



Quality Enhancement Review of Cardiff University

Outcome Report

March 2020

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This report is published in both English and Welsh.

About the Quality Enhancement Review method

The QAA website explains the method for [Quality Enhancement Review \(QER\)](#) and has links to the QER handbook and other informative documents.¹ You can also find more information about the [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education \(QAA\)](#).²

About this review

This is the Outcome Report of the QER conducted by QAA at Cardiff University. The review took place as follows: First Team Visit on 4 February 2020 and Review Visit on 2-5 March 2020. The review was conducted by a team of five reviewers:

- Professor John Baldock
- Mrs Claire Blanchard
- Ms Hayley Burns
- Dr Neil Lucas
- Mrs Sala Khulumula (student reviewer).

QAA reviews are evidence-based processes. Review judgements result from the documents review teams see, the meetings they hold, and drawing upon their experience as peer reviewers and student reviewers.

In this report, and based on the information presented, the QER team makes judgements on:

- the requirements of the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) Part 1 for internal quality assurance
- the relevant baseline regulatory requirements of the Quality Assessment Framework for Wales.

It is possible for the overarching judgement to be expressed in three levels which indicate whether the provider 'meets these requirements', 'meets them with conditions', or 'does not meet requirements'. More detail on these categories is provided in the QER Handbook.

The overarching judgement for this report can be found on page 3, followed by any commendations, affirmations and recommendations.

A more detailed [Technical Report](#) is also available for this review.³ The Technical Report sets out the team's findings under each heading in the QER method.

¹ About QER: www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/types-of-review/quality-enhancement-review

² About QAA: www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us

³ Technical Report: www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/quality-assurance-reports/Cardiff-University

About Cardiff University

The University was established in 1883 and was one of the founding institutions of the University of Wales in 1893. With the merger of the University of Wales, Cardiff and the University of Wales, College of Medicine in 2004, a Supplemental Charter granted university status and the title of 'Cardiff University'. This formally established the University as a university in its own right, fully independent of the University of Wales.

The University's vision is to be a world-leading, research-excellent, educationally outstanding university, driven by creativity and curiosity, which fulfils its social, cultural and economic obligations to Cardiff, Wales, the UK and the world. The University has set out its strategic direction in its strategy document - *The Way Forward 2018-2023* - focusing on five areas each with a sub-strategy: education and students, research, innovation, international, and civic mission.

The University has 24 schools organised into three colleges. The University offers a wide range of academic subjects extending across the humanities; natural, physical, health, life and social sciences; and engineering and technology. A large number of programmes are accredited by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.

In 2018-19, 33,190 students were enrolled at the University, comprising 23,961 undergraduates and 9,229 postgraduates (7,348 postgraduate taught, 1,881 postgraduate research). Between 2014-15 and 2017-18, student numbers grew by almost 5%.

The University has a total of 10 collaborative provision partnerships. Eight of the partnership agreements are for taught provision (five with UK partners and three with international partners) while the other two agreements relate to research degrees with international strategic partners. The University has made decisions to discontinue four taught collaborative provision partnerships and these programmes are currently in teach-out.

In the previous QAA review in 2014, there were three recommendations and one affirmation. The first recommendation concerned plans in one programme to use modules at Level 5, 6 and 7 in years of study that normally correspond to academic Level 4, 5 and 6. This was monitored through the annual review process and no unintended consequences were found. The second recommendation concerned errors that had occurred in the production of final-year results for medical students. The University monitored the introduction of a new system for recording and reporting results which ensured errors did not recur. The third recommendation required the comprehensive implementation of the Assessment Matters Framework across all provision from the commencement of the academic year 2015-16. The Assessment Matters Framework, which involved the introduction of a limited number of consistent methods for the classification of degrees, was successfully implemented across all programmes.

The University asked the review to consider four areas of focus: placements and employability; international student experience and mobility; student partnership and support; and student voice. These were selected to reflect areas of enhancement at different levels of development.

Judgements about Cardiff University

Based on the information presented, the review team judges that:

- Cardiff University **meets** the requirements of the ESG Part 1 for internal quality assurance
- Cardiff University **meets** the relevant baseline regulatory requirements of the Quality Assessment Framework for Wales.

This is a positive judgement, which means the provider has robust arrangements for securing academic standards, managing academic quality and for enhancing the quality of the student experience.

Commendations

The QER has identified one commendation, which is summarised below.

- Opportunities provided by the Cardiff Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programmes (CUROP) to students to engage with research activities to enhance their learning and future career prospects.

Affirmations

The QER makes one affirmation, which is summarised below.

- The steps being taken to implement a revised annual monitoring process that enables a more responsive approach to the review and enhancement of student experience.

Recommendations

The QER makes no recommendations.

Further information

A more detailed [Technical Report](#) is also available for this review. The Technical Report sets out the team's findings under each heading in the QER method.

This review and its findings relate to the provider as a whole and do not supply information about individual programmes of study or subjects. For further information about those, contact the provider or [visit its website](#).

Further information about QAA and QER can be found on the [QAA website](#).

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