

Quality News



Prifysgol Cymru
University of Wales

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Student Inductions to Committees

On the morning of Tuesday 20th September a group of six students came to Cardiff to discover more about being a University of Wales student committee member. Student representatives sit on all of UW's committees, from Academic Board to its sub-committees such as Research Degrees Board and Special Cases Committee. Their role is to engage formally with the business of academic governance. In other words, membership of these committees allows our students to participate in the running of the University, at its highest level.

The training is designed to prepare students for becoming committee members and covered a range of topics to give them a thorough grounding in the purpose and structure of the University's academic governance processes. During the morning they were faced with the task of matching the roles and duties of the Academic Board's sub-committees following a presentation on the University's committee structure. This prompted some interesting debate amongst the students as they related the rigorous checks and balances within the structure to their own life experiences.

We rounded off the morning with a meeting papers reading task which involved challenging the students to find different items. Reading academic papers, particularly for the first time, is not an easy task, but it is one which is crucial if our student members are to partake in discussion.

Following the final task the students were keen to ask more general questions about the University, (putting me on the spot as payback for all my questions to them!) and we found this a really useful way of rounding off some of the concepts we had explored during the training.

I was delighted to receive some excellent feedback about the way the student engagement team (Rhys, Hattie and Carwyn) supported this event and made it a success. We had an incredibly enthusiastic and hardworking group, I am proud to be part of this team.



This event is the first stage in establishing a register of student committee members so that the University can develop the skills of the students involved to ensure they are able to contribute fully to our quality and standards structures, and therefore participate as partners in the academic process. This year's theme for student engagement initiatives, 'Students at the Heart of UW', is intended to emphasise the important role students have within a global UW academic community.

Ben Gray
Student Engagement Manager



Are you a University of Wales student and interested in getting involved with its committees?

Get in touch with Ben at b.gray@wales.ac.uk

Vice-Chancellor's Statement to Students and Alumni

The University of Wales has recently made announcements regarding its future, responding to the priorities identified by the Government of Wales, and in particular the recommendations of the McCormick review.

The University has decided to merge with the University of Wales: Trinity Saint David and Swansea Metropolitan University. This merger will take place under the 1828 Royal Charter of the University of Wales: Trinity Saint David rather than under the 1893 University of Wales Charter. This is a historic decision and offers the transformed University the opportunity to continue to serve higher education both within a Welsh and international context. It is envisaged that the three institutions will have integrated by 1 August 2012.

For all students currently enrolled and studying towards a University of Wales award, the University of Wales will remain the degree awarding body for the duration of their studies. Students will continue to study the same course in their respective institutions, and on successful completion will be awarded a degree certificate bearing "The University of Wales" as the degree awarding body.

Graduates will still retain the University of Wales award they received upon graduation and will continue to be valued members of the University of Wales Alumni Association.

There are thousands of alumni around the world who hold a University of Wales degree. The University of Wales degree and the University of Wales name have a strong legacy and are widely recognised and highly regarded by employers worldwide. The value of this will not change.

*Professor Medwin Hughes
Vice-Chancellor*

Why is the merger happening?

Recent developments in Welsh Higher Education policy have been driven by a desire for there to be fewer universities in Wales. The Welsh Government is putting policies in place to have only six or seven universities (there are currently eleven). Our merger is in response to this challenge from the Government.

How will the merger affect the value of my degree?

The University of Wales degree and the name University of Wales have a strong history and are widely recognised and highly regarded by employers worldwide. There are many University of Wales alumni who graduated from universities which no longer award University of Wales degrees. They have suffered no detrimental effect as a result of that change and include many senior members of Welsh Government, people in public life and academic staff at universities across the UK.

Will this affect my employability in the future?

As stated in the above answer there are many successful members of the University of Wales alumni and we anticipate that there will be many more.

How will this change impact professional courses?

All of our professional courses meet UK standards and we anticipate that this will continue to be the case.

Do I need to consider changing Universities?

No. We do not believe that any of the recent developments should concern students to the point where they wish to change universities.

What role have students had in this process?

Students have been involved in the process, and the Vice-Chancellor has held meetings with the President of the NUS in Wales and also other Student Presidents from Universities in Wales.

What shape will the new Student Union take?

We anticipate the transformed University will have a single Student Union body representing the views of students. It is for the students to determine what shape that Student Union takes.

I'm a prospective student, where do I stand?

If you have been offered a place on a University of Wales course you will be treated in the same way as all past students and if successful you will exit with a University of Wales award.

I have graduated with a University of Wales award and am applying for a Masters, will these recent changes have any effect on this?

No. Students can have full confidence in the quality and standards of University of Wales awards. The Institutional Review of the University of Wales undertaken by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) in 2010 noted the highest possible outcome of confidence.

What will the new university do in relation to the quality of its courses moving forward?

The University of Wales will continue to apply rigorous quality assurance processes to all of its awards.

Who is awarding my degree now?

The University of Wales will continue to be the degree awarding body to all current students for the duration of their course.

What impact will this have on my tuition fees / sponsorship?

Tuition fees are determined by the Collaborative Centre or University at which you are studying. All existing sponsorship arrangements should be honoured as you will remain on a University of Wales course.

Will the University of Wales continue to offer bursaries?

The University is endowed with a number of scholarships and bursaries, with specific conditions attached to them. These will continue to be awarded. The current round of Validation bursaries will be honoured with the awards expected to be made in the coming months.

What will the ranking position of the transformed university be?

The University of Wales has never featured in any ranking system due to its Federal nature. The transformed University of Wales: Trinity Saint David will appear in the ranking systems but it will take time to establish its position.

Am I going to be able to visit the transformed University of Wales: Trinity Saint David?

The university will encompass a number of campuses and facilities and students will be welcome to visit all facilities.

Who can I contact for more information?

We are providing detailed information packs to academics throughout the University of Wales and we would anticipate within the next few weeks that most questions will be able to be answered within your own departments or colleges. In addition to this we will be establishing a student forum on our website in order to address any remaining concerns. In the meantime, please contact Kim Lloyd Elliott by email - k.lloydelliott@wales.ac.uk

Validation Bursary Award Winners Announced

Out of a pool of several hundred talented and high-achieving applicants, the University of Wales has selected a handful of exceptional individuals who will receive a Validation Bursary Award. Hailing from 11 different institutions across Europe, 21 students studying towards University of Wales degrees will receive awards ranging from £500 to £5000.

Congratulations to the following: Claire Jeffreys, Katie Victoria Gould, Jerome Pineau, Thea Wade, Alysia Pilar Forde, Marion Holmes (Coleg Llandrillo); Elizabeth Pinder-Ashenden (Spurgeon's College); Gledi Memelli, Ermal Vila and Plamen Dochev Panov (American College of Thessaloniki); Tenant Sibanda (UNESCO – IHE); Thorben Georg Witte and Ina Groger (Parexel); Sarah Taylor (Northern Guild); Josephine Korma and Sebastian-Klint Austin (RDI); William Charles Riding and Vashali Pathalk (Prince's School of Traditional Arts); Killan Strong (School of

Psychotherapy Regent's College); Junicar St John (Holborn College).

Annually the University of Wales makes available a number of Bursary awards to suitable candidates following validated degree schemes. The awards are intended to remit, in whole or in part, the tuition fees appropriate to the successful candidates' studies.

Professor Nigel Palastanga, Pro Vice-Chancellor at the University of Wales and Chair of the Validation Bursary Panel, commented: "These bursaries are designed to celebrate and reward excellence and also to offer financial support to students experiencing difficulties. The selection panel were delighted to have to consider so many applications, and were disappointed that financial constraints limited the total number of awards they could make."

*Tom Barrett
Communications Officer*

Forthcoming events November 2011

- 1 December The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education workshop: Learning from Complaints – current issues for the OIA, students and universities
Reading
<http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>
- 7 December The HEA Wales Seminar Series: Valuing Learners in the Workplace
University of Wales: Trinity Saint David, Carmarthen
<http://www.trinitysaintdavid.ac.uk/en/events/name,7848,en.html>
- 8 December AUA workshop: Innovation on a Shoestring: Looking at how to make quality improvements and deliver high-quality services amid tighter budget constraints
London
<http://www.aua.ac.uk/event-27-Innovation-on-a-Shoestring.html>
- 9 December AUA International Higher Education Seminar
London
- 14 December Inter-disciplinary Sustainability Education: Insights, Momentum and Futures
York
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/events/detail/2011/academyevents/14_December_ESD_InsightsMomentumFutures

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