

## SPR7.4

### **HEFCE Consultation on changes to the teaching funding method: Future support for teaching enhancement and widening participation (2008/28)**

#### **1994 Group response**

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The following is a response from the 1994 Group to the HEFCE Consultation on changes to the teaching funding method: Future support for teaching enhancement and widening participation. For more detailed responses to the questions contained in the consultation document, please see the individual submissions of the Group's member institutions.

Members of the 1994 Group are: University of Bath, Birkbeck University of London, Durham University, University of East Anglia, University of Essex, University of Exeter, Goldsmiths University of London, Royal Holloway University of London, Lancaster University, University of Leicester, Loughborough University, Queen Mary University of London, University of Reading, University of St Andrews, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of Surrey, University of Sussex and University of York.

#### **Question 1:**

***Do you agree with our proposal to create a new targeted allocation to support teaching enhancement and student success?***

As the consultation document acknowledges, the TQEF has been a key driver in ensuring a strategic approach to learning and teaching, and institutions have continued to develop LTA strategies that were required as part of TQEF. The 1994 Group agrees that there should be a continuation of an influencing mechanism in the areas of learning and teaching enhancement, and so welcomes the proposed TESS targeted allocation.

We recognise that retention and the wider student learning experience are closely linked and so welcome the proposal to combine the two funding streams. This will enable institutions to identify a more flexible approach to the allocation of funds and is likely to reduce the administrative burden on institutions.

However, we note that the new allocation is derived from a redistribution of existing resource and that no additional resources are being provided.

**Question 2:**

***Do you agree with our proposal to increase the funding for widening access to support the increased costs of working with schools and colleges?***

The 1994 Group strongly supports the principles of widening access and so welcomes this proposal to increase the funding for supporting increased costs of working with schools and colleges.

However, we feel it is important to emphasise the different challenges of outreach work experienced by city based HEIs as compared to non-city based HEIs. For the former, there is likely to be a higher local concentration of 'schools and colleges in the most disadvantaged areas', and due to the greater ease of transport within cities it is easier to conduct outreach activities. For the latter, the dispersal of appropriate schools and colleges across a wider area means that outreach activity is often more challenging in terms of communication and transport. We feel that the subtlety of this distinction, and the relative difficulty for HEIs outside of the large civic centres to conduct this outreach activity, should be reflected in the proposals.

**Question 3:**

***Do you agree with our proposal to change the quintile weightings to recognise the costs of working with schools and colleges in the most disadvantaged areas?***

We support the principles behind this proposal. However, 1994 Group members have raised various concerns that we feel should be carefully considered.

There is concern that such quintiles of disadvantage are not easy to identify, and the mechanism for doing so should perhaps take into account more measures than solely participation rates.

There is also concern that shifting the focus so that the most disadvantaged quintile receives four times the funding of the second most disadvantaged quintile, may result with potential students within the latter quintile being unfairly overlooked.

Again, we should emphasise the different challenges of outreach work experienced by city based HEIs as compared to non-city based HEIs.

**Question 4:**

***Do you agree that the new targeted allocation for teaching enhancement and student success (TESS) should reflect support for learning, teaching and assessment strategies, retention and teaching informed by research?***

There is general support from 1994 Group institutions that the new targeted allocation for TESS should reflect support for learning, teaching and assessment strategies, retention and teaching informed by research.

**Question 5:**

***Do you agree that there is no need for formal monitoring, but that the learning, teaching and assessment strategies should form part of our discussions with institutions?***

We agree that there is no need for formal monitoring, and that the LTA strategies should form part of the funding council's discussions with HEIs.

**Question 6**

***Do you agree that the new targeted allocation should be reviewed after three years, with a view to then rolling it into the mainstream teaching grant?***

We agree that the targeted allocation should be reviewed after three years. It may, however, be difficult to see any significant differences or impacts caused by these changes to the funding model after this short period. One characteristic of outreach work is that impacts can only really be discerned in the medium to long term.

The proposal to roll the targeted allocation into the mainstream teaching grant should be considered as part of the 3 year review.

Tom Norton  
6 Nov 08