

University of  
South Wales  
Prifysgol  
De Cymru

# 2019 Report on Progress (UNGC/PRME) Journey to Success and Sustainability

[www.southwales.ac.uk](http://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, Newport and most recently a campus in Dubai, 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.

One of the key areas to highlight in our report is the commitment we have to combat slavery and create an environment that is hostile to modern slavery. We have integrated modern slavery as an area of academic interrogation, but we are also ensuring we do what we can to 'walk the walk' rather than simply 'talk the talk'. Please find below our Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement signed by the Chair of our Board of Governors:

### Introduction

*This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31/07/2018.*

Modern slavery is a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights. It takes various forms, such as slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking, all of which have in common the deprivation of a person's liberty by another in order to exploit them for personal or commercial gain.

We are committed to improving our practices to combat slavery and human trafficking.

### Organisational structure

The University of South Wales is a large multidisciplinary University based in South Wales with campuses Pontypridd, Cardiff, Newport & Dubai, The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama and the College Merthyr Tydfil are wholly owned

subsidiaries of the University but separate legal entities with their own Boards of Directors,

The University is led by its Vice Chancellor, Professor Julie Lydon, supported small Executive team and advised by her Academic Board. The University is a Higher Education Corporation and is governed by a Board of Governors with a majority of independent governors. Academically the University is organised into four faculties each with a number of schools. The University has around 30,000 students and is one largest, by student numbers in the UK.

### Our supply chains

The University meets its needs for goods, services and works in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment. The University's supply chains mainly fall under five 'super-categories', which are:

- Laboratory Consumables and Equipment
- Library Resources
- Professional Services
- ICT Equipment and Services
- Estates Goods, Services and Works

The principal categories which carry material risks are office supplies, laboratory consumables, ICT equipment and some estates services, such as cleaning services outsourced from time to time.

The University of South Wales is a member of the Higher Education Purchasing Consortium Wales (HEPCW). HEPCW works effectively alongside its counterpart UK Universities Purchasing Consortia and national groups, with which it enjoys progressive and successful relationships.

The joint contracting programme provides a comprehensive and mature collaborative portfolio, which includes some of the high risk categories listed above.

Many of our suppliers in these higher-risk categories have committed to the Base Code of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) and the UK Universities Purchasing Consortia are working to persuade the remaining suppliers in these categories to join them. The ETI Base Code is founded on the conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and is an internationally recognised code of labour practice, requiring that:

1. Employment is freely chosen;
2. Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected;
3. Working conditions are safe and hygienic;
4. Child labour shall not be used;
5. Living wages are paid;
6. Working hours are not excessive;
7. No discrimination is practised;

8. Regular employment is provided; and
9. No harsh or inhumane treatment is allowed.

### *ICT Equipment*

The University of South Wales participates in a number of ICT equipment collaborative purchasing agreements. Through these collaborative purchasing agreements, the University supports the principles of Electronics Watch, an independent monitoring organisation working to achieve respect for labour rights in the global electronics industry through socially responsible public purchasing in Europe. We work with our contracted suppliers to implement commit to new monitoring regimes where corporate codes of conduct and social auditing policies and practices are failing in their transparency and effectiveness.

### *Our Policies on Slavery and Human Trafficking*

We are committed to ensuring that there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in our supply chains or in any part of our business.

In light of the obligation to report on measures to ensure that all parts of our business and supply chain are slavery free, we will review our workplace policies and procedures to assess their effectiveness in identifying and tackling modern slavery issues. Emerging government policy on ethical supply chains will also be considered by the University.

Our workplace policies and procedures will demonstrate our commitment to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business relationships and to implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure slavery and human trafficking is not taking place anywhere in our supply chains.

### *Due diligence processes for slavery and human trafficking*

As part of our initiative to identify and mitigate risk we will put systems in place to:

- Identify and assess potential risk areas in our supply chains.
- Mitigate the risk of slavery and human trafficking occurring in our supply chains.
- Monitor potential risk areas in our supply chains.
- Protect whistle blowers.

What we are doing now with regard to developing our policies:

- We are working collaboratively as Welsh Universities on implementing the 12 commitments of the Welsh Government's Code of Practice to ensure that workers in public sector supply chains are employed ethically and in compliance with both the letter and spirit of UK, EU and international laws.
- We have re-drafted University Business Contracts to reflect the introduction of the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015 where suppliers will be required to comply with all the applicable laws regarding anti-slavery and human trafficking.
- Reviewing the Purchasing Manual to reflect our commitment to act with integrity and ethically in all our business relationships and to implement and enforce effective systems and controls, including, in relation to, combatting modern slavery and human trafficking in our supply chains.
- Implementing a Contracts Repository – we are in the process of selecting and implementing a contracts repository software solution. The solution will enable us to identify risk types / areas and the University Contract Manager to signpost where training and guidance on MSA is required and the subsequent responsibilities of managing and mitigating the risks.
- Reviewing and subsequently updating the University's standard terms and conditions of purchase which will include provisions concerning compliance with applicable modern slavery laws.
- Reviewing and updating our Tender documentation to reflect the Modern Slavery Act 2015 which will include questions regarding bidders' policies and procedures to identify and eradicate forced labour in their own operations.
- Considering appropriate, effective and proportionate ways of raising staff awareness.

## Training

To ensure a high level of understanding of the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking in our supply chains and our organisation, we intend to raise awareness of modern slavery and human rights abuses amongst our staff and deliver appropriate training. Procurement staff will complete the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) 'Ethical Procurement and Supply' on-line training, or equivalent.

## Further steps

The University is committed to better understand its supply chains and work towards greater transparency and responsibility towards people working within them.

For contracts that we have awarded and participate in, we will identify those supply chains which represent a medium-to high-risk of modern slavery, human trafficking, forced and bonded labour, and labour rights violations. Working with our suppliers, collaborative purchasing groups and other relevant organisations, we will more closely monitor those supply chains that have been identified as a potential risk and take appropriate action if necessary.



SIGNED:  
Gareth Williams  
Chair of BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES

Date: 26 November 2018

### **Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:**

*"The University of South Wales Group is a diverse academic community....with different perspectives, values, and attitudes. We seek to promote an inclusive environment where such differences are shared and valued, and where any unfair treatment or discrimination is challenged and eliminated. It is important that we promote inclusivity in all our activities and promote the principles of diversity by ensuring that different perspectives of individuals or groups are respected and celebrated." Julie Lydon, Vice Chancellor, USW Group Strategic Equality Plan.*

The University of South Wales maintains a firm commitment to the equality agenda. The University is a member of Stonewall's 'Diversity Champions Programme' which is the leading employers' programme for ensuring all LGBT staff are accepted without exception in the workplace. Stonewall works with over 750 organisations, all of whom share our core belief in the power of a workplace that is truly equal. Spectrum is a collective of LGBT+ staff members and supportive allies organised with the support of the Chaplaincy, the University and Stonewall Cymru. All USW staff are welcome to join. Members include (but is not exclusively) staff who identify as disabled, BME, young, parents, carers both those who identify as LGBT+ and allies. Spectrum acknowledges that allies are essential members as they can help to create an inclusive environment for all.

What does Spectrum do?

- Provide a safe space in which issues of relevance to LGBT+ staff can be discussed and for LGBT+ staff from across the University to meet one another in an informal setting.
- Support the aim of the University of South Wales to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination and inequality, particularly on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Help those at appropriate levels of University management to understand the need to promote awareness of equality and diversity issues relevant to LGBT+, and to influence the development of LGBT+ awareness policies.

- Be a resource through which University management may be kept informed of the views and experience of LGBT+ members of staff (Spectrum has members representing the network on all strategic equality groups at USW)
- Provide and foster links with other external organisations in order to share information and good practice and to enhance the network and its events.
- Raise awareness of LGBT+ issues generally.
- Provide a gateway of support and assistance to all staff in the workplace and a forum for discussion of issues relating to LGBT+ communities.
- Facilitate social and networking events.

## **Sustainability:**

The University recognises the importance of maintaining and operating a sustainable estate and promoting sustainability across all activities, including teaching and research. The University is committed to reducing its environmental impact through a number of measures including:

- **Energy and Carbon Management**

Energy efficiency is of great importance to the University. We are dedicated to reducing our energy and water consumption, and have set ourselves an annual reduction target of 3% each year. Energy and water usage is regularly monitored to help us achieve this.

- **Waste Management**

USW recognises that responsible waste management is important, with limited capacity in landfill sites, and the increasing costs associated with disposing of waste. Therefore, the university aims to reduce the amount of waste that it generates and that is sent to landfill by implementing safe and responsible waste recycling schemes.

- **Transport**

USW recognises travel as a major impact on the surrounding area and environment. The transport of students and staff to and from the University, around campus and between campuses creates a major impact on the local environment, including air quality impacts and health impacts. Therefore an appropriate Travel Plan has been created, which details the impact of travel and the necessary measures the University will implement to control this impact.

- **Biodiversity**

As a University, we recognise the impact we can cause on the environment as a result of our activities. The various locations of our campuses mean that each of the landscapes are different and need to be managed appropriately. Our campuses are home to a number of environments, with grassy areas, woodlands and urban areas. As a University, we are committed to maintaining and enhancing our biodiversity through appropriate environmental management techniques.

As a University, we have a duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to maintain and enhance biodiversity across all of the University's functions, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems.

We are committed to managing the impact we create on biodiversity as outlined in our [Environmental Strategy 2015 - 2020](#) and Biodiversity Action Plan 2019-2022.

In 2018 a Phase 1 Habitat Survey was completed for each of our campuses. The results of these surveys can be found by clicking the links below:

[Treforest](#) - [Glyntaff](#) - [Atrium](#) - [Sports Park](#) - [Newport](#)

To date we have helped promote biodiversity through implementing a number of measures:

- Bee friendly planters at the Cardiff ATRium Campus
- Bird and bat boxes are in place on Treforest and Glyntaff Campuses.
- Herbicide and Pesticide use has been reduced around the margins of the playing fields at the Sports Park.
- A fertilizing regime which minimizes the use of inorganic (nitrate based) fertilizer is used at the Sports Park to reduce the risk of nitrate run-off.
- A green roof has been installed on the HUB accommodation break out zone.
- A wild meadow area is present at our Upper Glyntaff campus.
- A green wall has been installed on the roof terrace of the Student Union building.

This year we have introduced a new initiative to support our sustainability efforts: the Sustainability Champions initiative. Sustainability Champions will form a University-wide network of staff and students who are leading positive change for sustainability in their own areas and in a range of ways. They will support the work of the Sustainability Officer by initiating activity in their own areas that really makes a difference.

### **Recycling Stations:**

As part of our efforts to improve sustainability and lessen our environmental impact, our Estates Department have worked in collaboration with Catering and other teams across the University to introduce new recycling stations to some of the University's busiest areas, aiming to make recycling easier than ever. Enthusiasm for recycling is high among staff and students, but we found that waste was often being deposited in the wrong places. These new recycling stations take the guess work out of deciding where to deposit refuse, with separate sections for different types of waste and clear, eye-catching, labelling in both Welsh and English.

They are also at an accessible height for wheelchair users, and have signage on the front that enables people of all heights to easily distinguish where refuse should go. These new recycling stations have initially been rolled out across our Catering outlets on all campuses and in the Conference Centre, but plans are in place to introduce smaller recycling stations in high traffic areas of the University buildings.



## **Research in Support of the UN Global Compact:**

### [RICE](#)

The Reduced Industrial Carbon Emissions (RICE) initiative, led by the Energy Safety Research Institute (ESRI) at Swansea University in partnership with the Sustainable Energy Research Centre (SERC) team at the University of South Wales, will draw on world-class expertise to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from large and heavy equipment and facilities, and help drive a stronger and greener economy.

### [FLEXIS](#)

FLEXIS (Flexible Integrated Energy Systems) is a £24 million research operation designed to develop an energy systems research capability in Wales which will build on the world class capability that already exists in Welsh universities. Through the FLEXIS operation we will focus on developing flexible energy systems, which is an urgent priority in energy generation and supply. We will make a significant economic impact through supporting and developing the internationally renowned research in this area, and more specifically through the new technologies and new jobs that will follow this work.

### [ToOLTuBES: Toxicity & Organic Load Tracking using Bioelectrochemical Systems](#)

The ToOLTuBES project (Toxicity & Organic Load Tracking using BioElectrochemical Systems) will advance the development of a water quality biosensor towards technology readiness level TRL 7 (demonstration in an operating environment at pre-commercial scale). BES technology, which incorporates an electrode-supported microbial biofilm that generates electricity from oxidation of organics, and has great potential for low-cost, real-time sensing applications.

### [RES URBIS \(RESources from URban Bio-waSte\)](#)

The overall objective of the project is to integrate into a single facility and to use one main technology chain for the conversion of several types of urban bio-wastes into valuable bio-based products, while also minimizing any residual or consequent waste to be disposed of.

### [Lifes-CO2R](#)

The aim of this project is to develop a breakthrough technology based upon integrated low cost bio-electrochemical processes to convert CO<sub>2</sub> into liquid fuels for transportation, energy storage, heating and other applications. CO<sub>2</sub> is firstly electrochemically reduced to formate using electric energy from biomass or wastes and other renewable sources.

### [Newton-Mosharafa Fund](#)

The Newton-Mosharafa Fund is a £20 million, five year science and innovation partnership between the UK and Egypt. It aims to advance the capacity of the Egyptian science sector; increase the amount of quality scientific research and innovation being carried out in Egypt; and help mitigate social and economic challenges in Egypt through the development of new research and innovation.

### [Smart Circle](#)

Smart Circle is a £1 million collaborative industrial research project to explore how innovative bioprocesses can be used to improve the overall efficiency of a range of industrial operations. The project also aims to develop technology that can recover unused, high value molecules, including nutrients and enzymes, from low-value materials such as sewage sludge.

#### [Biological Integration of Electricity and Gas Grids for Low Cost Energy Storage \(BioGrid\)](#)

This project is funded by BEIS under the Energy Storage Cost Reduction Call. It is over 2.5 years and is in collaboration with NiTech Solutions and BPE. This project aims to further develop the USW AERIOGEN process. The project will move a novel biomethanation sub-system capable of converting grid relevant amounts of renewable electricity to carboxylic acids and methane for energy storage, from its existing Technology Readiness Level of 3 (Laboratory Proof of Concept) to at least TRL6 (Verified Prototype System).

The project is led by NiTech Solutions.

#### **Conclusion:**

We remain 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. We will continue to review our interventions. 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.