



## Further Education

### Introduction

- There are 25 further education (FE) institutions in Wales
- In 2004/05, the 25 further education institutions employed 14,695 staff.

### Review of Further Education in Wales

The Welsh Assembly Government has established an independent review to evaluate the strategic mission and role of the further education. *The Independent Review of the Mission and Purpose of Further Education in Wales* was launched in November 2006 and is chaired by Sir Adrian Webb.

As identified in the Welsh Assembly Government's document *The Learning Country: Vision Into Action*, the review will consider the extent to which FE institutions should focus on economically useful skills; the extent to which they should specialise; efforts to improve quality; the place of self regulation and other measures to streamline governance; the diverse nature of the sector; workforce development initiatives; and how best to monitor the views of students on a regular basis and to publish the results. The report will be published in Autumn 2007.

### Further Education and Training Bill 2006-2007

The Further Education and Training Bill 2006-07 was published on 20 November 2006 as a Bill to reform the further education system. The Bill has completed its passage through the House of Lords and moved to the House of Commons on the 7 March 2007.

The Bill includes provision for restructuring the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for England; for the Privy Council to grant further education institutions in England powers (but not in Wales) to award their own foundation degrees; and to make regulations in England requiring all college principals to achieve a stipulated leadership qualification before taking up a new post.

A Clause to transfer the power (in England) to incorporate further education institutions and to dissolve further education corporations from the Secretary of State for Education and Skills to the Learning and Skills Council (Clause 17) was defeated in the House of Lords.

### Overview of current statutory powers of the Assembly

The portfolio of the Welsh Assembly Government's Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills includes responsibility for the policy for further education in Wales. Primary legislation which confers specific statutory powers for further education in Wales includes the:

- Further Education Act 1985
- Education Reform Act 1988
- Further and Higher Education Act 1992
- Education Act 1997
- Education Act 2002

### Forthcoming EU and UK primary legislation

- The Further Education and Training Bill gives Measure making powers to the National Assembly for Wales in the field of education and training (amending the Government of Wales Act 2006 Schedule 5 Field 5: Education and Training).

The Bill contains provision amending the Government of Wales Act 2006 to confer legislative competence on the Assembly in respect of the following:

- Matter 5.1: the provision of facilities for post-16 education and training
- Matter 5.2: new provisions for the establishment and discontinuance of further education Institutions and their management and governance;

- Matter 5.3: provision for new forms of learning delivery through collaborative arrangements;
- Matter 5.4: provision of financial resources in connection with post-16 education and training
- Matter 5.5: the inspection of post-16 education and training and teacher training
- Matter 5.6: the provision of advice and information relating to post-16 education and training.

### Key Welsh Government strategy documents and action plans from the Second Assembly

- Welsh Assembly Government, *The Learning Country: Vision into Action*, 26 October 2006  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/docrepos/40382/4038232/403829/News/2006/learning-country-via-e.pdf?lang=en>
- Welsh Assembly Government, *Reaching Higher*, The ten year strategy for higher education  
[http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/policy\\_strategy\\_and\\_planning/further\\_and\\_higher\\_education/reaching\\_higher/?lang=en](http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/policy_strategy_and_planning/further_and_higher_education/reaching_higher/?lang=en)

### Legacy issues from the Second Assembly

The Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee's legacy paper highlighted as issues for the attention of the Third Assembly:

- Monitor the implementation of the review being Chaired by Sir Adrian Webb into the mission and purpose of Further Education in Wales in the context of the "*Learning Country: Vision into Action*"

### Useful Links

- The Welsh Assembly Government website, list of further education colleges in Wales:  
<http://www.elwa.ac.uk/ElwaWeb/elwa.aspx?pageid=667>
- Independent Review of Further Education in Wales, chaired by Sir Adrian Webb  
[http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/education\\_and\\_skills\\_consult/education\\_and\\_skills\\_consul/1244018/?version=1&lang=en](http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/education_and_skills_consult/education_and_skills_consul/1244018/?version=1&lang=en)
- Further Education and Training Bill 2006-2007 [HL]  
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200607/ldbills/006/07006.i-ii.html>
- Explanatory Notes: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200607/ldbills/006/en/07006x-.htm>
- Progress of Bill in Westminster:  
[http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/pabills/200607/further\\_education\\_and\\_training.htm](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/pabills/200607/further_education_and_training.htm)
- Department for Education and Skills White Paper "*Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances*", March 2006:  
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/furthereducation/index.cfm?fuseaction=content.view&CategoryID=21&ContentID=25>
- House of Commons Library Research Paper on the Further Education and Training Bill:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2007/rp07-035.pdf>
- National Assembly for Wales' Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee agenda, transcript and papers, 1 February 2007:  
<http://www.wales.gov.uk/cms/2/EducationLifelongLearningAndSkillsCommittee/AgendasPapersTranscripts?month=200702>
- Estyn inspection reports on FE colleges:  
[http://www.estyn.gov.uk/inspection\\_reports\\_index/further\\_education\\_institutions.asp](http://www.estyn.gov.uk/inspection_reports_index/further_education_institutions.asp)
- Fforwm website: <http://www.fforwm.ac.uk/>
- The House of Commons Education and Skills Select committee inquiry into Further Education (report published September 2006):  
[http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary\\_committees/education\\_and\\_skills\\_committee.cfm](http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/education_and_skills_committee.cfm)

### Further information

For further information on any aspect of the Further Education sector in Wales, please contact Anne Thomas, Members' Research Service ([Anne.Thomas@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Anne.Thomas@wales.gsi.gov.uk)), 029 2089 8966