

To Derek Griffin,
Deputy Chair, Glyndwr University,
Mold Road,
Wrexham.
LL11 2AW.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

16 February 2015

Dear Derek,

Joint Working Group to Consider Higher Education in North East Wales

Following the 'Review of Higher Education Provision in North East Wales' by Sir Adrian Webb, the Welsh Government is now commissioning an independent evaluation of the options for supporting the further development of Glyndwr University, via a Joint Working Group. The Welsh Government has a strong commitment to securing high-quality higher education provision in the North East of Wales and the proposed working group has been convened at the request of Minister for Education and Skills.

The Working Group's main objective will be to identify and evaluate the options for the delivery of high quality, fit for purpose, sustainable higher education in North East Wales which meets the requirements of students, local people and employers.

We are in the process of establishing the Group which is to be chaired by Sir Adrian Webb. We have asked for support from representatives from Glyndwr University, the National Union of Students in Wales, a North East Wales employer, a Further Education representative, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), and the Welsh Government.

The remit of the group will be to establish criteria against which options will be assessed, drawing on those previously provided by HEFCW and having due regard to the outcomes set out in the report of Sir Adrian Webb's review group, and to prepare an evaluation of proposals received. The Group will draw upon external independent expertise as appropriate, and make recommendations for consideration by the Minister and HEFCW, noting that options may not be mutually exclusive and might be combined.

We have written to a number of higher and further education institutions that have previously expressed an interest in working with Glyndwr University to provide high quality further and higher education in North East Wales, and which fit within the umbrella of the Webb Review recommendations.

In the first instance we have requested that institutions respond, with confirmation of their intention to participate in this process, by the beginning of March 2015. The institutions board will then be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) before additional information is provided.

Institutions interested in making a proposal will then have until Tuesday 7th April 2015 to prepare an outline statement of interest (of 10-15 pages in length) addressing the following seven areas:

- assessment of current and future FE and HE needs and wants in North East Wales;
- vision for the development of future provision for further and higher education;
- assessment of the pattern of current provision and plans for future development:
 - Learning, Teaching and Assessment;
 - Research and Innovation;
 - Enterprise and public engagement;
- assessment of financial position of the institution and outline plans for the future;
- proposed governance arrangements and legal accountability structure for the new institution/partnership which will deliver the vision for higher education in North East Wales;
- proposed quality assurance arrangements for the new institution/partnership which will deliver high quality, fit for purpose and sustainable higher (and further) education in NE Wales; and
- outline transition arrangements.

The outline proposal will be assessed and evaluated by the Joint Working Group with a view to making a provisional recommendation, subject to possible further due diligence, to the Minister for Education and Skills at the latest by the end of May.

If you would like further information on the Joint Working Group, please do not hesitate to contact Neil Surman on 029 2082 5759, email Neil.surman@wales.gsi.gov.uk or myself on 029 2082 5899 Huw.Morris@wales.gsi.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Huw Morris

Group Director
Head of Skills, Higher Education and Lifelong Learning, Welsh Government.