

Swansea University Response to HEFCW Circular W10/06HE: “Developing a Regional Dimension to the Planning and Delivery of Higher Education”

Q1. Do you support the definition of ‘region’ which we are adopting? If not, please set out your alternative proposal and the evidence for this.

Swansea University supports the definition of region proposed in the paper. To this end we are pleased to be fully involved in a number of regional initiatives including the Dragon Innovation Partnership, the SWWHEP, the South West Wales Welsh for Adults Centre and the region’s Reaching Wider partnership. We also support the work of the Regional Learning Partnership which we consider has a significant contribution to make in promoting HE/FE collaboration within South West Wales.

Swansea University recognises the different missions and complementary activity within the HE and FE sectors within South West Wales. We enthusiastically embrace the need to mobilise international excellence in order to energise South West Wales. Indeed as is implied in paragraph 10 of the Circular Swansea University endorses the North American model of universities working globally and delivering regionally. World class research invariably involves international and UK wide collaboration which develops intellectual assets that attract and retain high GVA businesses to the region. In drawing the most talented people to South West Wales we can deliver skilled entrepreneurs and graduates to meet the labour needs of employers driving wealth creation. Swansea University works in partnership with business and Government and is committed to the development of knowledge economy clusters in South West Wales in the digital economy, the low carbon economy, life sciences and advanced engineering and manufacturing. The purpose of the University’s EU convergence funded projects is to dramatically promote these clusters as can be seen at our Institute of Life Science and also our proposals for the Bay Science and Innovation Campus with the strategic objective of driving economic regeneration in South West Wales.

Q2. Do you support the way in which we expect regional ‘need’ to be identified? If not, are there other factors which should be taken into account?

The proposals provide a broad-brush description of the evidence base required to identify regional need. The challenge now is to develop robust datasets of provision and need in order to properly inform decision-making at a national and regional level, without delaying the implementation of a regional framework.

In Appendix 1 Swansea University sets out the relevant considerations which must be embraced in developing key performance indicators for defining “need” within a regional context and also beyond. Given the financial challenges for the public sector, it is critical to develop a common way of estimating need across Wales, which will demand a common evidence base that will allow inter-regional comparisons to be made. The issue of equity between regions is critical so as to enable a fair distribution of funded places and other resource allocations. In this regard we are aware that members of the South West Wales Regional Learning Partnership are particularly concerned about the potential patriation of South West Wales HE credits to Cardiff.

The performance measure indicators set out in Appendix 1 will provide a focus in effectively targeting the contribution of the Welsh HE and FE sectors towards the key priorities of the Welsh Assembly Government which are set out in *For Our Future* and also the recent remit letter to HEFCW. Such data can be supplemented by specialist LMI and skills analysis input such as that provided by WELMERC¹.

The analysis of need will take into consideration matters which are already in the public domain, for example in respect of widening access in South West Wales. At the same time it is accepted that in delivering Welsh Assembly Government priorities with regard to the 16–19 Agenda there is significant work that needs to be achieved within the regional context and also beyond.

Swansea University is committed to enhancing its work in respect of the HE STEM Academy whilst at the same time its Pathways to the Professions and Reaching Wider have developed links with 16-19 providers to facilitate a seamless transition to HE, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The University has built strong, lasting links with business over many years that have provided meaningful engagement in curricula and programme design². Our Department of Adult and Continuing Education is partnered with all FE Colleges in the region, is a member organisation on all Adult Community Learning Partnerships, and the University is active in delivering part-time education in 87 community locations³.

Q3. Do you support the way in which we plan to take forward the planning and delivery of higher education through the use of regional strategies? If not, are there any amendments which you would wish to suggest or do you have an alternative approach to recommend?

Swansea University strongly supports an evidence-based approach to the allocation of provision. It is for this reason that we set out at Appendix 1 some initial suggestions with regard to targets that could be used to measure the full regional impact of HEI provision.

We are convinced that the impact of HEI activity should be measured through a series of output targets. By way of example: the impact of widening access delivery within a region (as defined in the Circular) should concentrate not simply on the numbers of students recruited but on the retention, progression and the qualifications gained by the students. It is these output targets that will have a meaningful impact on the employment opportunities and incomes of individuals⁴.

In order to be robust, a common evaluation framework covering the full range of HEI activity with input and output targets established at regional and individual HEI levels will be necessary. The focus must be on how as a region we can most effectively and efficiently deliver Welsh Assembly Government agendas. The establishment of an evaluation framework with clear targets will direct HE resources towards activities that deliver the greatest added value, taking into account the priorities set out in *For Our Future*.

¹ See Appendix Two.

² See Appendix Eight.

³ See Appendix Seven.

⁴ See Appendices Three, Four, Five, and Six for evidence of Swansea University's intake of widening access students, and the University's rates of retention, which help ensure that more disadvantaged students leave with qualifications

	← SOCIAL JUSTICE ————— BUOYANT ECONOMY →				
	Widening Access to Higher Education	Learning, teaching and the Student Experience	Skills Provision	Increased delivery of STEM Subjects	Impact and Economic Regeneration
Key Enablers	High quality student support Community based provision PT study opportunities Flexible provision Multi-sector collaborations Links to FE/Schools	High quality L&T provision High quality student support links to research excellence International recruitment Opportunities for placements abroad/with employers	Involvement of employers in course design and delivery PT study opportunities Flexible provision Multi-sector collaborations Matching supply of skills with employer demand	Strong research base STEM Internationally competitive Critical mass in STEM areas Overseas Recruitment Strong PGR community STEM company collaborations Multi-sector collaborations	Strong research base Internationally competitive Critical mass Overseas Recruitment Strong PGR community Return on Welsh Assembly core funding investment
Needs Analysis	Welsh Index of Deprivation Audit of HE Provision size, nature and location Audit of population young and mature and skill levels Ratio of HE students to population Breakdown of market demand	Subject course provision: Local demand UK/EU/Overseas demand link to employer demand / skill shortages Economic and social impact of subject areas Welsh Assembly Government and National priorities	Audit of skill shortages - Sector Skills Councils and Labour market research (WEIMERC) Employer demand Welsh Assembly Government and National priorities FE Provision Welsh medium provision	STEM provision across Region / Wales Employer demand for training and research collaborations Skill shortages Welsh Assembly Government and National priorities FE Provision Welsh medium provision	Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation Higher Education and Business in the Community Interaction Survey (HEBCIS) Regional competitiveness:(1) Unemployment rates Salary levels Density of knowledge intensive firms Proportion of SMEs patenting

	Widening Access to Higher Education	Learning, teaching and the Student Experience	Skills Provision	Increased delivery of STEM Subjects	Impact and Economic Regeneration
Impact on Region: Input Targets/ KPIs	<p>Number of students from: Communities First areas Low Affluence areas Low participation areas</p> <p>Number of PT entrants & number of mature entrants in areas above</p>	<p>Number of students: Home - local /national/EU Overseas UCAS Tariff points FE to HE progression pathways established Provision of School outreach Modules taught through the medium of Welsh</p>	<p>Number of enrolled students who are in work</p> <p>Evidence of provision Number of courses at all levels delivered in partnership with employers FE to HE progression pathways established</p>	<p>Number of STEM students</p> <p>STEM course provision at FE and HE within region</p> <p>FE to HE progression pathways established Provision of School outreach</p>	<p>RAE2008 / REF Results Research Y and a % of total Y Research Y per academic fte RCUK Y per academic fte (Y is income) (target is closing the gap on English HEIs) Funding Council Grant as a % of income</p>
Impact on Region: Output Targets/ KPIs	<p>Low % non-continuation of students: from Communities First areas from Low Affluence areas from low participation areas</p> <p>Qualifications gained CQFW Level 4 and above - students from above areas Estimated economic benefit of qualification across subjects</p> <p>Level, size and nature of provision in Communities First Areas</p> <p>Welsh medium provision</p>	<p>Low % non-continuation of students: Following year of entry full time first degree entrants</p> <p>Qualifications gained CQFW Level 4 and above Estimated economic benefit of qualification across subject areas</p> <p>HESA Teaching KPI's: NSS Results % 1st and 2. 1s Employability</p>	<p>Qualifications gained CQFW Level 4 and above Estimated economic benefit of qualification across subjects</p> <p>Level of industry approved vocational qualifications</p> <p>HESA Employability KPIs</p> <p>Impact on level of salaries Impact on employment %s</p>	<p>RAE2008 results</p> <p>Numbers of staff in STEM Research income per FTE RCUK income per FTE</p> <p>Qualifications gained CQFW Level 4 and above Estimated economic benefit of qualification across subjects</p> <p>Number / value of STEM research & training collaborations involving other HEIs and / or business per academic fte</p>	<p>Impact on deprivation measures in particular: Level of salaries Employment %s</p> <p>HEI value added (1)</p> <p>Collaborative research involving both public funding and funding from business per academic fte</p> <p>Contract research Y / fte Consultancy contracts / fte IP income / fte Patent applications no. and size of spin-off firms</p>

(1) The Economic and Innovative Contribution of Universities: A Regional Perspective, Huggins and Johnston, 2009.
HEI value added = surplus + employee costs + depreciation calculated using HESA data

Appendix Two

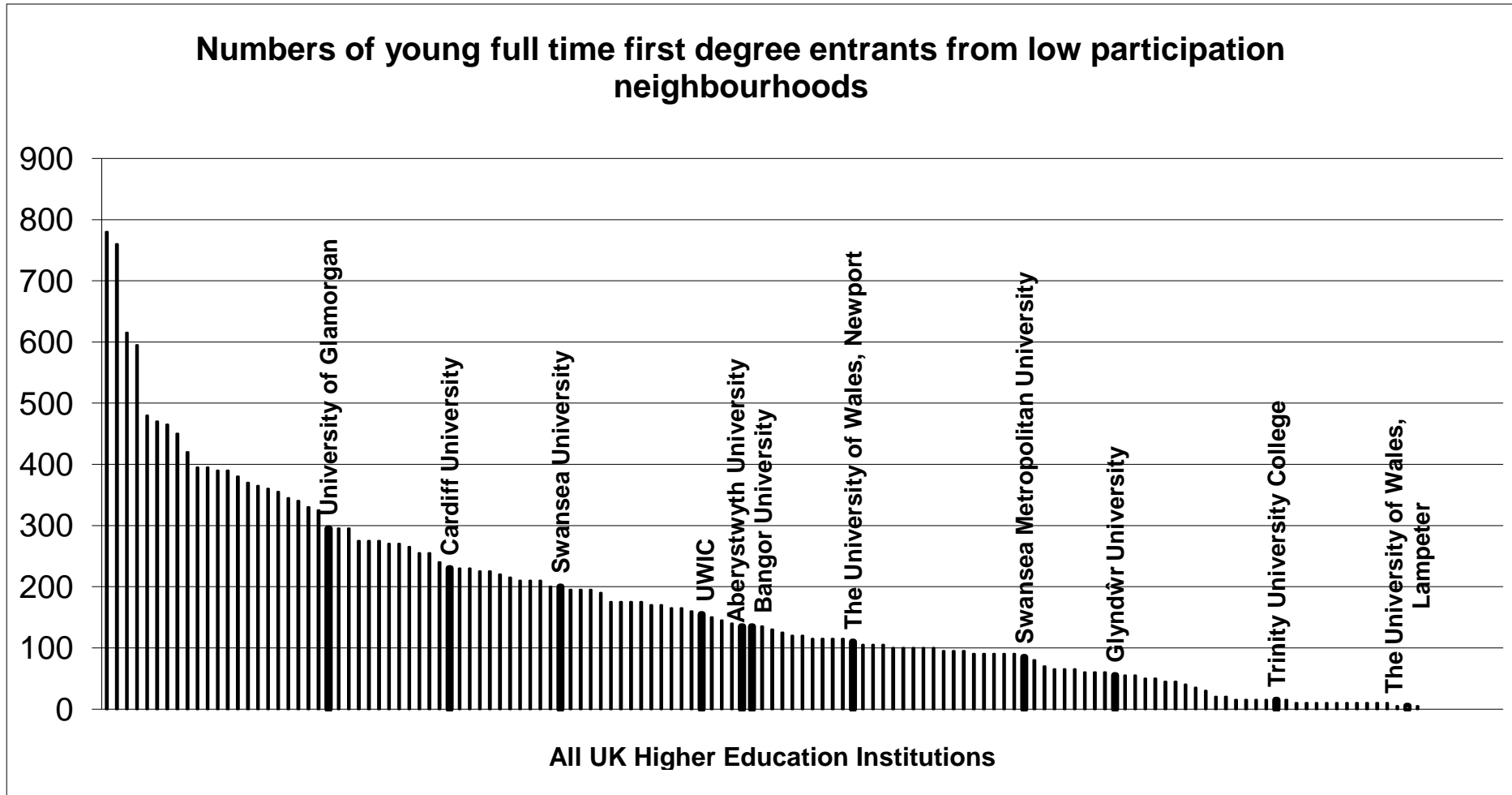
The Welsh Economy and Labour Market Evaluation and Research Centre (WELMERC).

WELMERC has four main objectives:-

- 1) To provide dynamic benchmarks for each Welsh Unitary Authority as a base from which to monitor the effectiveness of European funding;
- 2) To analyse and report on trends in economic data relevant to the Welsh Labour Market such as population profiles, migration flows, skills and qualifications, inactivity, employment, earnings, GDP growth rates and business information;
- 3) To analyse existing and new data sets including the Welsh boosts to the Labour Force Survey and British Household Panel Survey in order to inform policies relating to education and training, earnings, unemployment and inactivity, labour market discrimination and social inclusion;
- 4) To undertake evaluation analysis of Convergence Funding spending in terms of impacts on labour market activity and value for money.

Appendix Three

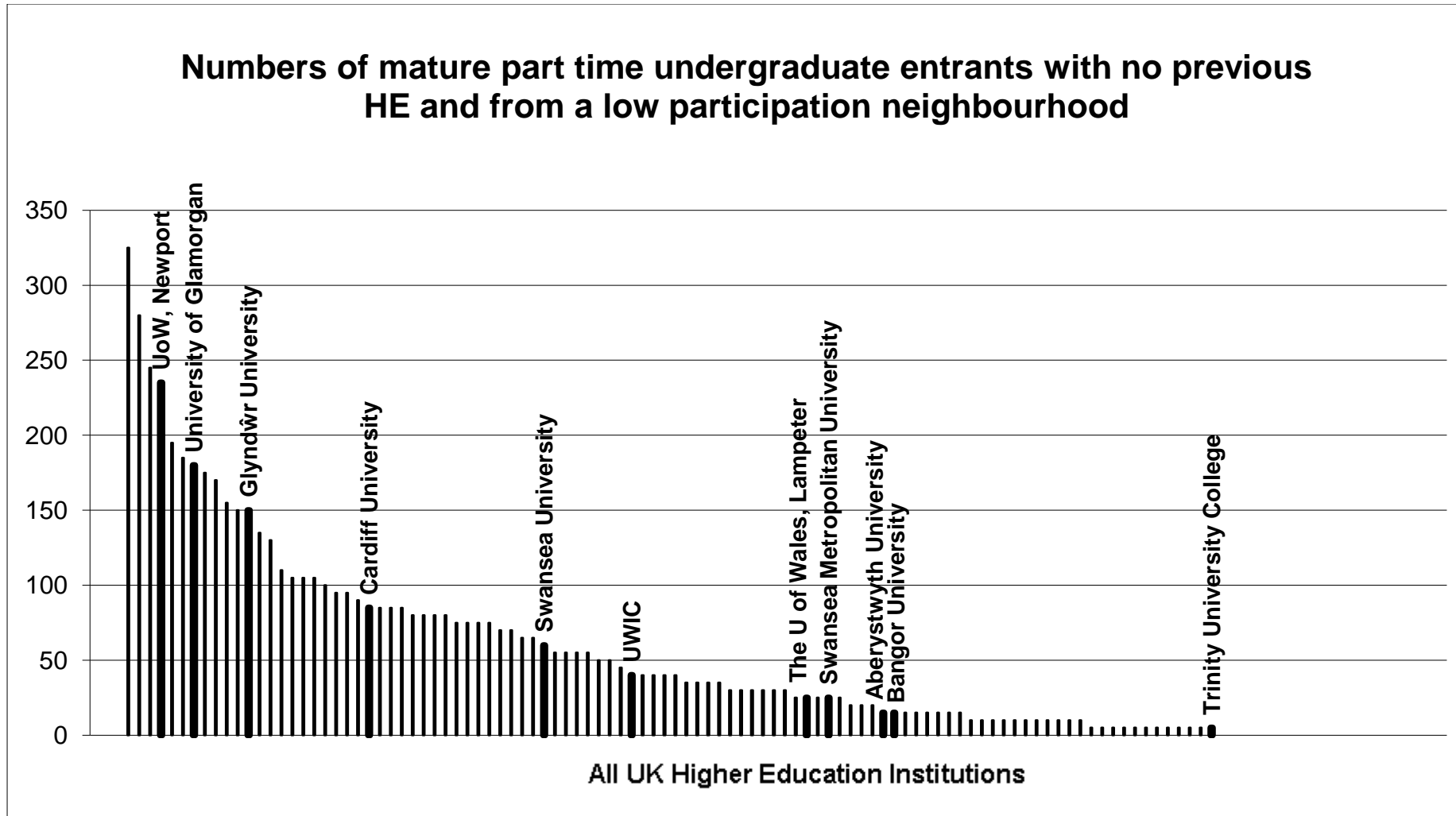
Social Justice - Widening Access Impact (Actual numbers of young full time WA students entering each HEI)



Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Performance Indicators – HESA-defined measure, all UK HEIs shown.

Appendix Four

Social Justice - Widening Access Impact (Actual numbers of mature part time WA students entering each HEI)

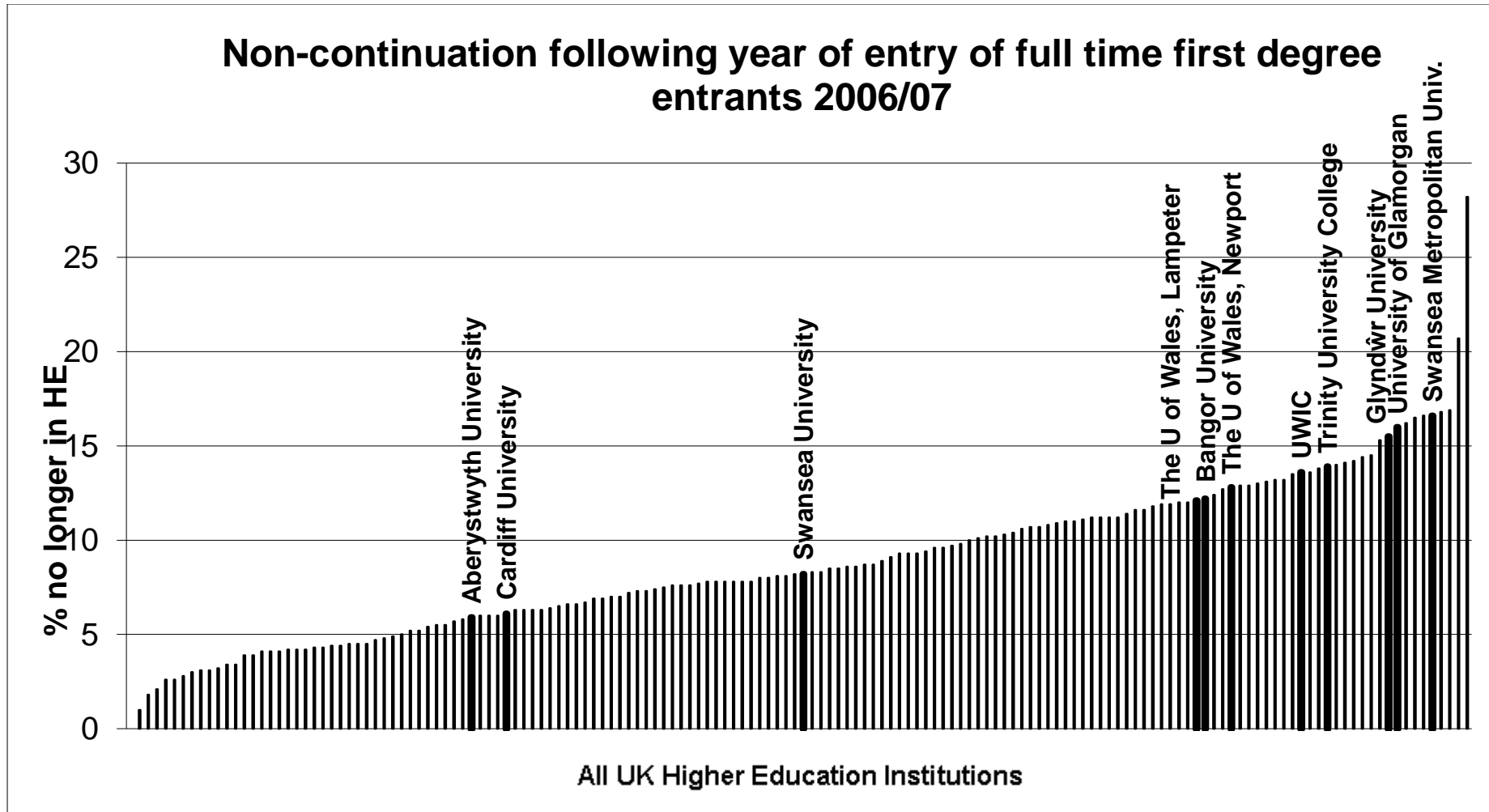


Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Performance Indicators – HESA-defined measure, all UK HEIs shown.

[Teesside, Hull and Edge Hill omitted to assist scaling of chart]

Appendix Five

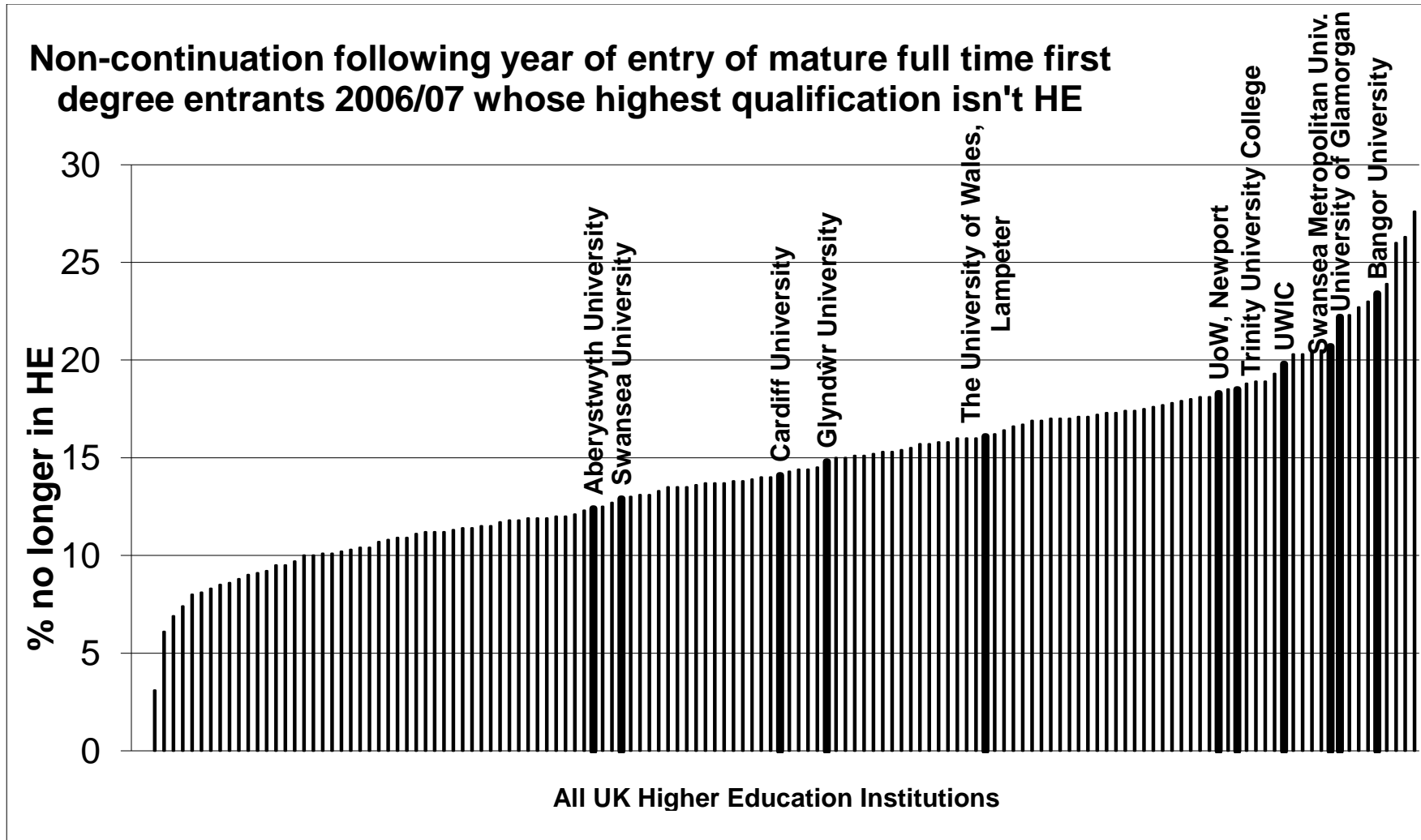
Social Justice - Impact (Retaining Students, All entrants)



Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Performance Indicators – HESA-defined measure, all UK HEIs shown.

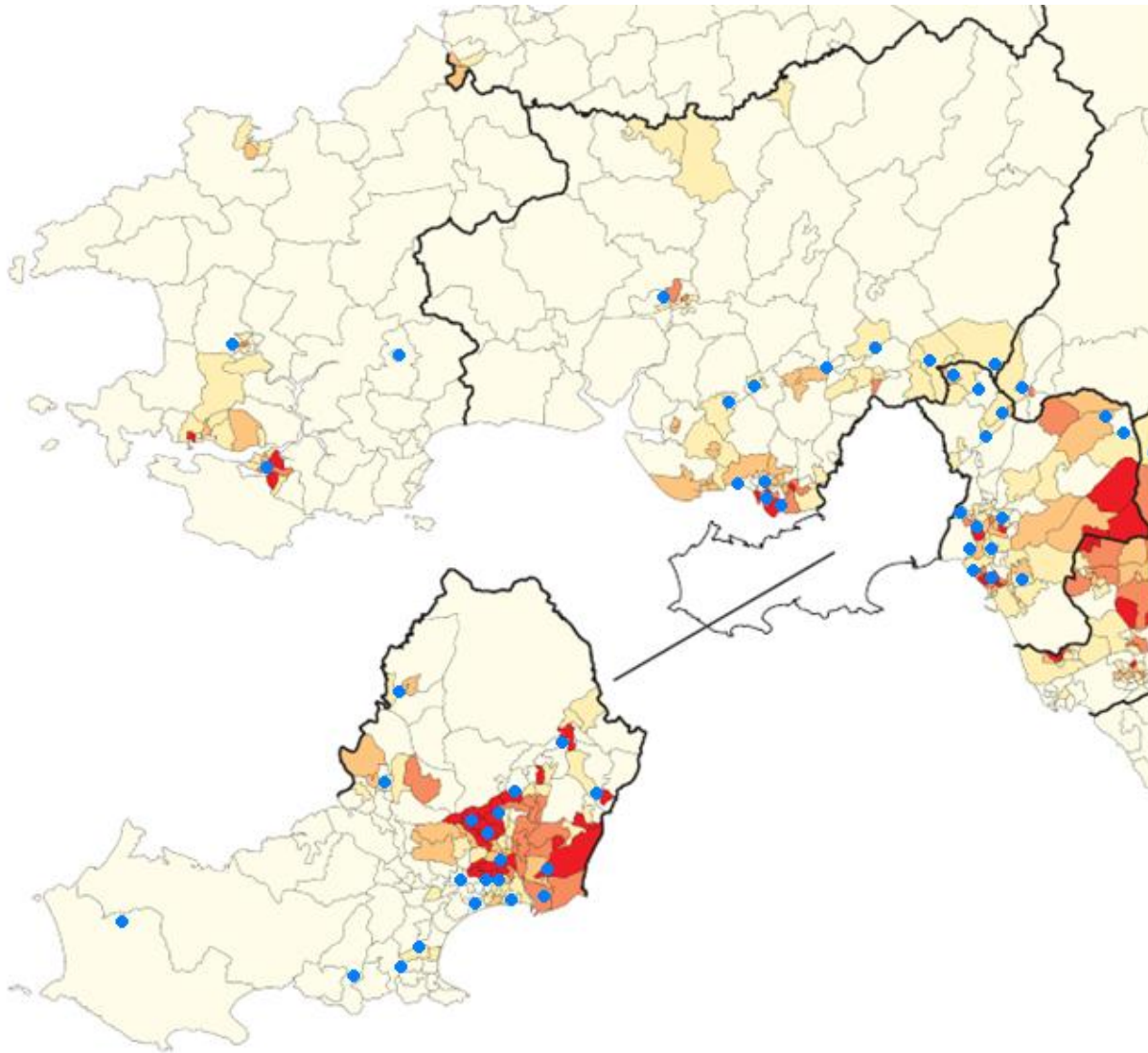
Appendix Six

Social Justice - Impact (Retaining Students, Mature students without previous HE)

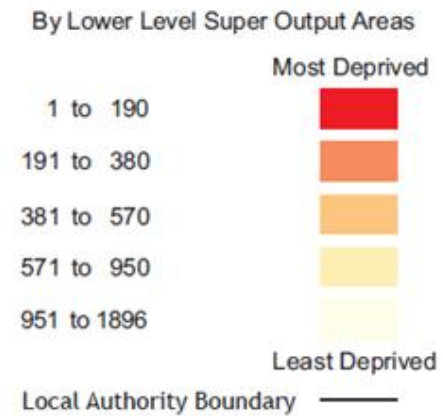


Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Performance Indicators – HESA-defined measure, all UK HEIs shown.

Appendix Seven
Social Justice – Widening Access through Community Delivery



This is a mapping of Swansea University's community education delivery (locations in blue) overlaid onto a map of educational deprivation (as defined by the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2008 Education, Skills and Training Deprivation Domain).



Appendix Eight

Non-exhaustive list of Engagement between Employers and University Academic Staff, Wherein Employers Drive Curriculum Development

These links enable employers to drive curriculum development, and facilitate the introduction of leading edge technology to teaching programmes.

Curriculum Boards	Significant local employers are represented on School curriculum boards, so that they can input directly into module and programme design.
Practitioner Expertise	In many areas of the University, such as Medicine, Law, and Health and Human Sciences, University staff are active practitioners, also working for leading employers.
Rolls-Royce University Technology Centre	The School of Engineering is a key member of a UTC which engages research students in cutting edge practical research.
Welsh Centre for Printing and Coating	The Centre works closely with companies in various supply chains, including ink, substrate and machinery suppliers.
Steel Training Research and Innovation Partnership	Supplies demand-led flexible credit based training addressing higher level skills gaps to equip workers with the expertise in new technology essential for increasing productivity, minimising environmental impact and with the capacity to develop novel products essential for the creation of a sustainable Welsh Steel Industry.
Knowledge Transfer Partnerships	KTPs are a two-way partnership between a business and academic enabling businesses to access skills and expertise for strategic developments, and to influence students' curricula and research foci.
Professional Practice for Sustainable Development: Targeted Training for Companies (PP4SD)	The Swansea University Professional Practice for Sustainable Development (PP4SD) team, in partnership with PP4SD UK and Lantra, the Sector Skills Council for the environmental and land-based sector, has developed higher-level training courses and materials to increase understanding of sustainable development within a business setting. The training materials are primarily aimed at four industry sectors: Environmental Management, Aquaculture, Fisheries Management and Agricultural Manufacturing.
Welsh Economy and Labour Market Evaluation and Research Centre	WELMERC have also recently won a research contract worth up to €264,800 from CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) to analyse the determinants and consequences of skill mismatch and policy implications.

Leading through enterprise and development	The LEAD programme enables a dual focus on developing both the owner-manager and appropriate development of the business through leadership development activities.
Software Alliance Wales (SAW)	SAW will up a network for Software Developers in Wales, develop a CPD programme, and implement an Accreditation Centre for the benchmarking of Welsh Computing and ICT companies, building links and collaboration with companies through the student development initiatives.
ITWales	ITWales was launched in 1993 as the industrial liaison unit of the Computer Science Department at Swansea University. ITWales acts as an important bridge between Industry and the University, particularly by running industrial placements that enable students to gain valuable experience in solving real-world problems as well as making progress in their own studies.
Stonewall	A scoping exercise of the needs and experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual people with mental health issues living in Wales. The Equality and Human Rights Commission funded this project which was commissioned by Stonewall Cymru in Partnership with MIND Cymru, Journeys and Hafal (Wales wide mental health organisations). The research was undertaken with collaboration and input from a reference group representing service users, members of the public, LGB organisations, mental health organisations across Wales.
Centre for Child Research	The Centre for Child Research works extensively with the public sector, specifically collaboration with Local Authorities, teachers, and other professionals working with children and children themselves.
Centre for Nursing Innovation	This is a unique (in Wales) collaboration between the newly formed ABMU Health Board and Hywel Dda Health Board. The Centre is at an early stage of development but the intention is to provide a focal point where innovations in nursing practice may be planned, debated, collated, coordinated, appropriately resourced, supported and disseminated.
Employer Study Partnerships	Develop links with employers through tailor-made research projects that support the development of an existing employee, and are responsible for creating and maintaining relationships with business and academia alike. Up to fifteen scholarships per year to support employees undertaking part-time study through this initiative
ERASMUS Work Abroad scheme	The University is a participant in the Erasmus work placement scheme and this year has sent 51 students on work placements throughout Europe. These placements form an integral part of their degrees. The students are working in a range of different placements covering translation, teaching, engineering and sales, at companies throughout Europe including Volkswagen and Bosch in Germany