

Medr statistics

Finances of higher education institutions, August 2024 to July 2025

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Summary: Breakdown of the income and expenditure of higher education institutions in Wales for August 2024 to July 2025
Theme: Higher Education
Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Finance Record

Contents

Introduction	1
Income	1
Expenditure	2
Underlying operating position	3
Data	4
Data source	5
Notes and definitions	5
Key quality information	5
Statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics.....	6

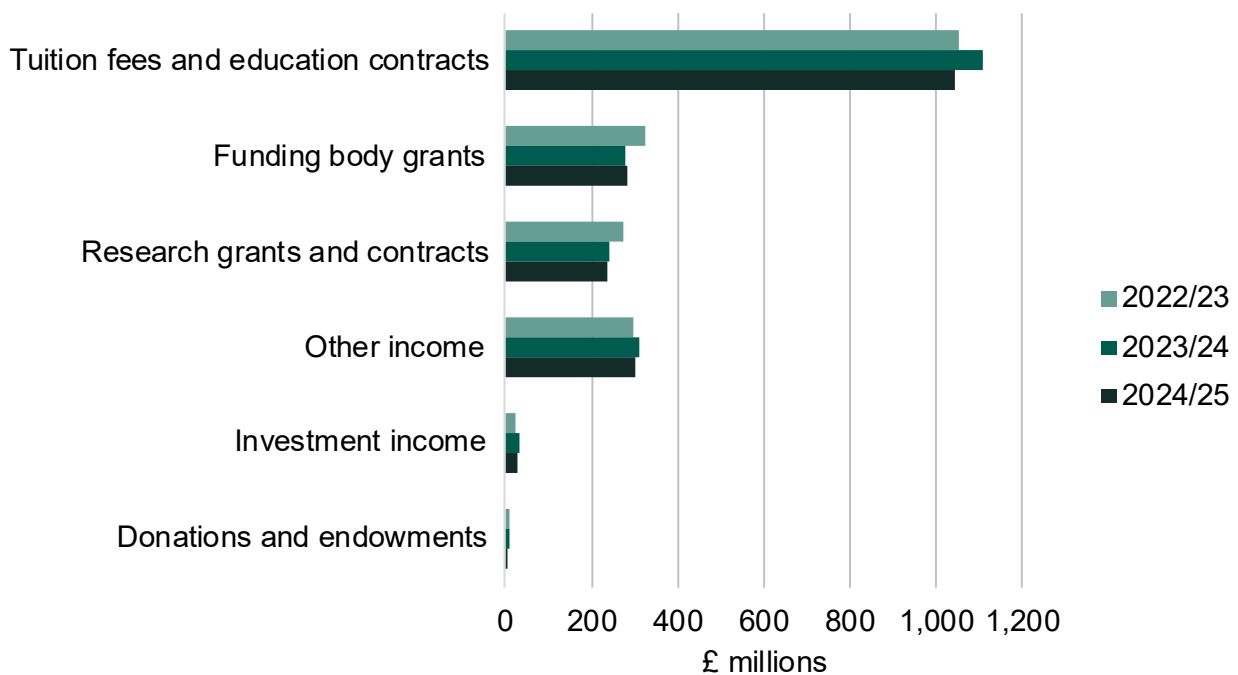
Introduction

This statistical release provides a summary of financial information submitted to the Higher Education Statistics Agency's finance record by Welsh higher education institutions.

In March 2026, Medr published '[Financial sustainability of the higher education sector in Wales](#)' which provides a more in-depth assessment of the finances of the higher education sector in Wales. There are some differences between the figures in each report. This report includes the University of Wales as it submits data to the HESA finance record, while the financial sustainability report excludes this institution (see [Data](#) section).

Income

Chart 1: Breakdown of income categories at all Welsh HE institutions, 2022/23 to 2024/25



Source: [HESA Finance Table 1](#)

The total combined income of Welsh higher education institutions was £1.90 billion in 2024/25. In both 2022/23 and 2023/24, it was £1.98 billion.

Tuition fees and education contracts accounted for £1.04 billion of income in 2024/25, making it the largest source of income. This was a 6% decrease from the 2023/24 of £1.11 billion.

Funding body grants was the only income category to have risen between 2023/24 and 2024/25, increasing by 3% from £276 million to £285 million. As well as funding from Medr, funding body grants can include funding for further education institutions within higher education groups, and some other UK government funding.

Research grants and contracts accounted for £237 million worth of income in 2024/25.

The remaining income categories all saw a decrease in 2024/25.

Expenditure

Note: the calculation of underlying expenditure in this release differs from the 2023/24 release in that technical non-cash accounting adjustments to defined benefit pension schemes are excluded from interest and other finance costs, in addition to staff costs. The 2023/24 release only excluded these from staff costs. This change has been made to align with standard practice in the sector and other Medr publications.

The HESA finance record does not collect restated figures for pension cost adjustments, so the originally submitted figures have been used.

Table 1: Comparison of expenditure types for all Welsh HE institutions, 2022/23 to 2024/25 (£M)

Expenditure type	2022/23 (£M)	2023/24 (£M)	2024/25 (£M)
Total expenditure	1,889	1,679	2,020
Underlying expenditure	1,945	2,056	2,026
Underlying operating expenditure	1,943	2,039	1,977

Sources¹: HESA Finance [Table 1](#), [Table 8](#) and [Table 12](#)

Total expenditure, as reported in statutory accounts, includes both technical non-cash pension adjustments and one-off items such as fundamental restructuring costs. The pension adjustments are based on actuarial valuations of the pension schemes and can fluctuate significantly dependent on market value at the point of valuation. This can give a misleading picture of underlying costs.

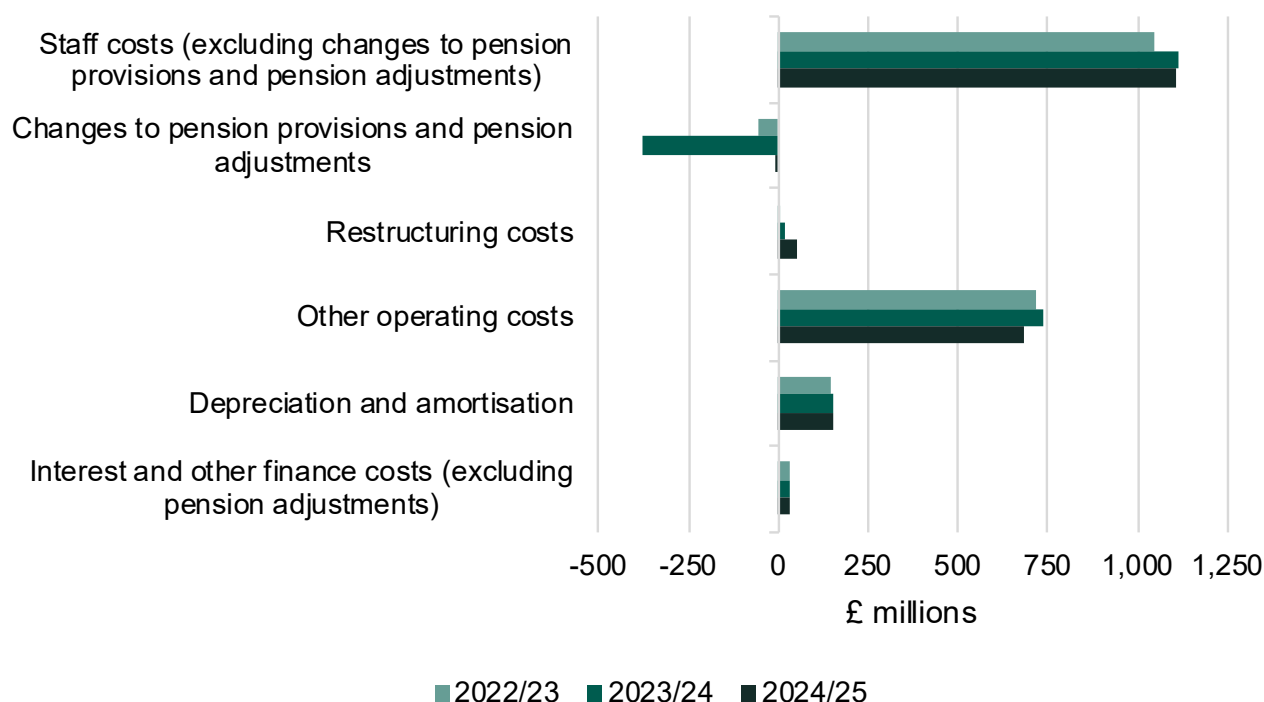
Underlying expenditure removes technical non-cash pension adjustments from staff costs and interest and other finance costs.

Underlying operating expenditure further excludes the cost of fundamental restructuring. As restructuring costs are one-off by nature, they are not part of normal ongoing operations.

In 2024/25, underlying operating expenditure declined by 3% to £1.98 billion.

¹ Table 1 contains the broad expenditure categories. Table 8 contains the pension adjustments to the 'interest and other finance cost' category in the 'interest and other finance costs' column, viewable when HESA cost centre group filter is 'other expenditure' and HESA cost filter is 'pension cost adjustment'. Table 12 contains the changes to pension provisions and pension adjustments for 'staff costs'.

Chart 2: Breakdown of expenditure categories at Welsh HE institutions, 2022/23 to 2024/25



Sources²: HESA Finance [Table 1](#), [Table 8](#) and [Table 12](#)

Both staff costs (excluding technical non-cash changes to pension provisions and pension adjustments) and other operating costs declined in 2024/25. Staff costs were recorded at £1.1 billion in 2024/25; they declined by less than 1%.

Other operating costs declined by 8% to £681 million in 2024/25.

Underlying operating position

The underlying operating position is the surplus or deficit from core operational activities at universities. In this publication, it has been calculated by subtracting underlying operating expenditure (which excludes technical non-cash pension adjustments and one-off fundamental restructuring costs) from total income.

In 2024/25, Welsh universities collectively reported an operating deficit of £81 million. This deficit was £56 million in 2023/24. In 2022/23, there was an operating surplus of £40 million.

² Table 1 contains the broad expenditure categories. Table 8 contains the pension adjustments to the 'interest and other finance cost' category in the 'Interest and other finance costs' column when HESA cost centre group filter is 'other expenditure' and HESA cost filter is 'pension cost adjustment'. Table 12 contains the changes to pension provisions and pension adjustments for staff costs.

Data

Figures for 2024/25 are for the year ended 31 July 2025, with previous data years following the same pattern.

This release does not include data from the Open University in Wales, as the Open University only produces financial data on a UK wide basis. The University of Wales (central functions) has been included in this release, meaning that figures may vary slightly from Medr's ['Financial sustainability of the higher education sector in Wales, March 2026'](#) report, which did not include the University of Wales in its figures, as the University of Wales is not currently an awarding body for other institutions in Wales and has limited activity as a standalone entity. Further education or sixth form colleges and alternative providers of higher education are also excluded.

The HESA finance record permits providers to amend their figures for each year in the subsequent submission. This publication uses the most recently published figures. The 2023/24 figures will be those taken from the 2024/25 submission and may therefore differ to previous publications. The exception is non-cash pension adjustments included in 'interest and other finance costs', where the finance record does not collect an amended value.

The data can be found on the HESA [Open Data](#) website which also includes data for individual providers.

Data source

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) finance record

HESA collects finance data from higher education institutions in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. This collection replicates the audited financial statements of the institutions and includes further information on income and costs by subject code and activity, and the funding of capital expenditure.

Higher education institutions in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland submit data following the end of each academic year on templates provided by HESA. HESA aim to publish UK wide data in the following spring, including equivalent data from English higher education providers collected by the Office for Students.

Notes and definitions

More information on the definitions used in the HESA finance record can be found on the [HESA website](#).

Key quality information

Relevance

The statistics provide high-level information on the finances of higher education institutions in Wales.

Accuracy

HESA have developed [detailed specifications](#) for the data that institutions return. All the data goes through several stages of validation and checking, with most higher education institutions submitting their data multiple times to pass these checks. As part of this the data is quality assured and processed, including comparison against higher education institutions' published accounts.

Timeliness and punctuality

HESA collects the finance record in the winter following the end of each academic year with the aim to publish data in the following spring after receiving data for English providers from the Office for Students.

This release has been published as soon as possible following this.

Accessibility and clarity

This statistical release was pre-announced on the Welsh Government website and then published on the [Medr.cymru](#) website.

Additional finance data can be found on the HESA [Open Data](#) website.

Comparability and coherence

The HESA open data website includes finance data for providers across the UK. This contains the data collected by HESA from higher education institutions in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and combines it with data collected by the Office for Students from providers in England.

Statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

All of our statistics are produced and published in accordance with a number of statements and protocols to enhance trustworthiness, quality and value. These are set out in Medr's [Statement of Compliance](#) with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

These official statistics demonstrate the standards expected around trustworthiness, quality and value in the following ways.

Trustworthiness

These statistics have been published according to Medr's [Statement of Compliance](#) and [pre-release access to official statistics policy](#).

Quality

The data is sourced from the HESA Finance record which collects data from higher education institutions. When the data is submitted it must meet certain validation rules. When the statistics are being produced quality checks are undertaken by the statisticians.

Value

These statistics are produced to provide an insight into income and expenditure of the Welsh higher education institutions.

Related statistics

The 2023/24 release in this series of statistics can be found on the [Medr website](#).

Otherwise, earlier reports in this series were published by the Welsh Government and can be found on [gov.wales](#).

'[Financial sustainability of the higher education sector in Wales](#)' is a more in-depth assessment of the finances of the higher education sector in Wales, published by Medr in March 2026.

Contact information

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics.

Feedback, questions, and requests for further data can be directed by email to:
hestats@medr.cymru.

Medr

Y Comisiwn Addysg Drydyddol ac Ymchwil
Commission for Tertiary Education and Research

www.medr.cymru

2 Cwr y Ddinas
Stryd Tyndall
Caerdydd
CF10 4BZ

2 Capital Quarter
Tyndall Street
Cardiff
CF10 4BZ



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