



**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES
LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY 2013-2017**

**DELIVERING PROFESSIONAL, EMPLOYMENT-
FOCUSED HIGHER EDUCATION**

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KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The University of South Wales learning and teaching strategy is focussed on:

- delivering professional, employment-focused higher education which leads to high performing employable graduates irrespective of background and individual characteristics
- maximising equality and social justice through coherent pathways that provide opportunities for success to students from a wide variety of backgrounds including those from Communities First wards and those with protected characteristics
- providing excellence in learner experience through high quality innovative, flexible and inspirational approaches to inclusive learning, teaching, assessment and student support

INTRODUCTION

The vision of the institution states that “By 2017, the University of South Wales will be unrivalled for its professional, employment-focused education and research-informed innovation and business engagement”. The social and economic role of higher education - with a clear focus on preparing graduates for future professional employment in the region, nationally and internationally - is therefore central to the institutional mission.

This learning and teaching strategy addresses the approach the institution will take to fulfil learner potential in contributing to the social and economic requirements and the wider skills agenda within Wales and beyond. Achievement of the strategy is predicated on furthering collaboration between students, graduates, employers, employees and the communities which the institution serves.

Through its approach to learning and teaching the institution will engage in developing the social and cultural capital of prospective and current students. Through specialised provision at regional levels (including the Heads of the Valleys) students and graduates will not only be able to engage in social and cultural development but will also be willing to challenge existing societal norms to achieve sustainable development and global citizenship.

The strategy promotes effective learning, teaching and assessment methods in order to ensure that individuals from marginalised communities and groups of learners with protected characteristics are part of mainstream provision. The strategy therefore prioritises achievement, progression and completion for all the institution's learners. The core emphasis throughout is inclusive learning.

The learning and teaching strategy developed in the context of the institutional strategy will also address the Welsh Government (WG) agenda outlined in For our Future (2009), and the Funding Council's operationalisation of that plan in the HEFCW Corporate Strategy 2010-13 (2009). This will include the WG regionalisation agenda for collaboration within South East Wales and engagement with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.

This strategy will respond to UK developments in higher education alongside the European Higher Education Area through the Bologna agreement, the Dublin descriptors and subsequent ministerial statements. The strategy has also been informed by four key WG and funding council reviews led by Browne (2010), Jones (2008), Webb (2007), and Graham (2006). As well as the HEFCW guidance circulars on learning and teaching strategies. In setting its short and medium term targets the strategy has taken account of the institution's fee plan for 2012-2013..

The strategy is further informed by the institutional outcomes of the National Student Survey and the ongoing engagement of the institution with its

students and the Welsh Initiative for Student Engagement. The learning and teaching strategy also informs, and is informed by, other institutional strategies, plans and policies covering Human Resources, Information and Communications Technologies, Research, International Recruitment, Regional Collaboration, Estates and Single Equalities..

Following the outline of the Key Strategic Priorities for learning and teaching the document will outline the strategic enablers that will drive delivery. It will then outline the approaches that will be used to ensure effective monitoring and delivery before providing specific short and medium term targets enabling the achievement of the implementation of the strategy.

STRATEGIC ENABLERS

The strategic enablers which will lead to the achievement of the institutional key strategic priorities are:

1. Employability
2. Creative Curriculum design
3. Students as Partners
4. Partnership and Collaboration
5. Academic staff development and accreditation
6. Scholarship and Research to inform learning and teaching

The strategic enablers map against the key strategic priorities as follows:

Strategic Enabler	KSP1	KSP2	KSP3
Employability	X	X	X
Creative Curriculum design	X	X	X
Students as Partners		X	X
Partnership and Collaboration	X	X	X
Academic staff development and accreditation	X	X	X
Scholarship and Research to inform learning and teaching		X	X

The strategic enablers are explored in more detail below:

Employability

Learning for employment

For the duration of this learning and teaching strategy the institution will continue to ensure graduates are well prepared for employment, including self-employment. The institution sees this theme as making a clear contribution to the Welsh enhancement theme – ‘Graduates for our Future’ (Higher Education Academy, 2011) within the ‘Learning for Employment’ work-strand.

In response to the Unleashing Aspirations report (Milburn (2009) the institution has undertaken a critical, data-informed review of its academic portfolio. The review has focussed on the way the institution supports fair access to the professions, delivers higher level skills and addresses the regional and national employment priority sectors. The existing institutional approach to achieving an inclusive curriculum will be used to inform the links between the institution and the professional bodies to ensure access to the professions is available to all. The institution is proud of its long-standing relationship with, and accreditation by, numerous professional bodies.

Curriculum development in 2013-15 will lead to the launch of a new employment-focussed portfolio in 2014-15. The portfolio will take account of the needs of a bilingual workforce by increasing the availability of Welsh medium provision. To inform the curriculum development the institution is

updating its Curriculum Design Guide (Fitzgibbon, 2013) which incorporates the overarching role of preparing students for employability and the use of personal development planning to facilitate such preparation. The implementation of employability, skills, and personal development into the curriculum will be supported by targeted staff development seminars to enable all academics to engage with the principles of the Curriculum Design Guide in their own disciplinary context. The curriculum developments are being informed by the USW Graduate Attributes (Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee, 2010) which acknowledge the capabilities and skills that graduates will possess on completion of their studies. In collaboration with employers and students the institution is developing an institutional scheme, called 'Grad Edge' to provide recognition and accreditation for work-based experience. This will highlight the added-value elements of employment experience which characterises the institution's engagement with its students, including increased opportunities for such work-based engagement through the medium of Welsh. Such accreditation will also respect the diversity of opportunity provided in the voluntary sector and in the accreditation of volunteering and civic engagement.

The institution has developed virtual learning simulations that replicate real situations in work places (a number of these already exist in Health, Business, Aerospace and Law); the institution will develop further simulations in the existing disciplines and in Science and Creative Industries. The institution will also develop scenario planning/business games. These simulations will enable students to respond to scenarios in real time and be assessed on their

responses and decision making processes. The institution is committed to enhancing the assessment experience of its students through the use of such simulations to achieve authentic assessment. The development of skills-based learning, teaching and assessment which both addresses the needs of students from a wide variety of backgrounds and impacts on the employability of graduates will be informed by collaborative partnerships with employers, sector skills councils and professional bodies. The development of skills will be informed by active consultation with the student body acting as partners in the institution's curriculum development and quality assurance processes. The Centre for Enterprise (Packham, 2010) has been established to take forward entrepreneurship through research, education and collaboration, in doing so it evidences the links between the innovation and engagement agenda of the institution and its learning and teaching strategy.

The institution will develop a programme of UK and international field trips to industrial and academic partners which enable students to visit industry leading companies and experience the depth and breadth of the companies' current work. In collaboration with existing partners study exchange programmes will continue. International placement opportunities will be included as part of the Grad Edge programme to encourage students, especially those from widening participation backgrounds, to develop an engagement with and awareness of global capitalism.

To achieve the institution's ambitions in preparing learners for the workplace, existing good practice in skills development and learning for employment will

be shared through the academic staff seminars, faculty Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committees and the good practice case studies on the CELT website.

The institution will focus on flexible learning opportunities and extend these to include online courses; distance delivery; courses with significant technology delivered content; flexible modular courses and bite size learning opportunities. These approaches are being developed for a wide range of courses, but have particular relevance to the institution's significant contribution to regional employability and skills agendas through the Universities Heads of the Valleys Institute (UHOVI). These developments are also intended to address the needs of those who are not able to attend higher education in traditional modes of delivery. They will contribute to achieving the widening access agenda for groups that would not otherwise access higher education (including those with protected characteristics) and ensure easier access to learning for part time students.

Learning through Employment

The institution took a lead in Wales in developing and validating a framework for Learning through Employment (Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, 2010c). This enables students in employment, employers and academics to develop bespoke learning pathways for employees who are seeking to accredit their learning experience in the workplace against higher education learning outcomes. Through this means, students in employment

can achieve modular credit which, if they deem appropriate, can lead to a complete qualification without the need to attend the premises of the institution. The Learning through Employment framework enables the institution to contribute to the development of regional and national employment and skills agendas through direct relationships with employers and employees in learning contexts which are distinctive from the traditional higher education provision. This will enable engagement with groups that would not otherwise access higher education, including those with protected characteristics. It will ensure easier access to learning for part time learners who are full or part-time employees. The Learning through Employment framework is also an important element of the UHOVI provision addressing the skills needs of existing employers in the Heads of the Valleys region. The institution's leadership in this area is evidenced through it being asked to lead on the 'Learning in Employment' work strand as part of the 'Graduates for our Future' enhancement theme in the pan-Wales development.

During the period of this strategy the institution will significantly increase its collaboration with employers and employees to offer flexible, innovative approaches to learning and accreditation taking account of the varying social and economic needs of the communities it serves. The institution will make use of innovative approaches to the use of technology in learning, teaching and assessment, including mobile technology, to provide just-in-time, fit for purpose, learning provision which can be accredited through the Learning through Employment framework.

Skills and Personal Development Planning

The institution recognises that students are on a journey of development and that the skills they learn and practice during their studies are reflected in the attributes they achieve as graduates. Part of higher education's role is to make sure students learn key skills and that they are exposed to challenges that support their development as lifelong learners. The institution is committed to a definition of employability using Dacre Pool and Sewell's (2007) *Career EDGE*

Experience (work and life)

Degree (subject knowledge, skills and understanding)

Generic skills

Emootional intelligence

The Career EDGE definition is built into the Curriculum Design Guide to inform the staff and students involved in the discussions and development of the institution's new academic portfolio. This approach has also informed the development of 'Grad Edge'.

Digital literacy

Digital literacy is a key skill for all graduates in the second decade of the twenty-first century. In addition to the skills traditionally associated with employment and employability digital literacy will enable the institution's students, as learners and as graduates, to make the most effective use of the range of technologies available today. Successful engagement in society will involve the ability to manage diverse identities in diverse networks. Learners will be expected to be able to develop and produce creative contributions in a multitude of media. They will need to be able to find, evaluate and use information in all its forms, using a variety of traditional and emerging technologies. They will be encouraged to become critical thinkers and to develop as independent learners throughout their time at the institution. Unlike previous generations when technical competence, e.g. ICT training, was sufficient to enable students and graduates to make use of media in their field of knowledge, the emergence of digital technology means all disciplines are shaped and redefined by the use of technology. The institution is committed to developing digital literacy among its students through the successful engagement of Information Librarians and digital literacy specialists with curriculum developers. Library Services in consultation with the wider institution has recently developed an Information Literacy Approach (Learning Resources Centre, 2010) document which articulates the principles of information literacy, as one aspect of digital literacy, and how it can be embedded within the curriculum.

Addressing the cultural and social dimension of the Welsh economy

The contribution the institution, its staff and students, can make to the cultural and social dimension of Wales should not be underestimated. In making this contribution the institution will reflect bilingualism as a growing and unique factor in the cultural and social dimension of the Welsh economy. The creative industries already contribute to Welsh culture and the Welsh economy; the institution's courses in this area will continue to provide industry relevant skills that can make a significant contribution to Wales.

Sustainability and Global Citizenship

Curriculum reviews will explore the ways that all the institution's courses address the issues of sustainability in learning, teaching and assessment, in order that all the institution's graduates are able to contribute to the major developments in climate change and more effective use of the world's limited resources. The role of graduates as citizens of Wales and the world means that the institution's courses will ensure that graduates are not just fit for employment but also fit to be members of a global society. The Curriculum Design Guide encourages those developing new curriculum to be explicit about addressing these key issues in programme development.

Creative Curriculum design

At the heart of effective curriculum design is the need to prioritise student learning, achievement and retention. During the period of this learning and teaching strategy the institutional curriculum will be redeveloped and redesigned to enable the highest possible achievement for the widest range of potential learners. It will make use of flexible learning opportunities and secure clear articulation and progression pathways into higher education and from higher education into graduate employment including the professions. The institution will continue to develop and enhance its Welsh medium provision by providing more learning, teaching and assessment opportunities for students through the medium of Welsh and new disciplines in which Welsh medium learning is possible.

Curriculum Design Guide

The institution launched its Curriculum Design Guide in 2011-12. Underpinning the Curriculum Design Guide is a continuing focus on curriculum design and development which addresses the whole skills agenda, not only the knowledge agenda.

The Guide sets out six principles to use when reviewing or designing curriculum to ensure that a well designed curriculum is:

1. viable and sustainable
2. holistic and coherent

3. encourages a breadth and depth of learning that is student centred, fostering progression and independence
4. inclusive / accessible / student centred
5. linked to research and scholarship
6. based on feedback, evaluation and review.

Staff development seminars are planned to engage Faculty staff with the Curriculum Design Guide. In addition support will be provided to individual staff who are using the Curriculum Design Guide in practice. The Guide will be evaluated following the first year of implementation and revised if necessary. The Guide brings together a number of hitherto separate aspects of learning, teaching and assessment. In particular it reinforces the institution's goals of ensuring students who complete their programmes of study have employability skills, mainstreaming inclusive practice and addressing the needs of students with protected characteristics. The institution has identified that it has a concentration of protected characteristics in groups of students with special educational needs, disability, mental health issues, mature students, students from black minority ethnic backgrounds and international students. In this way the institution is promoting flexible and responsive inclusivity which achieves mainstreaming through anticipatory design but also allows for reasonable adjustment. The Guide specifically addresses issues of internationalisation by ensuring that the distinctive cultural heritage of international students is seen as an enabler, not a barrier, to learning and teaching at the institution. The institution's approach is informed by the 'Supporting International Students in their Learning' report (2010) produced

for the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee which looks at learning, teaching and assessment issues in relation to international students and provides recommendations on the implementation of good practice in support of international students.

The institution also recognises the need to ensure data capture about performance of the groups with protected characteristics so that outcomes of inclusivity can be measured. During the period of this strategy the institution will make use of such data to inform its learning and teaching approaches. The outcome of the institution's Meaningful Student Engagement Project, in collaboration with the Higher Education Academy, will enable the institution to secure a balanced voice from all student groups, including those with protected characteristics.

Emotional Intelligence and skills in the curriculum

The institution will embed emotional intelligence and its associated skills into all areas of the curriculum. Emotional intelligence is a competence which contributes to personal and organisational enhancement. It provides approaches to understand and re-orientate an individual's behaviours, attitudes and interpersonal skills. These skills are especially relevant for learners who have not previously engaged with higher education and the work-place and as such addresses those from widening access and international backgrounds. The delivery of skills will not be added on to existing provision but embedded within the disciplinary context, making the

skills directly applicable in the learners' context. This approach will address and deliver the whole skills agenda (including emotional intelligence skills) in the context of specific disciplinary needs beginning in the design of curriculum and culminating in the achievement of the USW Graduate Attributes. In this way curriculum continuity is achieved.

Problem-based learning

To achieve employable professional graduates the institution will adopt a problem based learning approach to its curriculum design thus the whole curriculum will be developed around applied problems in industry or society. The problem based learning approach (sometimes known as enquiry based learning or research-informed learning) enables students to develop knowledge of their subject but more importantly to develop approaches to addressing issues within their disciplines which provide skills for life, not just for their learning encounters.

The institution recognises that effective higher education has moved beyond pedagogy, an adult-child learning and teaching relationship, and andragogy, an adult-adult learning relationship, to heutagogy, a student centric approach to learning which recognises the student as the key locus of learning development, and as co-creators, with academics, of learning. The institution's new curriculum will be based on heutagogic learning approaches to ensure learning which is not only to achieve assessment outcomes, but

which enables graduates to function effectively in employment and future learning opportunities.

Building learners' own experiences into learning and using project-based and simulation-enabled approaches to learning and assessment will ensure the continued relevance of the institution's courses to the learners' future employment. The continued value of face to face engagement between learners and academics means that the primary mode of delivery at the institution will continue to take that form, though, as highlighted below, technology will aid and enhance the learning experience. The institution has radically reformed its assessment regime in recent years and will continue to ensure that assessment is reflective, assesses both skills and knowledge, is based upon activities that reflect real world tasks and contributes to learning.

In response to student feedback on assessment the institution will make full use of its online assessment diary system to avoid bunching of assessment and to ensure that assessment is coherent at programme level, as well as at module level. When appropriate, assessment strategies will be designed which encompass a holistic assessment over a number of modules to better simulate real world scenarios.

In response to student opinion on assessment feedback we will continue to recommend the use of online assessment feedback methods including online tests with immediate responses, peer marking and online marking. Successful pilots of both peermarking and online marking have lead to early adoption of

these systems; we will continue to promote their use to help improve the student experience of feedback. Further use of early assessment with rapid feedback will be encouraged at level 4 to enable students to overcome the fear of assessment in higher education.

Referencing and Plagiarism

The institution has developed an academic integrity policy which focuses on high quality referencing and encourages students to avoid plagiarism by good referencing practice, rather than concentrating on plagiarism detection. The University of South Wales Guide to Harvard Referencing (Education Drop in Centre, 2013) has been produced and is available online, and in hard copy at the institutional libraries, Education Drop in Centres and student advice centres. A series of staff development sessions are planned to promote the use of the institutional reference guide.

TEL and learning environment enhancement

The institution has an excellent track record of innovation and successful large scale implementation of technology enhanced learning. During the period of this strategy it will build on this experience through the increased use of technologies already available for learning, teaching and assessment and through new innovations in the use of technology for learning, teaching and assessment.

The development of mobile technology will further enhance the accessibility of the institution's learning materials for its learners. The use of mobile delivery of learning will enable the development of flexible learning opportunities. The development of solutions and applications for smart phones will also increase the students' engagement with the institution on and off campus. The use of mobile technology will address the issues associated with the 'digital divide' as mobile access is much more ubiquitous than broadband access. The institution has already piloted the use of iPads to deliver paperless teaching, by providing content on electronic devices. During the time of this strategy it will expand the use of such devices to reduce the carbon footprint of the institutions' current paper-based materials. The institution will also increase the number of e-books it makes available to students, e-books will be accessible through a wide variety of digital formats.

Comprehensive coverage of module reading lists will be facilitated by our new investment in leading edge resource list management software. This will provide an attractive and accessible interface, personalisation features, the encouragement of student engagement through critical reviews and recommendations, simplified ways of building and updating resources, and full integration with the learning environment and library acquisition processes.

The institutions' learning system, continues to be enhanced with new features being deployed each year. The institution continues to uphold its excellent reputation as a technologically-enabled provider of learning, teaching and

assessment. It will continue to work with other HEIs across the UK and beyond, to model best practice for the higher education community.

The institution makes effective use of online reading lists, to provide students with access to resources (including links to e-journal articles, e-books, digitised chapters from textbooks or journal articles and websites) at anytime and anywhere. The institution will resource the completion of the online reading list project to ensure all modules have online reading lists, building on the 1,300 that already do.

The institution has been committed to the development and sharing of open educational resources. It has used iTunesU to make learning, and other materials, available to a world-wide audience and will continue to make its high quality learning and research content available to the wider community in Wales and beyond. Within Wales the institution will continue to increase its use of Y Porth in developing and delivering Welsh medium learning resources.

The use of social networking and the development of personalised learning environments was a key part of the previous learning, teaching and assessment strategy. The institution will continue to make full use of such technologies to enable learning, individually and collaboratively, across its courses. The examples of good practice in this area are being actively promoted through CELT seminars and the CELT website to all staff.

The use of online assessment has continued to grow and the institution is committed to the development of technologies to enable such assessment, including time constrained assessment, to be undertaken anywhere in the world.

Classroom enhancement and social learning spaces

With an increased focus on individual technology and mobile devices there can be concerns about learners being isolated and alone. Widening access populations may not have the financial, social or cultural capital for travelling to and engaging fully in campus life. It is therefore crucial for the institution to emphasise to learners the value of its campuses and the campus learning experience. The institution is committed to updating its learning environments to provide use of the latest technological developments including lecture capture technology and the provision of furniture fit for innovative learning, teaching and assessment. Technology-rich space designs provide a synergy between, exciting, flexible, inclusive learning processes and the physical/social context in which they take place.

The successful development of both social and flexible learning spaces on its campuses has led the institution to develop a road-map for future development in social and flexible learning. It is based on a 'hub and spoke model' with the hub being based in the Library emphasising the 'learning' aspects and the spokes emphasising the 'social' aspects including the

development of small areas in the foyers of buildings with soft seats and wireless provision to support student engagement with their faculty/college.

Applied research to inform teaching

Linking research and scholarship to curriculum design has significant benefits for both student recruitment and the student experience. A study by Short et al. (2010) highlighted students' perceptions of learning from staff research and indicated that students regarded lecturers as more enthusiastic and credible in these circumstances. Also students felt that this was a good way to increase their understanding of the subject, increased their interest and enthusiasm and helped them to understand issues around methodology. The Curriculum Design Guide reinforces the importance of linking research and teaching in explicit terms. For some courses students may well benefit from those with expertise in consultancy or other applied fields. A student who is coming to terms with the difficulties of taking classroom learning into a practical placement may well find that a module (or even a single seminar) based on a member of staff's own applied experience can ignite some understanding. Hearing about the pitfalls as well as the successes may make them feel that they are not alone in coming to terms with translating theory into practice. Therefore course teams may also wish to consider how applied expertise can be used to inform and enhance course design and delivery. A further example of the activities of the institution in seeking to reinforce the linkages between expertise, research and teaching is the Excellence in Learning and Teaching Awards for Research-informed Teaching.

Students as Partners

The institution is rightly proud of the great strides it has made in engaging with its students in a wide range of ways. It has had course representatives for well over a decade and the development of Student Voice Representatives – SVRs - has radically enhanced the ability of students to contribute to and influence the decisions the institution makes in a wide range of areas including learning and teaching provision. The institution is seen within Wales and the UK as a leader in this field. It will build on the work it has begun and enhance further the student partnership with the institution.

The institution is confident of its achievements in informing, consulting, involving and allowing its students to participate in its activities. The institution also has excellent examples of high-level partnership working with students, including for example the role of SVRs and the Students' Union (SU) on the Learning and Teaching Enhancement committee influencing the policy and practice of the institution's learning, teaching and assessment. The institution has also developed projects where the students have taken the lead, for example, the student data collection phase of the Change Academy Assessment (N. Jones, 2009) project which was led by the then SU Education officer. Following this the institution will develop further and will be looking to broaden the number of learning and teaching contexts in which student engagement occurs, including course design and development, and

increasing the opportunities for students to engage in institutional activity designed to enhance the student experience.

In moving this agenda forward the institution will use its students as the locus of control for the evaluation of its current practices of student engagement and identification of the next steps. Therefore it is planned that the evaluation be undertaken by the Students Unions (South Wales and Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama) within the group.

During the period of this strategy the institution will ensure that its students play a full part in the course development, design, validation and review cycle. The institution has piloted this in the last two years and now will move to full partnership in course development and design.

The institution will be reviewing its existing student charter to enhance the management of students' expectations of staff and staff expectations of students. The institution believes it is essential to ensure that responsibilities and expectations are two way processes between the institution and its students and therefore believes that the institution and its students will work as partners for the benefit of all, not as part of a supplier customer relationship.

The institution will ensure that its engagement with students is inclusive and draws on students from a wide variety of backgrounds including students with protected characteristics.

The institution will ensure that the UHOVI student experience is distinct in its delivery and offers the experience for student advocacy and partnership which characterises the existing student experience at the institution.

The institution will ensure that it collaborates with its students in the production of the Key Information Set. This will provide information to inform prospective students from diverse backgrounds about their HE choices and destinations, including costs of study. Learning and teaching priorities will be identified within the Key Information Set.

Partnership and Collaboration

The institution defines *collaborative partnership* as any arrangement in which the University makes an award or gives credit towards an award on the basis of education provided by, with or at another organisation in the UK or Overseas. Collaboration involves the sharing of resources between partners in order to engage in activity which secures mutually agreed learning and teaching objectives. Partnership and collaboration becomes a central theme within its strategy based on the recognition that *For Our Future* (2009) presents ambitious and challenging social justice and regeneration targets that can best be achieved by pooling expertise and resources through working together.

The institution will use partnerships and collaboration as a key feature of its learning and teaching. It will use partnerships to facilitate progression to higher education through clearly defined learning pathways developed in collaboration with FE, schools, private training providers and employers. Through its Education Drop in Centres, the institution will provide enhanced support mechanisms for learners from a wide variety of backgrounds, including those with protected characteristics.

The employability of graduates, at the heart of the institution's mission, will drive increased employer engagement and partnership opportunities. This will deliver an increase in student placements, internships and work experience opportunities. These developments will be informed by the Sector Skills Councils and employer fora in the relevant disciplines. The on-going engagement with professional bodies and associations at subject level will also inform further engagement between the institution, students and the workplace.

The institution will establish a Collaborative Partnerships Unit which will provide a single point of engagement between the institution and its various partners to support learning and teaching. Key developments include the focusing of HE in FE collaborative activity on South East Wales (Merthyr Tydfil College, Cardiff and Vale College, Bridgend College, Coleg Morganwng, and Coleg Gwent) and the associated withdrawal from the West Wales region and the achievement of a sustainable UHOVI operation.

Partner college operations and planning will be assisted by membership of the *Colegau Cymru* HE in FE Forum. National pedagogy and access developments will also be taken forward through the institution's involvement with the HEFCW *Student Experience Teaching and Quality Committee*, the PVC (Learning and Teaching) network and the Higher Education Academy Welsh Institutional Group..

Shared staff development programmes for lecturers across the South East Wales region will be developed through partnerships between CELT and equivalent educational development units at Cardiff. Cardiff Met and Further Education colleges.

UHOVI will deliver distinctive, full and part time learning opportunities for people who live and/or work in the Heads of the Valley through partnerships with FE and other educational providers. UHOVI will develop learning and teaching applications in tandem with the Heads of the Valleys Education Programme Board in order to ensure continuity with learning networks and adult community partnerships within the Merthyr, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Caerphilly, and RCT counties.

Staff development and accreditation

The institution continues to offer a wide range of staff development for academics and professional staff in the areas of learning, teaching and assessment. It works through the development of events to ensure that staff integrate developments in learning, teaching and assessment, approaches to widening access, equality and diversity and inclusivity in all that they do. Such staff development also informs the creation and enhancement of institutional policies in this area.

The institution will extend the practice of partnering with students in the delivery of staff development relevant to their experience. The student voice has proved a powerful influence in the assessment and technology enhanced learning agenda and the staff development team will continue to ensure students' voices are key contributors to the enhancement of staff.

This strategy will lead to a series of staff development sessions focussing on the strategic priorities and the enablers which will achieve them. The staff development programme will continue to respond to the emerging themes in learning, teaching and assessment. Discipline specific staff development at faculty/college/departmental/divisional level continues to ensure that generic themes are made explicit at discipline level for immediate application by staff. This approach will, for example, be central to the staff development to support the implementation of the curriculum design guide.

Staff development to enhance the quality of Welsh linguistic skills among the institution's staff will be in place to enable an increase in the number of staff able to teach and support learners through the medium of Welsh.

Learning and teaching is underpinned through induction and continuing professional development of academic staff as well as front-line colleagues within corporate departments. Staff development will include updates on equalities policy and practice. This will provide context and perspectives on specific widening access challenges and developments within local valleys communities. Such staff development will include part-time (hourly paid) employees both within UHOVI and other delivery.

The institution will build on its existing support for staff in industrial and professional work placements which inform their learning, teaching and assessment by ensuring all staff have regular opportunities to refresh their scholarship in line with the principles of the University of South Wales Academic. The institution will continue to support and further encourage the use of applied research in informing course developments and learning and teaching encounters.

The institution has seen a threefold increase in those staff accredited against the Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education (UKPSF) since being approved as a centre for accreditation of continuing professional development by the Higher Education Academy. The institution will continue to promote Fellowship and Associate

Fellowship of the Academy for those staff who have not yet engaged. The institution is also able to recognise staff as Senior Fellows and Principal Fellows of the Academy. Recognition at this level will be encouraged among experienced staff during the period of this strategy.

The institution continues to require all academic staff new to higher education to complete its Postgraduate Certificate in Developing Professional Practice in Higher Education or its Postgraduate Certificate in Education (for Health and Social Care Professionals) these awards also lead to recognition against the UKPSF. Both awards offer 20 credits of learning within the courses for non-academic staff wishing to extend understanding of their role in supporting learning.

The institution celebrates its staff achievement through the conferment of Excellence in Learning and Teaching awards. It will review and refine these rewards and continue to celebrate the importance of developments in learning and teaching at faculty/college and institutional level. The institution warmly welcomes HEFCW's engagement with the National Teaching Fellowship scheme and will actively support potential applicants from the institution in applying for NTFS.

Scholarship and research to inform policy and practice

While the development of the University of South Wales Academic and the successful launch of the Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education has helped the institution develop its scholarship and research in learning, teaching and assessment to supplement its existing profile in discipline specific research, the institution recognises that it has further to go in developing this area.

If an evidence base is to develop to support policy and practice enhancements in learning, teaching, assessment, student experience, inclusivity and equality, it needs to be rooted in the institutional practice of applied research. Such scholarship and research will contribute to the wider higher education community but will also inform future institutional development.

The institution will promote scholarship in partner further education colleges through the creation of a scholarship forum. This will support the achievement of recognised teacher status for tutors delivering HE in FE.

Elements of the scholarship and research that will be undertaken at the institution will be achieved through the normal academic approach; however, it is also crucial for the institution to make best use of the data it currently has for making decisions and enhancing the student experience. The significant increase in the availability of management information which the Planning and

Reporting Unit has achieved in recent years will now enhance the ability of the institution at every level to make well informed judgements on future developments. However further refinements of the data will be needed to address some of the specific requirements for data on equality, students with protected characteristics and students from marginalised backgrounds. The institution will support non-academic staff in their ability to collect, analyse and make effective decisions based on this data.

THE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The strategy has been informed by an evidence-based approach drawing on the achievement of targets from the previous Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategies. The evidence base has been constructed from specific project evaluations (e.g. Inclusive Curriculum, Assessment Change Academy, Gwella,) and from data emerging in reports and feedback from faculties and corporate departments. Throughout the period of the strategy the data has been used to inform the HEFCW Annual Monitoring Statement and institutional annual reports to the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee, Equalities and Diversity Steering Group and Academic Board. The use of evidence to measure achievement of this strategy is set out in the 'Delivering the Strategy' section below.

This strategy initially emerged from discussion sessions in each of the faculty/college Learning, Teaching and Student Experience committees, which include staff and student representation. This was complemented by discussions with corporate departments supporting students, the Partnership Forum and the Equalities and Diversity Steering Group. The outcome of these discussions led to the development of an outline proposal which was presented and agreed at Executive and Deans, Corporate Heads, and the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee. The outline led to a first draft which was evaluated by the Heads of Learning and Teaching and two Critical Friends, appointed by the Higher Education Academy. Following this

review the strategy was presented to the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee who approved it in principle. This substantive draft was then circulated for final consultation to student voice representatives, the Students' Unions, faculty staff via the Heads of Learning and Teaching and to all corporate departments via the Corporate Heads.

The consultation processes enabled enhancements to take place. The strategy was positively received throughout the institution including the Students' Union who said that: "...the document is easy to follow, flows nicely and makes use of appropriate language. The content itself is very student focused and it seems that all avenues have been covered in relation to the student experience and how this can be maintained and improved, especially in light of the difficult times ahead ... Thank you and well done for providing such a detailed and focused strategy" SU Vice-President Student Support.

Feedback from all sources led to the current version of the strategy which has been approved by Academic Board.

DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

Responsibility for the delivery of the strategy is vested in the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). The strategy is operationalised and reappraised by CELT reporting through the institution's Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee (LTEC) chaired by the DVC (Academic) reporting to Academic Board. LTEC is made up of the Director of CELT, the Executive Director of Student Services, Student Voice Representatives from each of the faculties and the Students' Union Vice-Presidents. It includes representatives from each of the four faculties and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Representatives of other corporate departments, the Welsh Medium Committee and Partnership Forum are also members.

Faculties, the College and corporate departments maintain their own learning and teaching operational plans, which link to the institutional strategy but account for discipline or support specific matters. Each faculty/college has a Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee which is responsible for faculty-based implementation, these committees report to Academic Board via the University Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee. Each of the faculty/college committees has a CELT representative to ensure communication flows between faculty and institutional levels. Student Voice Representatives are represented on the Learning and Teaching Enhancement committees.

The institution uses the Annual Monitoring Statement for Learning and Teaching to report to the funding council on the achievement of targets. CELT is responsible for drafting the annual monitoring statement. The annual monitoring statement is approved by LTEC and the institution's Executive before submission to the funding council.

To ensure the implementation of the strategy is compliant with the institution's equalities plans it is reviewed via the Equalities and Diversity Steering Group prior to approval by LTEC. The Partnership Forum also receives the strategy to ensure the full participation of our partner college network in delivering the strategy.

TARGETS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Short-term outcomes for Learning and Teaching

Category	Activity	2013/14 measurable (qualitative and quantitative) outcome
Employability	Learning for Employment	15 Targeted staff development seminars for the principles of the Curriculum Design Guide to be delivered at Departmental/School level in the faculties and RWCMD to reach all academic staff
		Approve new academic quality standards, assurance and enhancement framework
		Pilot the Grad Edge process - Initial pilot with 10 students and roll out to at least 100 students
		Deliver the Grad Edge, to at least 20 students, through the medium of Welsh
		Develop a flexible learning policy
		Build Skills for learning and skills for life into the curriculum - Pilot the emotional intelligence approach in three courses
		Pilot the delivery of sustainability and climate change agenda across further courses by using the outcomes of the CCI sustainability and climate change pilot project to inform development in the other 3 faculties/RWCMD
	Learning through Employment	Use the Learning through Employment Change Academy project to facilitate four new LTE pathways in the two participating faculties (HeSaS and CCI)
		Translate the Learning through Employment Framework into the medium of Welsh
	Digital literacy among students and staff	Provide 3 seminars targeted at academic staff to promote awareness of digital literacy.
		Information Librarians to explore with each faculty how information literacy will be embedded within the curriculum

Creative Curriculum Design	Curriculum Design Guide	15 Curriculum Design Guide seminars to be delivered at Departmental/School level in the faculties and RWCMD to reach all academic staff
		3 seminars targeted at professional staff who contribute to curriculum design and development
		A CELT/SU seminar to provide student representatives on curriculum design groups with insight into the Curriculum Design Guide
		Deliver six inclusive curriculum seminars, including international students' learning and teaching
		Promote the increased use of inclusive enabling technology through staff and student seminars
		Pilot the emotional intelligence approach in three courses
Technology Enhanced Learning	Technology Enhanced Learning	Develop five additional simulations and three scenario tools
		Provide a student placement opportunity to research the changing use of Technology Enhanced Learning among the institution's learners including the students from part-time, international and protected characteristic groups
		Develop mobile functionality (five applications) to increase the students' engagement with the institution on and off campus, including part-time student access
		Develop 5 applications which will support the part-time learner experience
		Continue to build the Wales CAMELs (Collaborative Approaches to the Management of E-Learning) to deliver cross-institutional enhancement
		Procure a software licence for a mobile version of Blackboard
		Use the evidence of the current iPad pilot to inform the development of a policy for the use of paperless teaching
		Support Welsh Medium developments in line with national development plans by delivering materials for Y Porth in Business, Music, Scriptwriting and Drama
		Ensure seven institutional courses make use of Y Porth material
		Pilot the use of e-book readers and/or similar devices amongst a small group of

		students
		Increase the number of artefacts available on iTunesU by 10%
		Build on the lecture pilot to provide lecture capture facilities on all three campuses
		Increase the number of modules using online reading lists to 1600
	Harvard Referencing	The University of South Wales Guide to Harvard Referencing to become the regulatory norm for all subjects where Harvard referencing is used
Students as Partners	Student engagement	In collaboration with the Students' Unions complete the review of the student charter and approve the revised charter
		Work with the Students Unions to research the level and effectiveness of student engagement to inform next stage developments by completing the Students as Partners project being undertaken by the Vice-President (Student Support) of the University of South Wales Students' Union and the President of the RWCMD Students' Union
		Evaluate the effectiveness of the individual student completion prompt on those completing the online module evaluation - Target 75% engagement of students with online module evaluation
		Pilot the new model of student engagement with course design, development and approval in one course area per faculty/college
		Deliver the requirements of the Key Information Set in an accessible and student friendly format
		Students with protected characteristics
	Students with protected characteristics	Establish a disabled students forum
		Provide training for Student Voice Representatives in equality and representation of students with protected characteristics
		Ensure student representation on the institutional Disability and Dyslexia Committee
		Ensure Student Voice Representatives and Course Representatives reflect the mix of student backgrounds at the institution
		Establish a comprehensive reporting strategy on the participation, progression and achievement of disabled students across faculties, modes and levels of study

	Universities Heads of the Valleys Institute Students	Pilot the new UHOVI student advocacy approach
Staff Development and Accreditation	Staff Development	Continue to provide the successful CELT seminar series (at least 30 events)
		Support faculties, RWCMD, UHOVI and partner colleges in developing specific staff development programmes for their disciplines as requested
		Provide CELT seminars in response to faculty and individual requests, as well as those which emerge from RAP
		Increase staff participation in Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol seminars
		Provide Welsh linguistic skills training for staff to enable them to teach through the medium of Welsh
		Provide staff development to address the specific needs of staff delivering on UHOVI courses through a programme of staff development for UHOVI staff in collaboration with the CELT and the UHOVI core team
		Seek opportunities to provide regional staff development in South East Wales by planning and delivering a collaborative staff development programme with Cardiff Metropolitan and Cardiff Universities
	Accreditation against the UKPSF	Continue to encourage staff to become fellows of the HEA. Increasing from the current number of staff 105 to 155 fellows
		Continue to encourage staff to become associates of the Academy. Increasing from the current number of staff 4 to 10 associates
		Ensure that all staff new to higher education complete the accredited PgCLT and PgCEd
Innovation in learning, teaching and assessment	Provide the opportunity for small scale Learning, teaching and assessment innovation by supporting 10 innovation grant projects	
Scholarship and research to	Provide support for staff who wish to engage in the	Offer one to one support for new researchers in learning, teaching and assessment as requested

inform policy and practice	scholarship and research in learning, teaching and assessment	Offer at least two 'Producing your First Paper' seminars to institutional and partner college staff
	Support staff in making use of the course digest and scorecard tools to inform the development of their courses	Provide staff development sessions (at least 3) to support analysis and interpretation of the course digest and scorecard data
	Increase NSS satisfaction outcomes	Move overall satisfaction score from 78% to at least 80%

Medium-term outcomes for Learning and Teaching

Category	Activity	2014/15 to 2016/17 measurable (qualitative and quantitative) outcome
Employability	Learning for Employment	Ensure employability of students is a central theme in all courses
		Monitor the completion rates of students completing the Grad Edge processes
		Deliver, to at least 40 students per year, the Grad Edge through the medium of Welsh
		Ensure flexible learning opportunities are available across curriculum areas
		Provide staff development and support to enable the emotional intelligence approach to be a norm in all curriculum areas
		Ensure all faculties/college have embedded sustainability and climate change in their curriculum areas
	Learning through Employment	Deliver the outcomes of the Learning through Employment Change Academy project to four new LTE pathways in the remaining faculties/RWCMD
Digital literacy among students and staff	Mainstream digital literacy provision for students and staff	
	Assess the digital literacy of staff and students and, in response, provide support and enhancement.	
Creative Curriculum Design	Curriculum Design Guide	Evaluate, revise and update the Curriculum Design Guide
		Monitor the impact of the Curriculum Design Guide through reports of course validation and review events
		Undertake a comprehensive research exercise into inclusive learning approaches in face to face and online environments
		Provide staff development and support to enable the emotional intelligence approach to be a norm in all curriculum areas
		Provide guides to referencing to six subject areas with approved derogations from Harvard referencing
	Technology Enhanced	Provide simulations and scenario tools in all curriculum areas

	Learning	Continue to build the Wales CAMELs (Collaborative Approaches to the Management of E-Learning) to deliver cross-institutional enhancement
		Implement outcomes of the research undertaken in 2011-2012 to further enhance the student experience of technology enhanced learning
		Undertake a comprehensive research exercise into the learning opportunities provided by mobile delivery to enable flexible learning
		Implement the institutional policy on paperless learning and teaching
		Double the number of available e-books (currently c. 40k) and provide 90% of journal subscriptions in e-only format
		Online reading lists available in all modules
		Continue to support the development of Y Porth in line with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol strategic plan
		Increase the number of artefacts available on iTunesU by a further 50% over the period of the strategy
		Provide lecture capture facilities in all lecture rooms
Students as Partners	Student engagement	Evaluate the impact of the revised student charter
		Implement the recommendations of the 'Students as Partners' research
		Opportunities for student engagement with course design, development and approval in all curriculum areas
		Evaluate the Key Information Set and enhance the provision of information to students in the light of student feedback
	Students with protected characteristics	Review the impact of the approaches to engagement for students with disabilities and students with other protected characteristics with the institution and its student representation processes
		Evaluate the effectiveness of the reporting strategy on the participation, progression and achievement of disabled students across faculties, modes and levels of study
	Universities Heads of the Valleys Institute Students	Put into practice the UHOVI student advocacy approach in line with the recommendations emerging from the pilot

Staff Development and Accreditation	Staff Development	Evaluate and enhance the CELT seminar series
		Continue to support faculties, RWCMD, UHOVI and partner colleges in developing specific staff development programmes for their disciplines as requested
		Provide CELT seminars in response to faculty and individual requests, as well as those which emerge from RAP
		Embed the programme of staff development for UHOVI staff in collaboration with the UHOVI core team
		Avoid duplication of provision for staff development across HEIs in South East Wales by establishing a regional staff development programme in South East Wales
	Accreditation against the UKPSF	Continue to encourage staff to become fellows of the HEA. Increasing from 155 fellows to 250
		Continue to encourage staff to become associates of the HEA. Increasing from the current number of staff 10 to 50 associates
		Completion rates of the courses to include all eligible staff
	Innovation in learning, teaching and assessment	Provide the opportunity for small scale innovation in learning, teaching and assessment by supporting 10 innovation grant projects annually
Scholarship and research to inform policy and practice	Enhance the course digest and scorecard tools to better inform course development	Ensure academic, managerial and professional staff have input into the identification and delivery of enhanced data provision in line with the emerging outcomes of the JISC Business Intelligence Programme
	Increase NSS satisfaction outcomes	Increase overall satisfaction to be 2% above the Welsh Average

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The equalities impact assessment of this strategy has been reviewed via the institution's equalities impact assessment procedures and process. In accordance with these procedures, the outcome of the assessment process will be reported to the institution's Equality and Diversity Steering Committee.

The strategy has impact on all the equality groups with protected characteristics who study at the institution and its partners. The strategy clearly articulates how future developments will enhance and develop the support in learning and teaching for those with protected characteristics. As such the assessment indicates a positive outcome on the equality groups from the implementation of this strategy. Consultation on the strategy has taken place across the institution with both staff and students, including those with protected characteristics, and no negative direct or indirect impact on the equalities groups has been identified.

The institution has taken an inclusive approach to the delivery of learning, and teaching. The strategy maintains the value of that approach in supporting equality groups through designing out inequality which enhances the experience of all learners and staff. The implementation of the strategy will be reviewed annually by the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee and any equalities impact reported through the Equality and Diversity Steering Committee.