

# Consultation on distribution of capital funding for 2021-22

## Introduction

We would like to collect your name and email address so that we can contact you in the event that we need to clarify any of your responses. This information will not be published. Please note that, if you choose to provide us with personal information as part of your consultation response, you will need to consent to us processing your data in line with the privacy notice outlined above.

I consent to the OfS processing my personal data in line with the privacy notice outlined above.

### Contact details.

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### In what capacity are you responding to the survey?

To provide an official response on behalf of a higher education provider, organisation or representative group

## Information about your organisation

### Name of higher education provider or representative group

Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association (MeCCSA)

Unless you indicate that you would prefer your response to be confidential, we may quote sections of your response when we publish a summary of responses to this consultation on the OfS website (and in alternative formats on request). This may include a list of the providers and organisations that respond, but will not include personal data such as individual names, email addresses or other contact details. Individuals and organisations will not be identifiable in our consultation response. We will not publish individual responses. Are you happy for passages from your responses to be published on the OfS website?

Yes, I am happy for my responses to be published.

## Proposed approach to distribution of capital funding

Question 1: To what extent do you agree that a bidding process is the most appropriate means of addressing the strategic objectives and priorities for capital funding for 2021-22? (See paragraphs 4 to 11.)

Strongly disagree

**Please provide an explanation for your answer. If you believe our approach should differ, please explain how and the reason for your view.**

We are primarily concerned that any adopted process should not under-value the importance of teaching in communications, cultural and media studies, nor risk seriously under-providing the necessary resources for students in the many diverse fields loosely captured by these rubrics. To provide them would, indeed, “enhance the learning experience” of students, as the document rightly requires, but their insufficiency would seriously compromise or even prevent the delivery of satisfactory and necessary teaching. Such facilities vary according to programme, but might include film and television studio facilities, radio studio equipment, video editing suites, and a very wide range of industry standard equipment, including digital, IT, and practice facilities of various kinds. In some instances these would be used for direct practice instruction, in others for ‘screenings’ and the like, contributing directly and necessarily to teaching input.

Bidding for ‘projects’ is inconsistent with this model of the necessity of capital equipment for teaching, in that what is actually required is installing and maintaining provision for routine and recurrent teaching, essential for the mainstream of the many programmes affected. A formulaic provision would allow flexibility in both timing and detail of provision for such purposes in a way that bidding for specifics would not, including the capacity to plan provision year on year with all that that entails (co-ordinating staffing, promoting the courses, applications) . We are primarily concerned that any adopted process should not under-value the importance of teaching in communications, cultural and media studies, nor risk seriously under-providing the necessary resources for students in the many diverse fields loosely captured by these rubrics. To provide them would, indeed, “enhance the learning experience” of students, as the document rightly requires, but their insufficiency would seriously compromise or even prevent the delivery of satisfactory and necessary teaching. Such facilities vary according to programme, but might include film and television studio facilities, radio studio equipment, video editing suites, and a very wide range of industry standard equipment, including digital, IT, and practice facilities of various kinds. In some instances these would be used for direct practice instruction, in others for ‘screenings’ and the like, contributing directly and necessarily to teaching input.

## Proposed assessment criteria for a bidding exercise

Question 2: If we were to allocate capital funding through a bidding exercise, to what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to assessing bids? (See paragraphs 12 to 35.)

Don't know / prefer not to say

**Please provide an explanation for your answer. If you believe our approach should differ, please explain how and the reason for your view.**

N/A since opposed to bidding process.

## Proposed approach to scoring and prioritisation for capital funds distributed through competition

Question 3: If we were to allocate capital funding through a bidding exercise, to what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to prioritising between bids? (See paragraphs 36 to 49.)

Don't know / prefer not to say

**Please provide an explanation for your answer. If you believe our approach should differ, please explain how and the reason for your view.**

N/A since opposed to bidding process.

## Terms and conditions for the capital funding

Question 4: To what extent do you agree with the proposed changes to terms and conditions that should apply to capital grant? (See paragraph 50.)

Don't know / prefer not to say

## General questions

Question 5: Do you have any other comments on the proposals set out in this consultation?

Our primary concern is with the approach to prioritisation of subject areas in this document, and indeed in the companion consultation on recurrent funding. The document identifies programmes that are "high cost" and of "strategic importance" with laboratory based subjects. The priority categories set out (in paragraph 14b) are plainly wrong when assessed against criteria of employability, student demand, and economic sector growth. All would place many programmes within the loose and elastic rubric of 'media studies' in the highest category. That 9.5 million people are employed in publishing and information services, media and communication, performing arts, and related areas is one simple indicator of the strategic significance of these fields. Annual data from AGCAS continue to show that employment levels of graduates from these fields are among the highest of all subject areas, whether directly into those sectors, or into other fields where their training and skills are recognised and valued. All that is set at risk by any failure properly to resource teaching and learning. We therefore strongly suggest that the allocation of programmes into price levels, and the consequential capital allocations, should depend on a detailed programme by programme examination of actual capital investment needs of the kind undertaken by HEFCE in the recent past.