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Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# **Further education workload review**

Guidance for action plan implementation funding, 2022-23

## Introduction

In October 2020, a review of the workload of further education (FE) lecturers was initiated. The review is being carried out by a social partnership comprising Joint Trade Unions, colleges and the Welsh Government, overseen by a steering group.

**Phases 1 and 2** of the project involved a survey of lecturers and discussion by the social partnership, to establish the extent of excess workload for lecturers and potential underlying reasons.

**Phase 3** of the project involved each individual college reviewing local workload issues and agreeing an action plan. These plans were submitted in January 2022 and have been analysed to identify common themes.

The steering group has agreed that **Phase 4** of the project will include funding for colleges to deliver collaborative projects that will address shared workload issues, including a pilot on a new workload allocation model. These projects will result in outcomes that can help to alleviate workload issues across the whole FE sector.

This document sets out guidance for the sector on funding for action plan implementation in the 2022-23 financial year. The Minister for Education and the Welsh Language has approved:

- funding of between £400,000 - £470,000 to support up to four collaborative projects; and
- a contribution of £10,000 to the costs of action plan implementation and monitoring in each college.

## Potential themes for collaborative projects

The individual action plans have been shared between colleges to aid discussion on shared challenges and areas where collaboration could be beneficial. This guidance sets out suggested project themes, but colleges may collectively decide to put forward alternative proposals based on their assessment of priorities.

Analysis of the action plans identified a number of common themes that could lend themselves to collaborative projects. The table below lists these, along with related work that will be undertaken over the next year.

Proposed themes for collaborative projects	Other related projects to be funded by Welsh Government	Areas for sharing of approaches, lessons and good practice
1. Attendance management and monitoring	Staff wellbeing (continuation of Well Aware project under Mental Health & Wellbeing fund)	“Out of hours” learner communications policies
2. Systems integration		Timetabling
3. User experience/ futureproofing	Learner discipline and behaviour (potential project being discussed with JTUs and colleges)	Support for new staff
4. Workload monitoring		Digital teaching resources

If appropriate, themes could be split into two complementary proposals; in this case, proposals should show clearly how the projects would work together to share information and avoid duplication.

## Project requirements

The model for developing and delivering collaborative projects will be similar to the Welsh Government's Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund and Professional Learning Fund. To secure funding approval, each project must:

- Have a lead college that will be the recipient of grant funding on behalf of the collaborative partnership;
- Have a clear plan for how the partner colleges will work together and what role each will play in delivering the project;
- Be co-constructed with trade unions in each college, and fully involve staff in all aspects of delivery;
- Have a plan for evaluation with full involvement of staff in each college;
- Include a workload impact assessment of the project itself;
- Result in a set of sustainable outcomes that can be disseminated for the benefit of the sector as a whole, in order to help alleviate the workload of lecturers and other staff. This should be a combination of:
  - practical outcomes such as forms, guidance, templates, systems, which have been workload impact assessed and shown to reduce workload for lecturers; and
  - an evaluative report identifying project outcomes, lessons learnt and recommendations for further action at sector, partnership and/or institutional levels.

Projects could involve creating a shared solution (or set of solutions) such as a system, policy, process or piece of software; or they could focus on sharing and evaluating different approaches in each of the partner colleges, in order to share good practice and identify critical success factors. We will expect project partners to make a commitment to sharing the outcomes and 'lessons learned' from their project, to help maximise the impact and benefits of the investment for the whole sector.

In evaluating applications, we will be looking for evidence that partner colleges are actively involved in project design, delivery and evaluation. This involvement should go beyond membership of project boards/steering groups.

### *Funding*

This is not a competitive bidding process. The sector should agree the overall list of up to four projects, the scope of each, and which colleges will be involved in each. The goal is for every college to be involved in at least one project; colleges can be partners in more than one project, but should not be the lead institution on more than one project.

The total funding envelope for collaborative projects is between £400,000 and £470,000 in the 2022-23 financial year. The exact amount is dependent on confirming the costs of other aspects of the workload project, including a staff survey, which are currently being discussed. Within this envelope, there is no set amount to be allocated to each project; the funding could be split evenly across all of them, or differentiated according to the scale of work required for each individual project. We expect lead colleges to liaise to ensure that the total available funding is used across the full set of project proposals.

Funding can be used for staff time, consultancy support, training, systems or software development. It cannot be used for capital equipment.

## Hwb

It is expected that each partnership will set up a project network on Hwb and will invite representatives from all colleges, including those not directly involved in the project, to join. This can be used to share information, resources and for discussions about the project, including creating draft resources such as guidance and templates.

Each project must result in outputs that can be shared with the whole FE sector on Hwb, and partnerships are required to describe in their application form what they envisage these outputs will be. It is likely that this list will be refined as the projects progress, and by the progress review in December partnerships should be ready to start to finalise their expected list of outputs.

### *Submission and approval of applications*

Lead colleges should submit the application form at **Annex A** of this guidance to [post16quality@gov.wales](mailto:post16quality@gov.wales) by **5pm on 17 June 2022**. Applications will be evaluated by representatives of the social partnership (JTUs, ColegauCymru and Welsh Government), and further information may be requested before projects are approved for funding.

#### **Evaluation criteria**

Proposals must:

- ✓ Demonstrate co-construction with, and full involvement of, lecturers and other college staff who are impacted by excess workload
- ✓ Reflect workload issues identified in college action plans
- ✓ Aim to produce sustainable benefits and outcomes for the whole sector
- ✓ Show how all partners will play an active role in projects
- ✓ Show how impact will be evaluated

## **Individual college funding**

Alongside the collaborative projects, a contribution of £10,000 per college will be provided to assist with local action plan implementation and monitoring. This can be used to cover staff time to participate in meetings and discussions, to ensure that local social partnerships continue to address issues around workload and actively monitor the impact of their action plans.

Colleges are not required to submit applications for this allocation. The funding will be included in grant offer letters to colleges covering a range of projects funded through the Investing in Quality budget, anticipated for issue in July 2022. Payment will be subject to submission of LSP progress reports as set out in the table below.

## **Timescales and reporting requirements**

Week commencing 16 May 2022	Guidance issued [subject to steering group sign-off]
17 June 2022	Deadline for submission of applications from college partnerships
Late June / early July 2022	Evaluation of applications; further information may be requested from partnerships during this period
By 8 July 2022	Outcomes of evaluation confirmed

July 2022 (tbc)	Grant agreements issued to lead colleges
From July 2022	Project delivery
16 December 2022	Submission of interim reports and grant claims. We will provide a standard proforma for reports, outlining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Progress to date;</li> <li>▪ Any issues, risks or anticipated slippage in delivering the agreed project outcomes;</li> <li>▪ Any requests for changes to the expenditure profile or project outcomes; and</li> <li>▪ Confirmation that projects are on track to expend their full funding allocation by 31 March 2023.</li> </ul>
January 2023	Project leads to attend social partnership steering group to present progress reports and emerging outcomes, and discuss any emerging risks or changes
January/February 2023	Workload survey of lecturers to include questions on involvement in projects and their impact
31 March 2023	Project completion; colleges to confirm total expenditure
28 April 2023	Submission of final collaborative project reports (signed off by local JTU representatives) and any resources produced for publication on Hwb Submission of individual colleges' action plan progress reports (signed off by local JTU representatives) Final grant claims for collaborative and institutional funding

## Contact

Any queries regarding this guidance should be sent to:

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