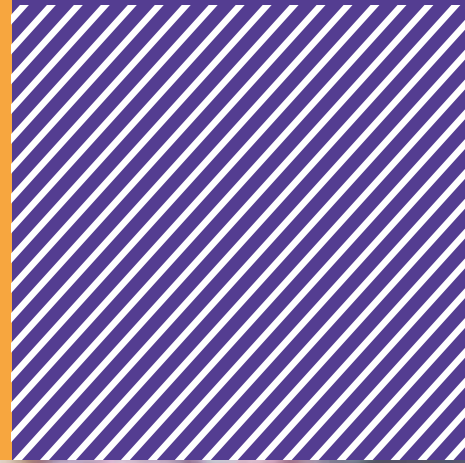


A guide to higher education in Wales

February 2022



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Foreword

Universities in Wales contribute to the fabric of our nation, bringing benefits to the local and national economy. They provide skills and education to people of all ages and backgrounds.

Our universities undertake important research and innovation to lead the way on scientific breakthroughs with a tangible impact on our day-to-day lives. As well as local benefits, universities develop international partnerships that put Wales on the map and draw vital investment into our nation.

Throughout this, collaboration has been at the heart of the way our universities operate: collaboration with businesses, charities, and the public sector.

The future remains uncertain as the country emerges from the pandemic and enters a new era with changing global trading relationships. The climate change emergency is becoming a more urgent threat to our way of life. The workplace is changing. Digitalisation and automation will bring new social and economic tests and opportunities. Together, the scale of these challenges is unparalleled.

By working with the Senedd and Welsh Government, and partners across Wales, universities will support our national recovery. Our universities can help to build Wales' future by delivering upon Wales' ambitions and promise.

This guide provides an overview of higher education in Wales, and the role of Universities Wales in representing the sector.

**Professor Elizabeth Treasure
Chair, Universities Wales**



There are 9 universities in Wales

134,000+ students attending Welsh universities each year...

...including 22,000 international students



In 2019/20 Welsh universities generated over £5.3 billion of output



£661m




61,722 jobs


£661million of export earnings – equivalent to 11.8% of all Welsh service sector export earnings

1 in every 20 jobs in Wales

Employability

94% 

of graduates securing employment or further study

13% 

Active Welsh graduate start-ups account for more than 13% of the UK total - the highest rate per capita in the UK.

Supporting communities



All Welsh universities are accredited Living Wage Employers

250,000 days



In 2019/20, Welsh universities provided over 250,000 days' worth of professional development



Over next 5 years
Welsh universities will:

1,300

help 1,300 new businesses and charities to be formed

4,000

give 4,000 years' worth of upskilling and training to businesses and charities

£536m

be part of regeneration projects worth £536 million to the Welsh economy.

Introduction to Universities Wales

Universities Wales represents the interests of universities in Wales and is a National Council of Universities UK. Universities Wales' membership encompasses the vice-chancellors of all the universities in Wales, and the Director of the Open University in Wales.

Members of Universities Wales meet regularly throughout the academic year to discuss issues relating to higher education in Wales, and to decide upon collective positions and actions. The Committee agrees the strategic priorities for the work of Universities Wales.

The Chair of Universities Wales is Professor Elizabeth Treasure, Vice-Chancellor of Aberystwyth University. The Chair represents the university sector at key meetings and conferences. Our Vice-Chair is Professor Maria Hinfelaar, Vice-Chancellor of Wrexham Glyndŵr University.

Our mission is to support a university education system which transforms lives through the work Welsh universities do with the people and places of Wales and the wider world.

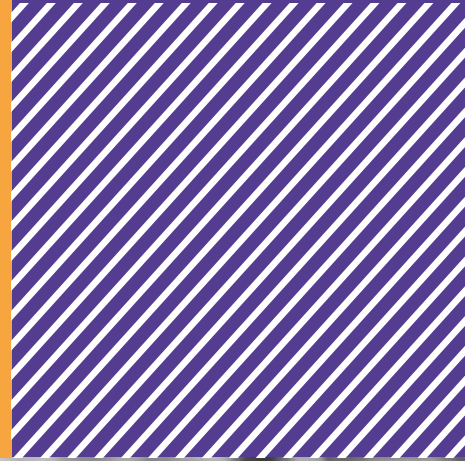




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Universities
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Universities in Wales



There are nine universities in Wales, including the Open University in Wales.

The history of universities in Wales is rich and varied. They began in different ways, from universities founded to train for the priesthood, to some emerging from the social experiment of universities founded on the voluntary contributions of local people, and some specialist colleges of higher education founded by the leaders of the great industries of their day. Universities in Wales are all registered charities and do not make a profit.

These institutions were born from their communities and they have served those communities across many decades, and in some cases centuries.

All the income they receive and any surplus they make is spent on:

- Teaching and training students to meet the skills needs of Wales and equip them with the attributes they need to actively participate in a global economy
- Conducting world-class research that transforms lives
- Driving innovation that supports local and national economic growth
- Investment in the estate and infrastructure to provide fit for purpose teaching and research facilities

The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) regulates the higher education sector and administers Welsh Government funding for students and universities.





Bangor University

Wrexham Glyndŵr University

Aberystwyth University

UWTSD, Lampeter

UWTSD, Carmarthen

**Swansea University &
UWTSD, Swansea**

USW, Newport

USW, Pontypridd

**USW, Cardiff
Cardiff University
Cardiff Metropolitan University**

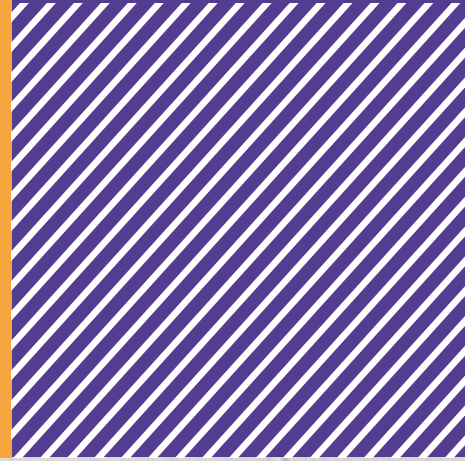
**USW, Royal Welsh College
of Music and Drama
Open University
in Wales**



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Student experience



93.9%

of students in
2019-20 continued
into their second
year of study

94%

of graduates
securing
employment or
further study



Wales leads the way on student experience

The Welsh higher education sector consistently scores well against the UK average in the National Student Survey (NSS). In 2020-21 Wales scored above the UK average on learning and teaching, student experience and overall satisfaction.

Wales outperforms the rest of the UK in terms of retention rates. 93.9% of students in 2019-20 continued into their second year of study. Wales also performs the best in the UK for continuation of study for students from widening access backgrounds.

Graduates from Welsh universities have excellent prospects, with 94% of graduates securing employment or further study 15 months after leaving university.

Mental health and wellbeing

Every university has a dedicated mental health policy, and the sector as a whole has signed up to Universities UK's Stepchange framework, which outlines a 'whole university approach' to mental health and wellbeing – ensuring every aspect of university life takes into account the wellbeing of students and staff.

During the pandemic, universities used additional Welsh Government funding to develop innovative projects and solutions to enable students to continue to access mental health and wellbeing support.

The Cross-Party Group on Universities in the fifth Senedd considered student mental health, particularly during the pandemic. As a result, Universities Wales is working with the wider sector to develop a set of principles and recommendations for Welsh Government to consider in developing mental health and wellbeing policy for students in post-16 education.

Case Study

The Connect programme is a partnership between Swansea University, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, their respective Students' Unions and local colleges. It aims to reduce loneliness and isolation in students and build supportive communities through peer support, social prescribing and student and staff training.

Financial support

Wales offers students the most generous package of financial support in the UK.

Students on undergraduate, part-time, and postgraduate courses are entitled to maintenance loans and learning grants calculated based on household income and intensity of study.

Wales was the first country in Europe to introduce comparable living cost support across full and part-time undergraduate study.

Wales is also the only part of the UK that provides the equivalent of a living wage in student financial support. All universities in Wales also offer hardship funding that students can apply for if they need additional financial support.

Quality

A key part of the student experience is ensuring that the teaching and learning students receive is of good quality and helps them achieve their learning outcomes. There is a range of sector-wide mechanisms that are used to assure and enhance the quality of Welsh higher education.

All universities in Wales monitor student opinions internally through student feedback mechanisms. As well as this, the National Student Survey (NSS) provides detailed information for universities and the regulator to understand how students feel about their education and provides a means for the university to address student feedback. Wales has performed strongly in comparison to the rest of the UK in recent times.

Universities have well developed internal complaints processes and are subject to an external complaints procedure through the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). Information on complaints in Wales is made public, with the latest report OIA report. In recent years, complaints in Wales have declined against a UK-wide upward trend.

All of these approaches are part of the regulatory and funding environment at the heart of which is the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.

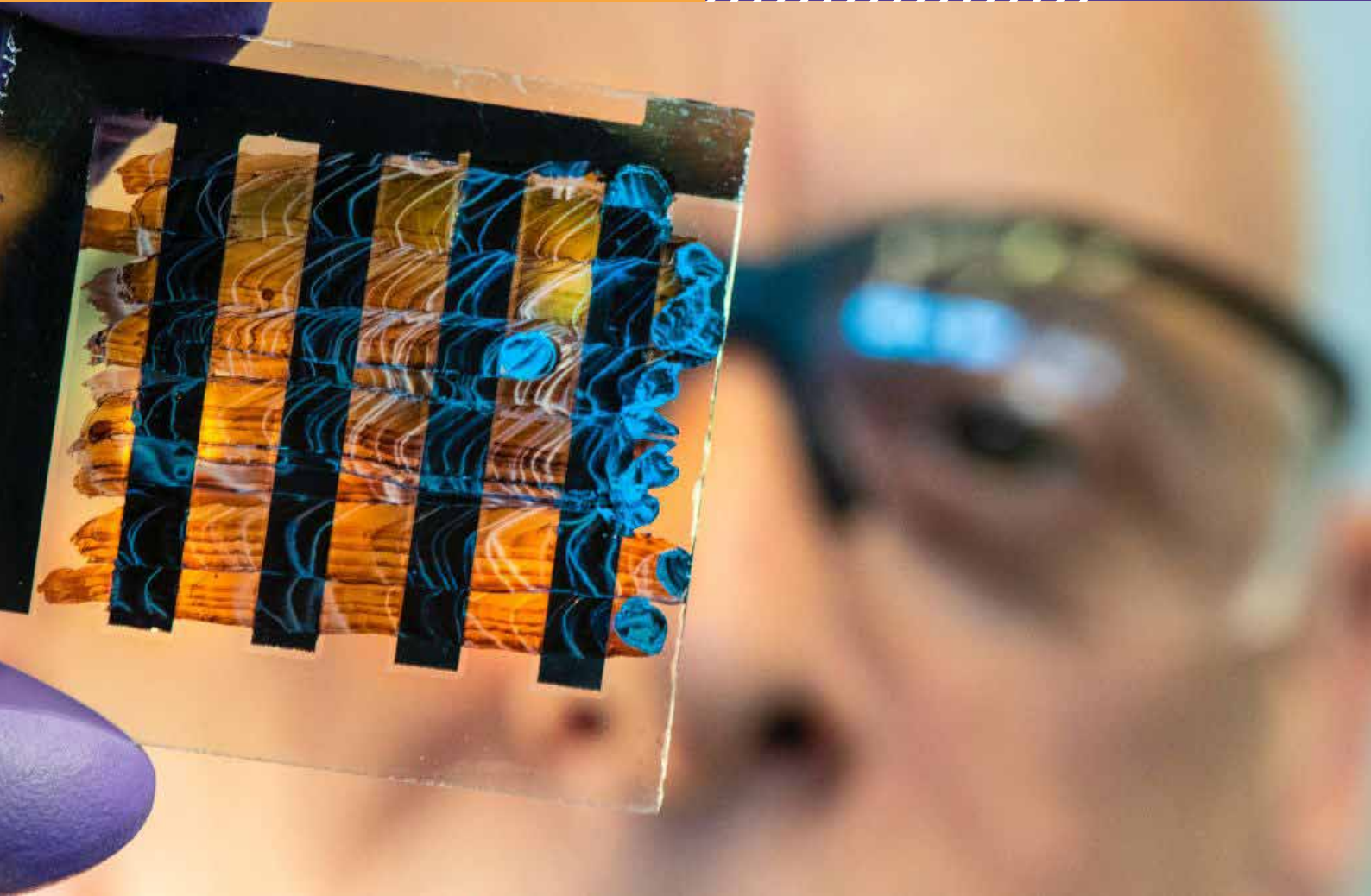
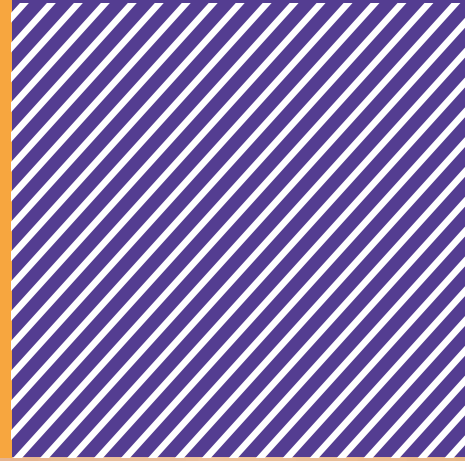
Wales is also the first nation in the UK to have all universities unilaterally sign-up to the QAA Academic Integrity Charter, demonstrating their commitment to fighting essay mills and other forms of academic misconduct.

Universities are committed to delivering a high-quality student experience and are always looking at ways to improve and enhance their offer.

As a sector, Welsh universities have jointly delivered projects such as the JISC learning and analytics project and a collaborative blended learning project to improve the experience of students across Wales.

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Research and innovation



Welsh universities undertake world-leading research that brings tangible benefits to the people and places of Wales.

From international partnerships drawing in investment and expertise, to localised collaborations with small and medium sized enterprises bringing innovation to the front line of Welsh business, developing new products and services and generating jobs. Our research and innovation sector will be key to tackling the challenges Wales faces, from climate change to technological change and workplace transformation.

Research and innovation funding

There are two broad categories of research funding, which operate in a dual-funding system:

- Un-hypothecated ‘quality-related’ (QR) funding acts as general funding for research infrastructure, not linked to specific projects and supports basic research. This provides institutions with the ability to build capacity and secure external grants. This funding is drawn from the overall grant Welsh Government provides to HEFCW, and is distributed by HEFCW.
- External funding can be secured through winning competitive bids for specific research projects, from Research Councils such as UK Research and Innovation and Horizon Europe. QR funding is often needed to match-fund these bids.

The Research Wales Innovation Fund was introduced in 2019 to provide core research funding specifically aimed at allowing universities to increase their capacity to engage with business.

There is a strong correlation between QR and competitive funding, as QR funding unlocks a university’s potential to be successful in winning bids.



QR funding is key in allowing universities to reliably fund researchers and research infrastructure, and can be used to fund cutting-edge research without specific parameters.

Professor Graeme Reid, in his 2018 review of Welsh research funding, strongly advocated for a real-terms increase in QR funding to reinforce the Welsh Research Base, particularly in light of the impact of our withdrawal from the European Union. The Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee in their 2019 report on Research and Innovation in Wales recommended the Welsh Government implement the recommendations of the Reid Review in full.

Welsh universities have delivered significant benefits to communities in Wales through European Structural Funds. Between 2014-2020 over £300m of European funding was awarded to projects that Welsh universities were lead partners for. Replacement regional investment opportunities will be crucial in sustaining the research infrastructure and capacity that this funding supported.

Wales Innovation Network

In 2019, Universities Wales commissioned Professor Graeme Reid to deliver a report making recommendations on the future of the Welsh research base. In his 2019 report, *Strength in Diversity*, Professor Reid found that a significant 'untapped resource' of Welsh research is diversity. The broad range of specialisms and resources across Welsh universities could be harnessed to strengthen Wales' capacity to secure external research funding.

The **Wales Innovation Network (WIN)** has subsequently been established, bringing together all Welsh universities to collaborate on research bids. The WIN Board is made up of Pro Vice Chancellors from each university in Wales, who will shape the direction and focus of the network. A professional team is based in Universities Wales.

| Case Study

The **ASTUTE 2020 (Advanced Sustainable Manufacturing Technologies)** operation supports collaboration in industrial Research, Development and Innovation (RD&I) between world-class academics based in five Welsh universities and a team of technical experts and project managers and industry.



Successful projects have included a collaboration with Brother Industries (BIUK) to develop printer cartridges made using recycled plastics. BIUK can now transition products currently made from virgin resins to recycled resins, creating a direct environmental impact, reducing the use of raw materials, saving energy and reducing CO2 emissions from manufacturing and landfill. As a result, this will contribute to Government targets, the Paris Agreement and UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Case Study

Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarship (KESS) is a programme led by Bangor University on behalf of the higher education sector in Wales, funded by European Social Funds. KESS supports collaborative research projects, placing research master's and PhD students with external partners ranging from SMEs to large companies, social enterprises and public bodies, including Tenovus Cancer Care, Natural Resources Wales, Tata Steel, S4C, National Botanic Garden of Wales, Mencap Cymru, Halen Môn, Qioptiq Ltd., P&S Nano Ltd. and the Tidal Lagoon Swansea Bay.

SMEs taking advantage of a KESS 2 project benefit from being able to focus skills towards a research area related to their business at a significantly lower cost than, for example, commissioning a research organisation to undertake such work

Successful projects so far have included:

- A partnership between a PhD student at Bangor University and the Savari Research Trust, developing a range of fungus-resistant tomatoes optimised for the Northern European climate
- A University of South Wales PhD student working in RUMM (Remote Utility Monitoring and Management) as a low carbon psychologist, identifying energy saving interventions based on behaviour change for large companies
- A collaborative partnership between the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and Swansea University, involving a PhD student researching the rate of continuing carbon deposition and exchange in peat bogs – an area of conservation research of increasing importance

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Civic Mission



Universities in Wales have long served their communities, both through education and research as well as supporting local schools and the foundational economy.

They continue to have a crucial role to play in engaging with their local communities and contributing to society, particularly as we emerge from the pandemic.

During the Covid pandemic, universities stepped up to provide their expertise and resources to support Wales' efforts by supplying medical equipment, facilities and resources, and through staff and students volunteering their time.

In January 2021, universities in Wales launched the Civic Mission Framework to help universities build upon the ways they work with people, schools and communities. It is the first of its kind in the UK, and the first in the world to have all universities in a nation signed up to it.

The framework is set around five key areas of action to ensure universities are well connected and contributing to their places and people:



Leading place
– engaging
with other key
civic leaders at
a national and
community level



Contribution to
raising educational
standards by
developing links
with schools,
colleges and
other learning
environments



Developing active
citizenship



Acting as the
engine of social
enterprise,
business skills
and employability



Responding
to global
issues

| Aberystwyth University

Dewis Choice, a project run by Aberystwyth University, is the first dedicated service in the UK for older people who've experienced domestic abuse. Since its inception, over 140 older people and their families have been provided with long-term intensive support, with many describing the service as life-saving.

| Bangor University

Scientists at Bangor University are working with Welsh Government and Public Health Wales to examine the levels of Covid-19 present in waste water. This work helps to capture the levels of the virus circulating in Welsh communities and can also provide an early warning system for other diseases emerging in the community, such as influenza and norovirus.

| Cardiff Metropolitan University

Design researchers at Cardiff Met have created a 'HUG' product which is designed to provide comfort and increase wellbeing in people living with advanced dementia. It has a beating heart, plays music, and it has weighted limbs that give the sensation of giving and receiving a cuddle. In a care home study, people who used the HUG for six months showed an 87% increase in their wellbeing.

| Cardiff University

The Caer Heritage Project by Cardiff University aims to raise the profile of historical sites such as Caerau Hill Fort, which is the largest and most complex iron-age site in the Cardiff region. The project involves people and local communities in every part of the process through activities such as historical research and archaeological digs. The project has had over 3,500 active participants.

| The Open University in Wales

The Blaneau Gwent REACH project run by The Open University in Wales in partnership with Linc Cymru Housing Association and Aberbeeg Residents' Group supports Blaenau Gwent residents to engage with the arts, community and heritage. There are plans to grow the project in all areas of Wales.

| Swansea University

The Swansea University Copperopolis project is focused on engaging with community groups, schools, colleges and charities in the heritage-led regeneration of Hafod copper works. The work has helped to raise the profile of the industrial heritage of the Lower Swansea Valley and its importance to the city.

| University of South Wales

The University of South Wales operates a Refugee and Asylum Seeker Sanctuary Scheme, which allows refugees and asylum seekers in Wales to access language tuition and language preparation before starting their degree.

| University of Wales Trinity St David

The Assistive Technologies Innovation Centre at UWTSD is working with Cerebra to develop a process for scanning the heads of children with brain conditions that have affected the growth and development of their skulls. Imogen has cerebral palsy and loves horse-riding, but the shape of her skull makes it difficult to find a riding helmet that fits properly. Through this partnership, ATiC and Cerebra were able to use hi-tech scanning equipment to make a bespoke helmet that fits perfectly.

| Wrexham Glyndŵr University

The TrACE project by Wrexham Glyndŵr University and ACE Support Hub aims to enable and support Wales to become a world leader in preventing, mitigating and tackling adverse childhood experiences and trauma.

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International



Wales attracts around 22,000 international students annually and is a destination of choice for researchers from across the globe.

International students and staff enrich the student experience, enhance learning and teaching, and help to make Welsh graduates more prepared for work.

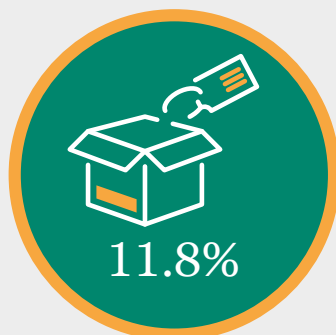
International students contribute significantly to Wales' economic as well as cultural prosperity.

Universities generate around £661 million of export earnings per year, which is equivalent to 11.8% of all Welsh service sector exports, creating around 12,000 jobs and supporting tourism. This helps drive local economies across Wales, with all parts of Wales benefitting from the expenditure of international students, staff and visitors.

Wales' universities work hard to support international students throughout their studies. As a result of the social and cultural links they make at university, international students maintain close ties with Wales after they have graduated, strengthening Wales' soft power on the global stage. Wales' networks of international alumni act as positive overseas ambassadors developing important links between Wales and a wide range of global businesses and contacts.



Universities generate around £661 million of export earnings per year



This is equivalent to 11.8% of all Welsh service sector exports



In turn, this is creating around 12,000 jobs

Taith

This ambitious £65m international learning exchange programme will fund the inward and outward mobility of students and staff from across universities, further education and vocational education and training, adult education, youth work settings and schools. The scheme, which will be global in reach, will commence in academic year 2022-2023 and is being hosted at Cardiff University.



Global Wales

Global Wales is a partnership between Universities Wales, Welsh Government, British Council Wales and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales that provides strategic support to the Welsh higher education sector as a key export industry and builds networks for Wales internationally.

From 2022-2026, Global Wales will form a strategic part of the new international learning exchange programme, Taith, launched in February 2022.

134,760

students attended Welsh universities in 2019/20

52%

came from Wales

32%

came from the rest of the UK

4%

came from the EU

12%

came from outside the EU



Global Wales' objectives are to:



Increase student recruitment



Maintain and grow research and educational partnerships



Generate export earnings



Increase the awareness and reputation of Welsh institutions internationally

The programme has established four priority markets: the USA, India and Vietnam, and most recently added the European Union as its fourth priority area.

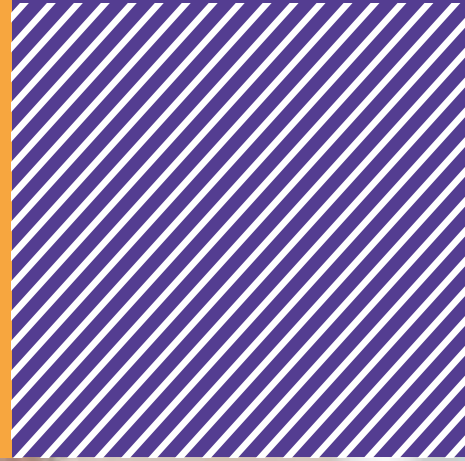
Unique to Global Wales is its ability to engage in 'system to system' development, leveraging all elements of the Welsh HE system (government, regulator, sector) to respond quickly and innovatively to the requirements of partner countries. This is supported by market development activities ranging from recruitment and marketing to capacity building projects, diplomatic delegations and visits as well as a range of prestigious scholarships, including the flagship Global Wales Scholarship.



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Skills for the future



There are more than 130,000 students in higher education in Wales, studying programmes from accounting to zoology.

Beyond the traditional undergraduate, master's and PhD routes, Welsh universities provide a variety of flexible learning opportunities to ensure higher education is accessible, creating highly skilled workers for the future.

The workplace is changing. The future offers both opportunities and challenges for universities as the economy shifts to one where automation and AI become increasingly important. An ageing population and a decline in new entrants to the workforce will mean that finding ways for people of all ages and backgrounds to reskill and upskill will become ever more important.

Wales has the highest per capita rate of university-delivered CPD in the UK, providing over 250,000 days' worth of professional development in 2019-20.

Degree apprenticeships

Degree apprenticeships are integrated degree programmes that involve employers, and where on the job learning plays as important a role as the time spent studying at university. They offer a new route to gaining a degree that will play a vital role in enabling those already in the workforce or who have responsibilities that make full-time study challenging to access university-level learning.

The programme is in the final stage of a pilot, covering three areas: IT/computing, engineering, and advanced manufacturing. Employers in Wales can offer a degree apprenticeship in these subject areas through a partnership with a university in Wales.

Degree apprentices work alongside experienced employees to gain practical skills and experience while receiving external training. This means that degree apprentices finish their course with skills learned in the workplace, as well as the higher-level knowledge that comes with a degree qualification.

The apprenticeships run for the duration of the degree course with apprentices spending around 20% of their time at university and the rest with their employer. In Wales, a degree apprenticeship will be a minimum of three years and usually up to a maximum of five years in length.

Universities Wales advocates an expansion of the Degree Apprenticeship programme beyond its three-year pilot and into a broader range of subject areas and up to Master's level, with a continued commitment to widening access and attracting students from a range of backgrounds.

Widening access

Universities play a crucial role in social mobility. Much of the work universities do in this area falls under the heading 'widening access'. Every university has a fee and access plan, which sets out how they will attract, retain and support under-represented groups, including those with protected characteristics, to ensure they can achieve their full potential.

Fee and access plans include, for example, the methods universities use to communicate with students and prospective students about the financial support available to them, how they raise aspirations among school-aged pupils to encourage them to consider higher education, and how they support their respective students' unions to champion equality and diversity.

In 2018/19, 39% of students at Welsh universities had a home address within the bottom two quintiles of Lower Super Output Areas in the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014.

The percentage of students from low participation neighbourhoods – areas with fewer people going to universities – at Welsh universities is higher than the UK average. For the academic years of entry 2015/16 to 2019/20, Wales had 15.6% of first degree students from low participation neighbourhoods, compared to a UK average of 11.8%.

Flexible learning opportunities

Universities have developed new ways of delivering higher-level skills to people of all ages and backgrounds - including through degree apprenticeships - and a part-time offering is core to this. Universities are committed to expanding the breadth and reach of our skills offer, including part-time and lifelong learning.

Getting results

Universities UK's Getting Results campaign in summer 2021 highlighted the contributions made by universities to the UK's recovery, based on data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency, ONS and Innovate UK data.

The research found that, over the next five years, universities in Wales will:



Give 4,000 years' worth of upskilling and training to businesses and charities



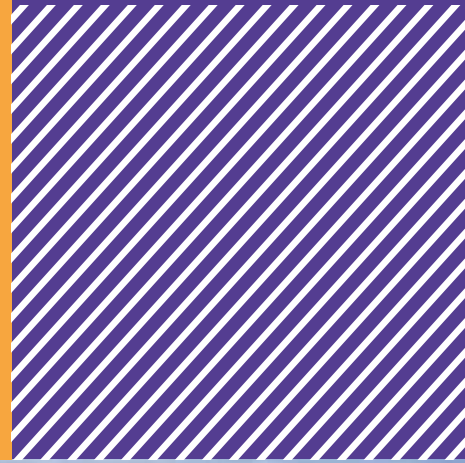
Help 1,300 new businesses and charities to be formed



Train 10,000 nurses, 4,000 medics, and 8,000 teachers

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Powering the Welsh economy



Powering the Welsh economy



In 2019/20 Welsh universities generated over £5.3 billion of output

£661m



£661million of export earnings – equivalent to 11.8% of all Welsh service sector export earnings



£2.8bn



£1.6bn

of Welsh GVA through their expenditure and that of students and their visitors – equivalent to 4.2% of 2019 Welsh GVA.

of their own output, with their activities creating an additional £3.7bn of output for the Welsh economy.

Universities are an integral part of the Welsh economy, providing employment and generating other economic activity.

The teaching undertaken by universities is vital to enhancing the skills base of the nation, and their research and innovation activity supports and enhances business.

All universities in Wales are accredited Living Wage Employers – the only higher education sector in the UK nations to have achieved this status.

Wales also performs well on graduate start-ups. Universities offer support ranging from office space to bursaries to help with setup costs and mentoring from tutors and dedicated enterprise staff. The annual Higher Education Business and Community Interaction survey consistently finds that Wales outperforms the rest of the UK on the number of graduate start-ups we have per capita, and these start-ups are more likely to last three years or more than those elsewhere in the UK. Wales also has the highest rate of active graduate start-ups in the UK with Welsh graduate start-ups accounting for 13.25% of the UK total.

Output

A study undertaken in 2019/20 into the economic impact of universities in Wales found that Welsh universities generated over £5 billion of output - £1.64 billion through their direct activities, and generating a further £2.1 billion of knock-on output for the UK economy, with the majority (£1.57bn) accruing in Welsh industries.

In other words, every £1 million of Welsh University output in 2019/20 generated a further secondary output impact of £0.96 million in Wales plus a further £0.33 million outside Wales, in the rest of the UK.

Jobs

Universities in Wales provided 20,730 jobs, which in turn generated a knock-on 47,887 jobs outside of universities.

The total combined impact on Welsh employment of the universities and their students came to 61,722 jobs. This was equivalent to 4.8 % of all 2018 Welsh employee jobs

GVA

Welsh universities, together with their students and related international visitors, generated Welsh GVA of over £2.8 billion, equivalent to 4.2% of total 2019 Welsh GVA.

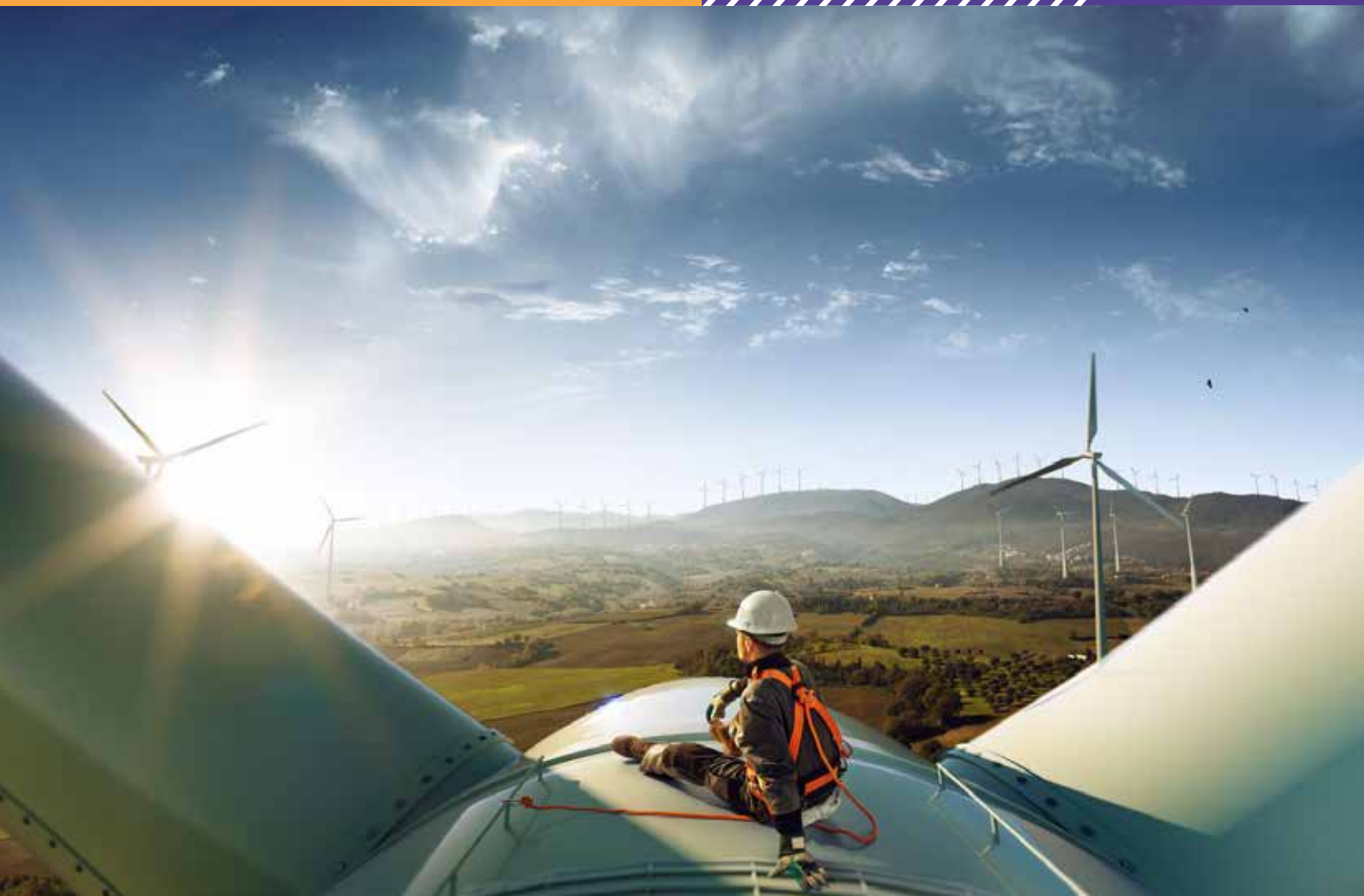
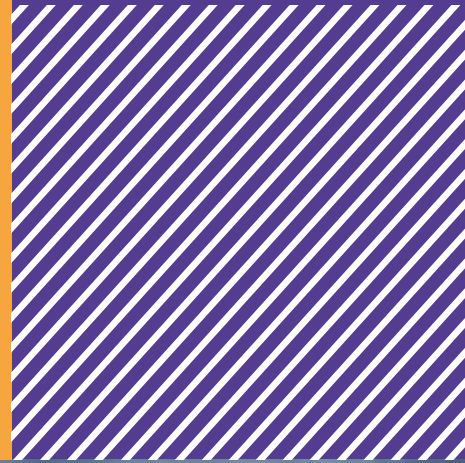
Export earnings

In 2019/20 Welsh universities attracted nearly 22,000 students from outside the UK. Tuition fees and off-campus expenditure of international students amounted to £661m, which is equivalent to around 11.8% of all Wales service sector export earnings.



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Building Wales'
future - opportunities
and challenges
during the sixth
Senedd



Universities are well-placed to collaborate with partners across Wales to support our nation's recovery from the pandemic and build Wales' future together.



A future-ready workforce

During the sixth Senedd, universities will be able to support employment:

- through providing joined-up flexible learning, including part-time provision
- by delivering research and innovation activity that will generate new businesses, new jobs and new industries. This will include knowledge transfer partnerships that help existing businesses to expand
- by supporting the generation of new businesses, including graduate start-ups where Wales is already UK-leading
- through universities' local economic activity, including the contribution to the foundation economy and the spending of staff, students and visitors



Climate change

Welsh universities are helping to tackle climate change by developing and implementing solutions in the race towards net-zero.

- Research and innovation directly addresses how we as a society transition to a low carbon future, as well as the practical challenges around generating and storing energy. Many of these projects are collaborative and examine complex and interdependent issues.
- Universities are also well-placed to deliver on sustainable use of resources and land/seascapes.
- As we introduce new technologies – such as those that will create and proliferate energy-neutral or energy-positive homes we will also need to retrain and upskill those who will be fitting, installing and making use of these technologies. There will be opportunities to further join up the skills system, allowing cutting edge research and innovation to inform delivery across the entire education system.

Digitalisation

Wales' response to digitalisation, and ensuring we make the most of the opportunities presented, will in large part depend on our ability to further upskill our population, and the success with which we deliver research and innovation in this area.

- The implementation of degree apprenticeships in digital has seen substantial and increasing demand from businesses across Wales.
- Welsh universities host high profile hubs and centres that cover cyber security, software engineering and data science. Universities in Wales are building Wales' digital future.



Changing global relationships

Through alumni, staff and student mobility, collaborative research, cultural and sporting activities our universities are contributing to Wales' soft power.

- Partnerships built by our universities through transnational education, research and commercial activities have established a significant footprint for Wales internationally, building on the international recognition of Wales as an innovative and forward-thinking nation.
- Similarly, by coming to Wales, international students, staff and researchers play an invaluable role in diversifying and internationalising our communities.

Advancing Welsh culture


Universities play an important role in the cultural life of Wales.

- As well as teaching and research in the arts and humanities, our universities are often cultural and artistic hubs offering live performances, exhibitions, and public lectures.
- Universities undertake research in and about Wales and its culture.
- Universities also often provide a community space, a place for people to gather and pursue shared activities.
- As we emerge from the Coronavirus pandemic, the rooted presence of universities in communities will provide opportunities to come together and share experience. Universities will also continue to be key to meeting ambitions around the Welsh language, both by providing Welsh-medium education and also, in many cases, delivering or hosting Welsh for Adults courses.

Building Wales' regions

Welsh universities are critical economic anchors in all parts of Wales that support the foundational economy.

- All universities in Wales are accredited Living Wage employers and signed up to the Code of Practice on Ethical Employment in Supply Chains.
- Universities have resources to deliver direct benefit to their communities through funding while also acting as conduits for other organisations and businesses – which might have smaller administrative capacity – to access regional investment opportunities.
- Universities can also leverage regional funding to secure additional investment to Wales.



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