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**Title**

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**Abstract**

In relation to the size of its population, Wales has a relatively large number of higher education institutions, several of which are small and located in rural areas. Compared with other parts of the United Kingdom, only a small number of higher education students are taught in Welsh further education colleges. Nevertheless, efforts have been made to increase higher education provision in the colleges, beginning in the late 1980s with the encouragement of franchising arrangements by the Wales Advisory Body and later with a joint initiative by the Higher and Further Education Funding Councils for Wales to expand some sub-degree higher education in the colleges by direct funding. These developments represent just one strand of activity linking the higher and further education sectors in Wales and have not been a subject of major or regular policy attention. For reasons of scale and geography, and through the enabling structures and processes serving both funding councils, cross-sector initiatives and collaboration have generally been given high priority in strategies to widen access and build progression. The administrative devolution reflected in these arrangements has been

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increased by political devolution since 1999, with as yet unclear implications for the future development of higher education in the colleges. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)