

2017 Report on Progress (UNGC/PRME)

Journey to Success and Sustainability

www.southwales.ac.uk



Welcome to the University of South Wales

The University of South Wales (USW) is a major player in UK higher education. With campuses in Cardiff, Pontypridd and Newport, the University is renowned for its partnerships with major employers. These partnerships are one of the many reasons that 94% of our students are in employment or further study within six months of graduating.

The University of South Wales Group comprises the:

- University of South Wales
- The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama
- The College Merthyr Tydfil


These institutions share the common values of quality and excellence in delivering education across the full spectrum of the needs of the people of Wales and beyond.

As an institution we are committed to the Sustainable Development Goals and, in particular, Goal 4 with its focus on access to quality higher education. We see our engagement with the United Nations Global Compact and the Principles in Management Education as being critical initiatives in providing a foundation to support the advancement of our work on the SDG agenda.

Facts and figures

345 
UNDERGRADUATE
AND POSTGRADUATE
COURSES

Figures 2014/15 | BiGGAR Economics

7,000 
GRADUATES
INTO THE ECONOMY
EACH YEAR

Figures 2014/15 | BIGGAR Economics

 **ATTRACTING**
£23.2m
INVESTMENT
INTO WALES

Figures 2014/15 | BIGGAR Economics

 **94% OF GRADUATES**
IN EMPLOYMENT OR
FURTHER STUDY
WITHIN 6 MONTHS

Figures 2014/15 | BIGGAR Economics

OVER
200,000
ALUMNI

Figures 2014/15 | BiGGAR Economics




Figures 2014/15 | BiGGAR Economics



Figures 2014/15 | BiGGAR Economics

EVERY  IN
FUNDING
£6.32 IN VALUE

Figures 2014/15 | BiGGAR Economics

£104,606
AVERAGE
GRADUATE
PREMIUM 

Figures 2014/15 | BiGGAR Economics

CLASS OF 2015
CAN EARN UP TO
£628m
MORE OVER THEIR LIFETIMES 

Figures 2014/15 | BiGGAR Economics



Figures 2014/15 | BIGGAR Economics



Figures 2014/15 | BIGGAR Economics

Our Commitment

The University Strategy 2014-2020 outlines a vision for the University of South Wales (USW) to be:

“The University of choice in Wales and beyond for students, organisations and communities who value vocationally focused education and applied research which provides solutions to problems that affect society and the economy”

We are committed to transforming the lives of individuals, communities and the economy. Higher education institutions encourage and thrive on students and staff from a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences to enrich the educational and cultural experience at university.

We have an excellent record of achievement in enabling the participation of students of all ages in higher education and in creating pathways to achieve this. We take seriously our

responsibility to enhance learning opportunities for students from all backgrounds and, in particular, provide access to those from Communities First² cluster areas, areas in the bottom quintile of the lower super output areas of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation³ (WIMD) and other Low Participation areas.

We are justly proud of our successes in supporting non-traditional entrants not only to aspire to participate, but to achieve outstanding outcomes. Our strong partnerships with schools, further education colleges and other education providers, plus our use of modern and traditional learning methods (*recognising a range of learning styles and diverse employment destinations*), has been a significant element in our success.

Our Academic Plan and Student Experience Plan

The University of South Wales has produced an Academic Plan that recognises the importance of the role of the institution in the regeneration and future development of the region. The Student Experience Plan (SEP) is a companion piece to the University of South Wales Strategy and Academic Plan.

Our Academic Plan highlights **Partnerships** as one of the key goals

We aim to foster partnerships that:

- facilitate student and staff interactions and promote the application and transfer of knowledge for added and shared value
- connect students and staff locally and globally

Overview

The University of South Wales has an excellent record of achievement in enabling the participation of young people and mature age students in higher education and to create pathways that facilitate the transition required to achieve this. We take seriously our responsibility to enhance learning opportunities for students from all backgrounds and, in particular, provide access to those who may be the first in their family to study for a degree or from low socio-economic communities. We are proud of our successes in supporting non-traditional entrants to not only aspire to participate, but to succeed and achieve outstanding outcomes. Our strong partnerships with a range of schools, Further Education Colleges and other education providers has been a significant element in our success to date in this domain and will continue to be so, eg, through the development of strategic alliances and focused articulation agreements. Constructive international partnerships are also important to our long-term sustainability whereby we must fully realise the academic, cultural and financial benefits of such activities whether that be on-campus, in-country or on-line.

An important focus of our Plan is ensuring that our students graduate with a distinctive and competitive edge that enables them to demonstrate the attributes that are valued by employers and that our academic staff offer excellent learning and teaching experiences that are informed by engagement with employers through research and practice. To this end, we will work with employers to develop the USW Graduate Attributes and we will foster partnerships with key stakeholders in, eg, business, industry, and the public sector,

that enable staff to apply and transfer knowledge in support of our active approach to learning and teaching. These activities will demonstrate impact -- *added and shared value* -- for all parties, including the wider impact on our society and the economy. In addition, we will seek to grow our work-based offer to employers that is flexible in both mode of delivery and progression from bite sized learning through to postgraduate level study.

Strategies

- Provide engagement opportunities for students from Communities First areas and those who live in areas of low participation through, eg, implementation of the Strategic Alliance with key local FE partner colleges to enhance student progression to on-campus provision
- Develop and implement the USW International Strategy to increase on-campus, off-campus (London Centre) and in-country international student recruitment
- Continue our focus on working with employers to develop our students' employability and skills and place priority on the three key areas highlighted in the Agreement on Skills and Employability – work placements (UK or overseas); industrial/professional accreditation of provision; embedding employability within the curriculum
- Broaden our strategic approach to working in partnership with employers so that we grow our CPD and work-based learning offer and our research collaborations with purpose
- Working with employers, develop and embed USW Graduate Attributes to include core business skills, notably project management skills
- Develop an alumni mentorship scheme for final year undergraduate and all postgraduate students
- Enhance learning and teaching through supporting active engagement of staff with external partners through research and practice, and through exposure of students to employers

Targets

- Increase students progressing from FE College partnerships (currently 42%) to at least 50% in 2017 and at least 60% in 2020 to achieve CPI7 (*link to HEFCW CS Target T1 – Widening Access and T2 – Participation*)
- Increase international student numbers (on-campus, London and in-country) to 3,750 by 2017 and 4,500 by 2020 to achieve CPI8 (*link to HEFCW CS Target T7 – Overseas Students*)
- Develop three new international partnerships of scale by 2017 and six in total by 2020 (*link to HEFCW CS Target T7 – Overseas Students*)
- Develop two new courses per year that are offered fully online or with a significant blended approach (*link to HEFCW CS Target T4 – Part-time*)
- Increase business and community interaction (non-SME and non-commercial businesses) by 12% year-on-year to achieve CPI6 target of £8m by 2019/20 (*link to HEFCW CS Target T12 – CPD and Targets T13/14 - Research*)
- Increase graduate employability by 2.5% year-on-year to achieve CPI3 target of 70% by 2019/20 (*link to HEFCW CS Targets T10/11 – Employability*)
- All final year undergraduate and all postgraduate students to be offered an alumni mentor by 2017 (*link to HEFCW CS Targets T10/11 – Employability*)

- Student feedback (NSS / annual monitoring) to clearly identify effective engagement with employers and the development of graduate employability skills (*link to HEFCW CS Targets T10/11 – Employability*)
- Broaden and strengthen the number of staff engaging in development programmes with employers, eg, SIPS (*link to HEFCW CS Target T12 – CPD and Targets T13/14 - Research*)

The Student Experience Plan is underpinned by the University vision to be:

‘The University of Choice in Wales and beyond for students, organisations and communities who value vocationally focused education and applied research, which provides solutions to the problems that affect society and economy.’

This vision implies that:

1. USW is a quality institution and an aspirational choice
2. That we are not parochial, we are locally rooted but highly connected nationally and internationally
3. That our purpose is vocational. We enable people to prepare well for a career with valuable graduate attributes and support the economy through our research
4. That we are problem solvers connected to the challenges of our times

Building aspiration and success

USW is located in a region of low participation in higher education. Some of our own data shows that our students have lower expectations of graduate salaries and do not see themselves as being as socially mobile as other UK students (eg, working nationally or internationally). The moral imperative of building aspiration and success is therefore taken as axiomatic; financial benefits will ensue as we keep more students, allowing us to further invest in their success. We aim for an inclusive educational environment that allows access at a variety of levels to our programmes and through our approach to pedagogy. But we will also set students challenges and introduce stretch into learning.

Journey to Success and Sustainability

At the University of South Wales we have made a range of positive and constructive interventions in support of the UN Global Compact and PRME. The interventions range from raising awareness of the Principles of the UN Global Compact via an open access e-learning package through to the introduction of measures to raise awareness of selected areas of the initiatives to all staff via a compulsory postgraduate certificate undertaken by new academic staff.

iTunes U

iTunes U is a part of the iTunes Store that is dedicated to educational content. The catalogue features text, audio and video content from universities, museums and cultural institutions across the globe that can be downloaded for free to PCs and mobile devices. It is the largest body of free, online, educational resources in the world. Visitors to the catalogue can search, download and interact with the learning packages. The University of South Wales was the first university in Wales to host content on iTunes U and since September 2015 we have logged 42,000 subscribers and 2.5 million downloads of our content.

In 2016, we launched a freely available open access iTunesU course called an Introduction to Global Governance, which is the first course of its kind on the subject matter. The course was featured by iTunesU as one of their 'Standout Courses' based on the quality of content. The self-guided learning package aims to provide insight into some of the cross-sector challenges facing decision makers at the highest level. For this reason, the Principles of the UN Global Compact provide the foundation of the curriculum design. Key components of the online course are human rights, labour rights, environmental degradation and anti-corruption. The development of the online course has provided the institution with a vehicle to champion the Principles but we believe the resource also goes beyond simply raising awareness of the UN Global Compact. The learning package offers busy professionals an opportunity to engage and reflect on the topics. The resource has over 5000 subscribers worldwide and has consistently ranked high in the iTunesU charts.

MSc Global Governance

The MSc Global Governance is a flagship course at the University of South Wales, which drew upon the UN Global Compact and PRME to directly inform the curriculum design. The course has been designed to ensure that students develop an in-depth understanding of the intertwined nature of the activities of business, government and NGOs. The themes of sustainable development and human rights are at the heart of the course. The MSc Global Governance is delivered by leading academics and expert practitioners with international reputations for excellence. Our Visiting Professors include former Government Minister the Rt. Hon. Lord Peter Hain and former Managing Director of Jaguar Cars Geoff Cousins. Students study subjects such as Global Ethics, International Human Rights Law, Global and Strategic Issues in Leadership and Management, Planning for Disasters and Civil Contingencies, New Security Challenges, Modern Slavery and Economies, Markets & Strategic Decision Making.

Human Rights and Modern Slavery

Students on the MSc Global Governance students have been a key catalyst for raising awareness about modern slavery in all of its forms ranging from forced labour, human trafficking and sexual exploitation. As part of our teaching on human rights, the students have been able to engage with representatives from Welsh Government, Crown Prosecution

Service and the Police, who are working on the modern slavery agenda. The Course Leader offered the students an opportunity to become University of South Wales Anti-Slavery Ambassadors as a co-curricula activity (a non-assessed voluntary activity aimed to support learning). Fifteen students from the cohort volunteered and undertook a 'train the trainer' style workshop to provide them with the tools to deliver their own awareness raising workshops on the agenda. The students were trained by a representative from the Crown Prosecution Service and the Course Leader made arrangements for the students to run sessions within modules across the disciplines. The students were also supported by the Crown Prosecution Service and Welsh Government to develop an anti-slavery guide for University policy makers. This piece of work is going to be disseminated as good practice to other Universities. The resource will also form the basis of a unit of study that will be embedded in the Postgraduate Certificate for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, which is a probationary requirement for all new academic members of staff. The University of South Wales already has a statement on its website on modern slavery, but the students have been able to make an additional impact across the institution.

Cutting Edge Research

The University of South Wales houses two Research Centres that support our commitment to the UN Global Compact and PRME: the Business Accountability & Responsibility Centre and the Sustainable Development Research Centre. Both Centres are engaged in cutting edge research that feeds back into the learning and teaching experience. The institution has a strong reputation for its approach to research informed teaching and the activities of the Research Centres are key exemplars.

Business Accountability and Responsibility Centre (BARC):

The Business Accountability and Responsibility Centre (BARC) has a wide remit with members currently researching across a number of areas that extend from criminal and civil liability to governance, accountability and ethics generally.

The Centre works with researchers both within the university and nationally and internationally. BARC works with major law firms and high profile members of the legal and accountancy professions and the emphasis is on being outward facing.

In 2017, BARC organised a conference on Ethical Business, which was attended by academics, practitioners and students from across the disciplines. The conference is part of an annual programme of events hosted by the Centre.

Sustainable Environmental Research Centre (SERC):

SERC is a groundbreaking research centre bringing together leaders from biology, engineering, chemistry, and physics united in a single academic team combining their resources and skills in order to meet the energy security and environmental challenges of the new millennium.

By dissolving the boundaries between disparate academic divisions, SERC has already established itself as one of the most forward-looking institutions in Europe by achieving large grants in many key areas.

Sustainable Environmental Research Centre Press Releases:

Multi-million-pound energy project gets underway

A multi-million project set to transform the UK energy sector and tackle some of the biggest challenges currently facing society is underway in Wales.

FLEXIS, the £24m project led by Cardiff University, is bringing together expertise from across Welsh universities to facilitate an affordable, sustainable, and socially acceptable transition to a low carbon future.

The work is being carried out by Cardiff University, Swansea University and the University of South Wales as principal sponsors. Aberystwyth and Bangor Universities and the British Geological Survey are also participating in the project.

The five-year EU-backed project will look to solve a diverse, complex and inter-dependent set of challenges, ranging from energy storage, to decarbonisation and fuel poverty.

The project will specifically look at how new, low-carbon energy sources can be integrated into the energy grid, and how the grid itself can cope with extreme flows of energy into the system in numerous places and at random times.

As part of the project a demonstration site has been identified in the Swansea Bay area, centred at the TATA Steel Works in Port Talbot, to act as a test bed for new ideas and to showcase the new technology and energy solutions being developed. Partners include TATA Steel, Swansea City Region and Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

Speaking ahead of a launch event at the Pierhead Building in Cardiff Bay, Professor Colin Riordan, Vice-Chancellor of Cardiff University, said: "FLEXIS will position Wales at the forefront of research and innovation as the energy sector adapts to meet the urgent need for climate change mitigation and energy security.

"The project will attract world-leading researchers to Welsh universities and pave the way for the development of new technologies and job creation in the energy sector, as well as enticing new companies to locate themselves here.

"This significant amount of EU funding shows how financial support from Europe is helping to propel the fundamental research that is being performed here in Wales."

Professor Alan Guwy, Director of the Sustainable Environment Research Centre at the University of South Wales, said: "FLEXIS provides a fantastic opportunity for energy research and innovation in Wales, it brings together key researchers in the universities in Wales

working together to address industry's needs for cleaner energy production and use. The team at USW working on hydrogen energy believe that FLEXIS can help provide the integrated energy systems that are essential for migrating climate change and securing future energy needs.”

By 2020, over £20m of additional competitive research income is expected to be secured in Wales as a result of FLEXIS.

USW welcomes Japanese trade mission

The Sustainable Environment Research Centre (SERC) at USW welcomed a trade mission from the Kansai region of Japan and the city of Osaka last week.

The visit was organised by the OCCI (Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry) and supported by the Japanese government METI (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry) as well as the UK and Welsh Governments.

The purpose of the trade mission was to strengthen ties between the Kansai region and Wales and to establish business opportunities for hydrogen technology.

This is the second year that OCCI have visited the University's Hydrogen Centre, this time with a much larger delegation, including senior leaders from the Japanese hydrogen and fuel cell industry such as Hitachi Zosen, Osaka Gas and the Iwatani Corporation. As well as presenting an overview of the University's research in hydrogen and fuel cell technology, presentations were also given by two of the University's key industrial collaborative partners, ITM Power and Tata Steel.

The opportunity was also taken to explore areas of potential collaboration between the University and Japanese academic and industrial organisations.

Conclusion

We are fully committed to working towards embedding PRME and the UN Global Compact Principles into our teaching, learning, research and operations. Since becoming signatory, we have already introduced a wide range of interventions at module level and as an institution. Our Academic Plan represents a roadmap to further activity that is focused and measurable. We are keen to host UN Global Compact and PRME events at our University and we look forward to engaging with the fellow signatories along our journey to success and sustainability.