



HEFCW-funded QAA Cymru Collaborative Enhancement Projects 2022-23

Micro-credentials and Student Complaints and Extenuating Circumstances

Call for Expressions of Interest

Would you like to lead a collaborative enhancement project with colleagues from other QAA member higher education providers in Wales?

What are the working groups?

1 These working groups between QAA Member higher education providers in Wales are aimed at promoting collaboration and sector development. These are projects where groups of providers agree to work collectively on matters of mutual interest which have the potential to add value to the whole sector once complete. These project groups will be asked to report on progress to QAA Cymru and regularly share learning from their activity. These project groups will be supported by QAA Cymru, through HEFCW grant funding, and some staff facilitator support.

2 You are invited to express interest in leading one or more Collaborative Enhancement Project(s). If you have an idea for a project but have not identified any collaborative partners, we encourage you to still submit an expression of interest. Following the closing date, QAA will identify projects proposals with similar aims and can work with providers to form a Collaborative Enhancement Project.

3 This call is for **two separate projects only**, that are to be funded through the HEFCW Grant Letter for QAA-facilitated sector activities. The two topic areas are **Micro-credentials** and **Student Complaints and Extenuating Circumstances**. Proposals outside of these areas will not be considered.

What projects have QAA supported previously?

4 As an organisation, QAA has a long history of supporting sector-wide collaborative enhancement activity.

5 Specifically in Wales, QAA Cymru launched a call for the first Collaborative Enhancement Projects for Wales in March 2021. The projects taken forwards as part of this initiative included:

- [Student engagement in learning](#)
- Lead: Bangor University (collaborative partners: Grŵp Llandrillo Menai).
- Welsh medium employer initiative
- Lead: University of South Wales (collaborative partners: Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, Cardiff and Vale College, Coleg Gwent, Coleg Y Cymoedd, The College Merthyr Tydfil).
- Embedding COVID-19 lessons learnt to enhance communities of learning
- Lead: University of South Wales (collaborative partners: Cardiff and Vale College, Coleg Gwent, NPTC).
- [Development of resources for PGR students to assist preparation for their viva](#)
- Lead: University of South Wales (collaborative partners: University Alliance, University of Huddersfield, Coventry University). This project is funded through the Welsh collaborative enhancement funding but came through a call from the UK-wide membership call for projects.
- QAA Cymru have also been supporting a project on enabling co-creation in assessment in collaboration with Aberystwyth University, Bangor University, Cardiff University and University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

6 QAA supports Collaborative Enhancement Projects led by members in England via QAA's UK-wide Membership. The completed and upcoming projects can be found on the [QAA website](#).

7 QAA also supports collaborative clusters as part of the [QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes](#). A range of outcomes and outputs from all collaborative clusters are available on the [Enhancement Themes website](#), including projects relating to the current Enhancement Theme: [Resilient Learning Communities](#).

How are the topics identified and chosen?

8 For 2022-23, QAA Cymru has received funding from HEFCW to support up to two projects in the areas of **Micro-credentials**¹ and **Student Complaints and Extenuating Circumstances**.

9 QAA Cymru has also received funding from HEFCW to support further collaborative work deriving from the HEFCW Higher Education Investment and Recovery Fund pan-Wales digital learning project led by the Wrexham Glyndŵr University on behalf of the Universities Wales Learning and Teaching Network. QAA is working with the Universities Wales Learning and Teaching Network to identify this project.

10 If we receive more proposals than we can support at the current time, we have a set of selection criteria which the expressions of interest will be considered against (see paragraph 11).

¹ QAA is leading a micro-credentials project, as part of the grant arrangements with HEFCW, in 2022-23. This project is looking at current practice in the higher education sector in Wales and how, for example, the [Characteristics Statement](#) is being used. The project will aim to share good practice and learnings through a sector webinar in 2023. Therefore, you may wish to consider how a project in this area can complement this work. Please contact QAA for more information.

What is the selection process and criteria?

- 11 The expressions of interest will be reviewed by QAA Cymru in terms of:
- alignment to the themes of **Micro-credentials** and **Student Complaints and Extenuating Circumstances**
 - number of institutions (and/or students' unions) actively engaged in the project (in general, this would be at least three to four)
 - potential for the sector as a whole to benefit from the work once completed
 - impact on/benefit to the providers involved in the working group and their students
 - extent of student engagement in the activity
 - plans for disseminating outcomes across the sector
 - value for money
 - ability to complete project by 31 July 2023
 - consideration for the positive impact the project will have on Welsh medium/ bilingual provision and study opportunities.

What are the key dates?

- 12 Key dates relating to this call for expressions of interest are:
- expressions of interest should be returned to h.thomas@gaa.ac.uk and copied to ARCAdmin@gaa.ac.uk by Wednesday 22 February 2023 (we welcome responses in English and Welsh)
 - decisions on all expressions of interest will be reported to providers involved during week commencing 27 February 2023 at the latest
 - successful project proposals will be required to commence and commit expenditure in 2022-23.

What is the level of funding support?

13 The money allocated to successful expressions of interest will depend on the nature of the activity and anticipated outcomes, expenditure per project will **not exceed £3,000**. Expressions of interest should include details of how much funding and other resource you are seeking and an indication of how the money will be used.

- 14 The funding will support your work and the proposed outputs, which could include:
- development of practical resources to be published for the wider sector
 - production of written material or multimedia resource for use by students and staff (for example, case studies)
 - support for the evaluation of an existing initiative
 - assistance with developing a good practice or quick reference guide for students and staff
 - providing a small amount of funding to enable an institutional activity to be extended for the benefit of additional providers.

This is not an exhaustive list and other proposed outputs will be considered.

What are we asking providers to do?

15 If you are interested in leading a project, please complete the Expression of Interest Application Form.

16 Please indicate the kind of support you are seeking from QAA Cymru to facilitate your proposed work. As an indicative list, examples of support might include:

- directing to readily available material at QAA relating to the topic
- support for the evaluation of an initiative
- promotion of the project through QAA communication channels
- providing logistical support to allow a meeting to take place online or in person.

Interested and want to be involved?

17 If you would like to discuss a proposal or thoughts for a project, we would like to hear from you. You can contact us on h.thomas@qaa.ac.uk.

Thank you for your interest and support in this HEFCW-funded opportunity in collaboration with QAA Cymru - we look forward to hearing from you!