

Academic Staffing Scheme: arrangements for 2014/15 and 2015/16

Date: 2 May 2013

Reference: 12/10

To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Consultative Group, institutional Welsh Medium Provision coordinators.

Respond by: 7 June 2013

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This circular is part of a consultation process with the higher education institutions on the arrangements for awarding Academic Staffing Scheme posts in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

This document is available on the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol website

ACADEMIC STAFFING SCHEME: FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

Background

1. This circular forms part of a consultation process on the future arrangements for the Academic Staffing Scheme.
2. The scheme was introduced in 2011/12 following the establishment of the Coleg and in accordance with the recommendations made by Professor Robin Williams in his report. By September 2013, over 80 appointments will have been completed.
3. Up to 40 further posts are to be awarded (approximately 20 per year) to commence in 2014/15 and 2015/16. Discussions have started with the Welsh Government on the funding arrangements for the period after 2017 but it is not anticipated that a significant number of new posts will be available in that following period. It is therefore essential, in order to achieve the objectives set out in the Coleg's Academic Plan, that the appointments that remain within the current budget cycle are completed in the most strategic way possible.
4. The section that follows outlines two possible models for the two years in question. The Coleg is not asking the institutions to favour one option over another but that general comments and, possibly, other suggestions are submitted on how best to achieve the aims of the Staffing Scheme and the Coleg through these posts.
5. The Coleg Board of Directors will make a final decision on the matter at its meeting on June 19, 2013 and the circular inviting applications will be published at the beginning of September, as usual.

Continue with the current arrangements

6. The current arrangements, which are outlined in the circular for 2013/14 (Ref 12/01), are based on a competitive process between the institutions for the posts that are available. The current procedure allows flexibility to the institutions to

submit up to nine applications each but, increasingly, means that difficult decisions have to be made by the Coleg when selecting between a number of strong applications.

7. At times the current system highlights that institutional priorities are not always compatible with those of the Coleg in relation to academic planning. There have been cases where the decisions made by the Coleg have led to disappointment amongst colleagues in institutions for this reason.
8. If the Coleg adhered to the current system, possibly with some changes, it is proposed that institutions will be invited - should they wish - to list the posts in order of priority. This would, at least, allow the Coleg to better understand the position of the institutions with regards to the relative strategic value of different applications.

Other Models of Awarding Posts

9. The Coleg is prepared to consider other models of awarding posts, based on strategic principles rather than competitive ones. Of course, it would be required for any such process to be based on clear criteria and a transparent process. The Coleg Academic Plan, and the new subject plans, would be central to any such process.
10. Having considered the matter, however, the Coleg is not confident that an alternative model could be offered that would ensure unanimous support from the institutions and the wider academic community. However, it was decided to invite recommendations from the institutions to ensure that any potential models for the next two years have been considered and discussed fully.
11. Any responses to this circular should be submitted by **Tuesday June 4, 2013**.

