addition, the governments and the funding councils should begin work with HE stakeholders to ensure sensible workable alternatives to the RAE beyond 2008.

¹⁰ The most recent year for which recurrent research allocations were available at the time of writing.

¹¹ Share of recurrent funding for research in Northern Ireland: 1997-8: QUB 67%; Ulster 33%. 2005-6: n/a.

¹² Speech 22 November 2005, UK Research Base Funders' Forum conference.

¹³ Speech 22 November 2005, UK Research Base Funders' Forum conference.

We note the proposals in the 2006 Budget for a mainly metrics-based system for assessing research quality to replace the RAE either before or after 2008. This is a controversial proposal, and at this late stage we think it would cause chaos in the sector to replace the RAE before 2008 with a metrics-based system. Although many of our members would support an immediate end to the 2008 RAE, it is extremely unlikely that a 'simpler system' will end 'the publish or perish approach' that has been adopted by most Welsh universities. In fact, a metrics-based system is likely to result in further negative consequences for Welsh research. For example, using research income as the measurement of quality is likely to disadvantage smaller, specialist departments and research teams.

We welcome the UK government's drive towards full economic costing of research carried out in UK higher education. UCU believe that the Assembly should publicly support this position. In particular, we recommend that the funding councils meet their commitment to fund projects at 100% of the full economic cost by the end of the decade. At the same time, full economic costing should ensure that bureaucratic burdens that arise from the process are kept to a minimum. Full economic costing should also support the move to permanent contracts as the norm for research staff.

Mention is made in the challenges of the need to collaborate fully to exploit and develop the research base in Wales. UCU welcome the proposal not to continue with the RAE in its current form and would urge the Assembly Government to play a full role in the discussion about how one funds research on a collaborative basis.

Are we right to focus on poverty of educational opportunity, tackling disadvantage and reducing gaps in performance?

We fully support the efforts of Assembly in addressing these issues, but it will not happen if the policy does not recognise the very real structural issues which we discussed earlier. Much more attention must be paid to the 'equality agenda' as it operates within the education sector in Wales. New legislation will not allow employers to continue to pay lip service to these issues. UCU feels so strongly about these issues that it provides the context for the Joint trade union pay claim in Further education this year.

In relation to higher education and the intervention by the Assembly in supporting Welsh domiciled students following the second Rees investigation into Student Finance, UCU is concerned that initial data from a number of institutions is demonstrating significant market fluctuation. For example, at University of Wales, Aberystwyth, there has been a 10 per cent reduction in non-Welsh students through cross border flow. A significant percentage of these are students from England, in particular Birmingham (which has always been a recruitment area for the institution). Distortion of student access through the imposition and individualization of risk and debt may therefore negate the short-term positive solution put forward by the Assembly for 2007/08. Equally, and noting the philosophy behind the question, loss of markets may impact on the structure of learning for Welsh students, If anyone believed that this would not happen then they were at best, na_ve, and at worst, foolish. Such market distortion will further exaggerate the tensions within the cultural missions of institutions which recruit from other UK States.

Is our concentration on the development of generic, employment-related skills appropriate in the context of Wales and changes in society and the economy?

Clearly a focus on this area needs to be an integral part of any policy which purports to shape the future of post 16 education and training. Clearly it has less importance in developing policy in other sectors of education in Wales. We would contend that the balance in the document needs to reflect all education sectors in Wales. Clearly the needs of the learners must come first but the document seems concerned with the needs of the employer in its tone and content-this bias must be addressed in the final policy.

Do you agree that the actions described in this document are the right ones to deliver the agenda we have set?

UCU strongly urge that you conduct a full review of post16 education and training sector to fully understand the implications and impact of the policies and structures which currently exist within Wales.

We would also want to be fully involved in any discussion as a full partner in the development of a professional body to set and safeguard professional standards relating to lecturers within the FE sector in Wales.

What, if anything would you do differently or in addition?

Our views are covered in our observations and responses elsewhere in the document.

Have we struck the right balance between, on the one hand, the wider role of education and training in sustaining the society and culture of Wales and, on the other, developing the skills base needed to support the Welsh economy and tackle economic inactivity?

No, see our comments to earlier questions.

In relation to education, lifelong learning and skills, what further action should the new DELLS take to:

- ***promote race equality;***
- ***address the needs of disabled people;***
- ***meet the needs of different faith groups;***
- ***tackle gender imbalances;***
- ***meet the needs of older people; and***
- ***improve equality of opportunity for other minority or disadvantaged groups, including gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender people***

Much more attention must be paid to the 'equality agenda' as it operates within the education sector in Wales. New legislation will not allow employers to continue to pay lip service to these issues. UCU feels so strongly about these issues that it provides the context for the joint trade union pay claim in Further Education this year.

We are also pursuing this agenda through the implementation of the pay framework agreement in HE. The Assembly should consider, within the Remit Letter to the funding council, linking grant support to equity compliance. Additionally, legislation is going to require employers to be more proactive in all these areas and the Assembly could take the lead in referring to this in its remit letters requiring ASPBs to comply with equality legislation. Clearly the success of any such development will be based on the willingness of the Assembly to audit the performance of ASPBs in this area of policy.

Are the outcome indicators suitable and realistic? Are they sufficiently challenging? What kind of qualitative measures would helpfully promote Wales as a Learning Country?

Given that the thrust of the document has been premised on criteria which is narrow and economistic – missing the wider and broader and more difficult to ‘capture’ subjective thrust of education, we suggest that the Assembly begin the difficult task of working with all post-16 and post-compulsory institutions in developing a framework which is, in effect, user and citizen led, rather than an imposed, Procrustean and ill-fitting framework. UCU would also appreciate information as to how our concerns in respect of the cultural flow of the LC2 document, and the failure to address the constraints on learners post their education experience i.e. labour market discrimination, will be addressed. If the Assembly is committed to partnership, then surely it must seek to develop equity across all institutions in society?

Appendix

Table 1

Recurrent and capital grant, Wales

	Recurrent grant	Recurrent grant	Capital grants*	Recurrent grant & capital	Recurrent grant & capital
Wales	cash £m	% change	cash £m	cash £m	% change
1997-98	237			237	
1998-99	232	-1.9%		232	-1.9%
1999-00	263	13.4%	5.362	269	15.7%
2000-01	277	5.4%	15.162	293	8.9%
2001-02	303	9.0%	25.762	328	12.2%
2002-03	307	1.4%	20.762	327	-0.3%
2003-04	318	3.8%	19.546	338	3.2%
2004-05	331	3.8%	18.396	349	3.3%
2005-06	362	9.6%	22.396	385	10.3%
2006-7	397	9.5%	18.396	415	7.9%
2007-8	402	1.4%	18.396	421	1.3%
1997-8 to 2007-8 Change %	69.9%			77.6%	

* capital items were not separately identified in 1997-8 and 1998-9.

Source: annual grant letters; National Assembly for Wales Budget 2005-6 to 2007-8 draft proposals October 2004 and 2005, plus additional funding announced November 2005. Calculations by UCU.

Table 2

Tuition fees, Wales

	Public fees	Private fees	Total fees	Total fees
Wales	cash £m	cash £m	cash £m	change %
1997-98	65		64.9	
1998-99	67	8	75.6	16.5%
1999-00	37	16	53.7	-29.0%
2000-01	35	21	55.9	4.1%
2001-02	34	24	57.6	3.0%
2002-03	34	26	59.3	3.0%
2003-04	34	27	61	2.9%
2004-05	34.6	28.1	62.7	2.8%

Source: annual grant letters. Calculations by UCU.

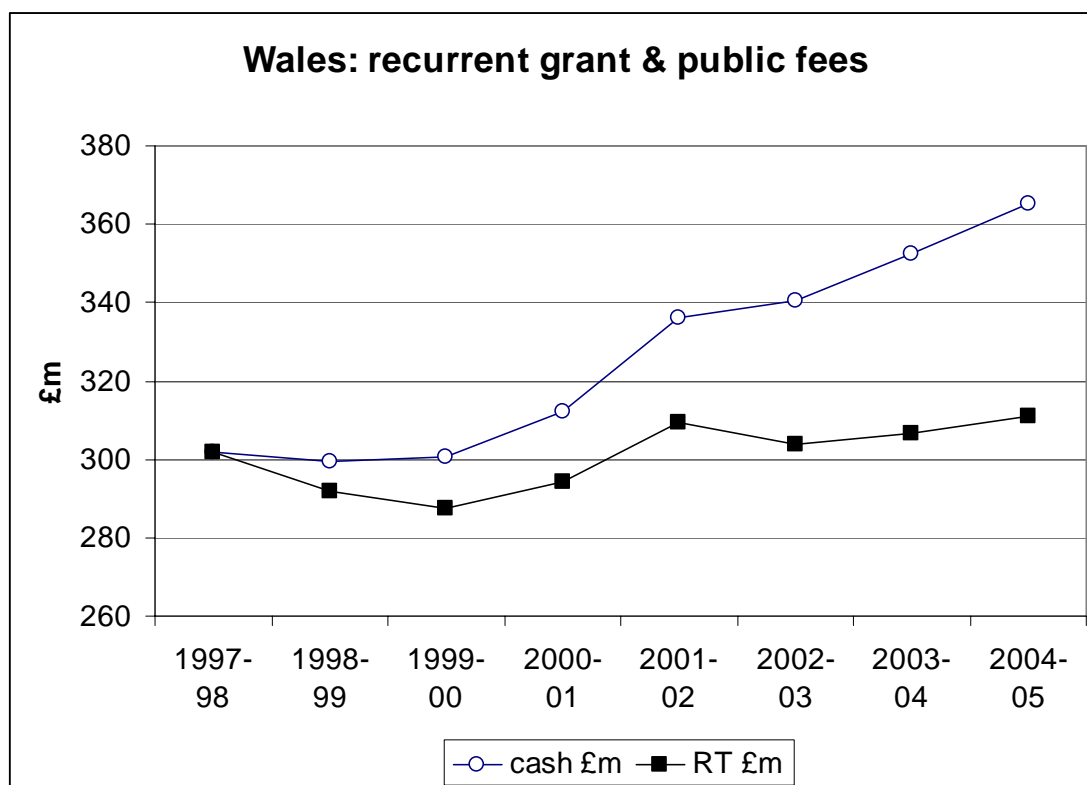
Table 3

Grant and fees: cash and real terms, Wales

	Recurrent grant & public fees	Recurrent grant & public fees
Wales	cash £m	Real terms £m
1997-98	302	302
1998-99	300	292
1999-00	301	287
2000-01	312	294
2001-02	336	310
2002-03	340	304
2003-04	353	307
2004-05	365	311
1997-8 to 2004-5 Change %	21.0%	3.0%

Source: annual grant letters; calculations by UCU, using HMT GDP deflator @ 23.12.05.

Table 4



Source: annual grant letters; calculations by UCU, using HMT GDP deflator @ 23.12.05.

Table 5**Funding council grant and academic fees, Wales**

	2003-4	2004-5	2005-06	2006-07	2005-6 to
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	2006-7
	Outturn	Outturn/ estimate	Forecast/ plan	Forecast/ plan	% change
1. Funding council grant			362,477	396,772	9.5%
2. Academic fees and support grants	174,668	178,388	182,634	187,127	2.5%
Top-up fees*					
Total grant and fees			545,111	583,899	7.1%

	2007-08	2006-7 to	2008-09	2007-8 to	2005-6 to
	£000s	2007-8	£000s	2008-9	2008-9
	Forecast/ plan	% change	Forecast/ plan	% change	% change
1. Funding council grant	402,199	1.4%	392,196	-2.5%	8.3%
2. Academic fees and support grants	192,104	2.7%	197,291	2.7%	7.8%
Top-up fees*	42,507		87,309	105.4%	105.4%
Total grant and fees	636,810	9.1%	676,796	6.3%	22.5%

* Provisional figures awaiting further analysis

Notes

1. Higher level learning incl. HEFCW grant	Source: NAW Draft Budget Proposals Oct 2005, plus additional funding announced November 2005
2. Academic fees and support grants	Source: HESA 2003/04 Resources of Higher Education Institutions, uprated by HMT GDP deflator @ 23.12.05
Estimated top-up fee income	UCU estimates based on 2003-4 HESA data: 23,615 full-time 1st-year u/grads UK & other EU domicile x £1,800 in 2007-8, then x2 in 2008-9

Table 6**Recurrent funding per student, Wales**

	Recurrent grant & public fees	Recurrent grant & public fees	Recurrent grant & all fees	Recurrent grant & all fees
	unit £ cash	unit £ real terms	unit £ cash	unit £ real terms
1996-97	4420		4420	
1997-98	4634	4634	4634	4634
1998-99	4445	4332	4568	4452
1999-00	4416	4221	4656	4450
2000-01	4446	4195	4749	4481
2001-02	4643	4275	4975	4581
2002-03	4658	4157	5007	4468
2003-04	4796	4170	5161	4487
2004-05	4935	4201	5315	4524
1997-8 to 2004- 5 % change	6.5%	-9.3%	14.7%	-2.4%

Source: annual grant letters; calculations by UCU, using HMT GDP deflator @ 23.12.05.

Table 7**Higher education institutions' share of QR research funding**

	England		Wales		Scotland	
	1997-8	2005-6	1997-8	2005-6	1997-8	2005-6
HEIs N	135	130	14	13	22	19
Top 10%	55.8%	59.4%	39.4%*	57.0%*	47.6%	49.3%
Top 25%	84.3%	78.1%	83.5%	82.7%	81.8%	75.7%
Top 50%	95.1%	94.2%	97.5%	98.7%	97.1%	95.8%
% with no recurrent funding for R	10.4%	11.5%	14.3%	15.4%	13.6%	0.0%

* Cardiff University only

Source: data for 1997-8: HESA Finance Plus; data for 2005-6: England: HEFCE circular 2005/43 table 1; Wales: HEFCW circular 2006/06 table 3; Scotland: SHEFC circular HE/08/05 table B7 (excluding funding for Knowledge Transfer Grant, which for the purpose of this submission is seen more as funding related to university-business links than to research per se). Percentage calculations by UCU.