

Widening Access: Delivering for Wales



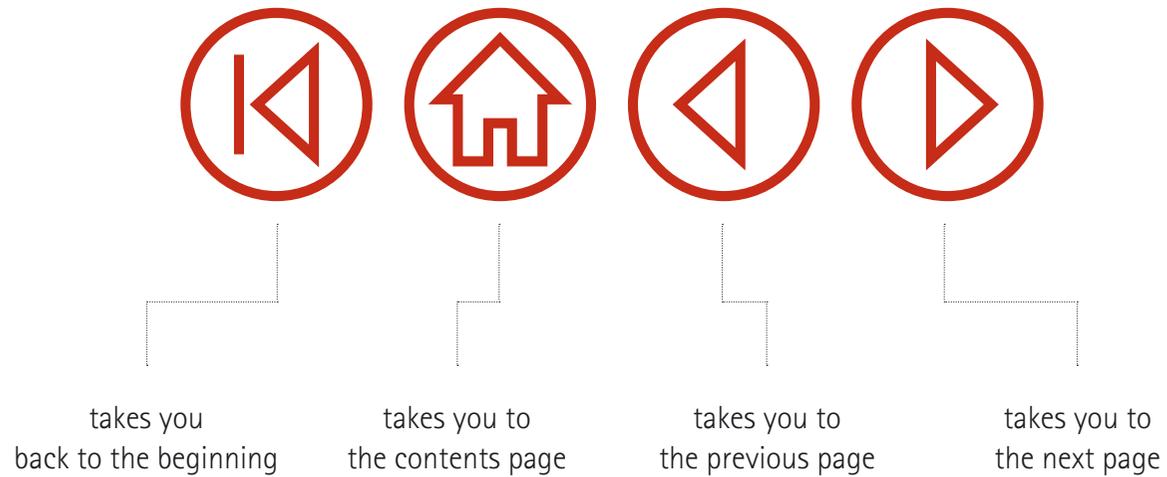
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December 2014

User guide & key

- This resource is a 'click and go' guide which enables you to find the information you want on specific topics quickly and directly
- The contents page shows what each Case Study of the document covers. Click the Case Study you want and you will go straight to it
- When you are on a Case Study page, click on the weblink bottom left to access more information or click on the email link to send a message. You can click on the  button at any time if you want to return to the contents page.



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Five themes we will use to categorise the case studies are:



Encouraging educational aspirations



Supporting transition



Enhancing skills



Promoting vocational skills and employability



Promoting equality of opportunity



HEFCW Foreword



Widening Access: Delivering for Wales

Wales has a long and strong tradition of widening access to higher education.

Universities in Wales have been commended for working collaboratively, for their innovative

practices and for acting as agents of economic and social change in widening access¹.

Widening access is a long-term, all-age agenda. The range of activities in this publication and the diversity of our universities' partners illustrate that widening access to, through and beyond higher education can only be achieved through effective, sustained, multi-agency working.

HEFCW and Welsh universities remain committed to working collaboratively to deliver effective outcomes for Wales.

With our partners, we continuously re-evaluate and refine widening access policy and practices to contribute to advancing equality of opportunity. In addition to meeting our statutory responsibilities, we are committed to driving cultural change and encouraging proactive approaches to ensure widening access and equality and diversity issues are fully integrated into universities' operations, and to meet Welsh Government priorities.

"We work with Welsh Government, higher education providers and our partners to promote widening access and equality of opportunity"

Some examples of universities' work have been drawn together in this publication. The examples illustrate the diversity of widening access practices, including engaging participants from primary school pupils to families, employees and adult learners and from campus-based to workplace to community-based delivery. Case studies show how universities help encourage learning aspirations, support transition to and through learning, enhance learning skills, promote vocational skills and employability, and promote equality of opportunity. Widening access provides informal and formal learning and progression pathways to full-time, part-time and 'bite-size' opportunities. We recognise there is more to be done

to widen access to higher education, lifelong learning, higher level learning and skills, but we have firm foundations to build on.

This publication can only present a partial picture of activity. In presenting a case study, we recognise that other universities offer similar activities and our intention is not to suggest anything other than the breadth of provision across Wales. We hope this widening

access 'taster' will encourage readers to continue to explore the ways in which universities are widening access and contributing to social justice, social mobility, economic upskilling and a buoyant economy.

Dr David Blaney
HEFCW Chief Executive

Note (click for more information)

1. www.heacademy.ac.uk - assets - nations - wales - Review of the Widening Access and Reaching Wider Strategies in Wales



HEFCW Policy Position

Our Corporate Strategy widening access strategic theme sets our direction of travel and measures of success¹

Widening access objective: secure inclusion, progression and success in higher education

Social justice is a key Welsh Government priority and widening access to higher level learning and skills has an important contribution to make to this aim. We will work with the Welsh Government, higher education providers and our partners to promote widening access and equality of opportunity.

We will prioritise the further development of inclusive learning, retention and progression opportunities to contribute to social justice and mobility for learners of all ages and backgrounds. We will encourage HE providers to resource effectively interventions that raise educational aspirations to all levels and modes of learning and support successful learning outcomes. Excellent practice has been identified in widening access in Wales related to partnership and regional working and work with looked-after young people and care leavers. We will support collaborative partnerships and provision, including the regional 'Reaching Wider' widening access programme, and we will expect HE providers to improve the evidence base to support widening access to and through higher education.

There will be increased emphasis on innovative flexible learning, community and work-based provision, fair access, including fair access to the professions, higher level skills, the priority sectors and postgraduate study, retention and learner success. Building on Welsh Government priorities and our advice to the Minister on part-time employer focussed provision and progression from FE, we will implement our part-time action plan and develop new innovative approaches for supporting flexible and part-time provision. We will maintain our focus on under-represented communities and individuals, including the Communities First

clusters and care leavers, to address inconsistencies in inclusion, progression, social mobility and learner success for those from areas of multiple-deprivation in Wales, as well as addressing the aims of our Child Poverty Strategy.

We want to see the regional dimension to the planning and delivery of higher education deliver further clear articulation and progression to, through and beyond, higher education, including in the Heads of the Valleys area, and responding to specific rural and/or urban learning priorities. This will include further work to embed HE in FE provision and enable progression opportunities for apprentices into higher education. We see Reaching Wider as a key mechanism for widening access regionally. Productive partnership working, cross sectoral and multi-agency approaches, including franchised provision with further education, and other post-16 providers will be further developed.

We will work with the Welsh Government and higher education providers to advance equality of opportunity, including through going beyond statutory duties, new fee planning requirements and support arrangements. We will engage with higher education institutions and other partners to broaden the diversity of the student population, having due regard for the provisions of the Equalities Act.

In the area of Widening Access we will work particularly towards the For our Future expectations² that:

- Participation is maximised through different and more flexible ways to experience higher education, including through part time study
- Improved part-time learning opportunities are offered
- Inconsistencies in access and opportunity are addressed

Our Outcomes

To measure improved access and progression for people in locations where such opportunities are low, including the Heads of the Valleys.

T1. Widening Access

A rise in the proportion of all Welsh domiciled students studying higher education courses at higher education institutions and further education institutions in Wales who are domiciled in the bottom quintile of wards in the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation or in Communities First cluster areas, from 20.0% in 2011/12 to 22.4% in 2015/16 (a rise of 11.8%)

T2. Participation

An increase in the proportion of all UK domiciled students studying higher education courses at higher education institutions and further education institutions in Wales who are from UK low participation areas from 33.2% in 2011/12 to 35.3% in 2015/16 (a rise of 6.3%).

To measure the increase in the number of students who successfully complete their learning objectives

T3. Retention

- (a) A decrease in the percentage of full-time undergraduate students no longer in higher education following year of entry from 9.2% in 2011/12 to 8.2% in 2015/16 (a drop of 10.7%); and
- (b) a decrease in the percentage of part-time first degree students no longer in higher education two years following year of entry from 33.7% in 2011/12 to 30.1% in 2015/16 (a drop of 10.7%).



To measure extent to which part-time learning opportunities are offered

T4. Part-time

The percentage change in the number of part-time students attending higher education courses in Welsh higher education institutions and further education institutions to be equal to, or greater than, the comparable figure for the UK.

Our monitoring includes:

UK Widening Access performance indicators; recruitment of disabled students; ethnic minorities; age profile, care leavers, learners in receipt of Education Maintenance Allowance and Assembly Learning Grant, socio economic class, male participation

HEFCW's Widening Access Strategic Approach 2013/14 to 2015/16³

HEFCW's *Strategic Approach to Widening Access* sits beneath our Corporate Strategy and alongside HEFCW's *Strategic Approach to the Student Experience*⁴ and our *Child Poverty Strategy*⁵. It should be read in conjunction with these documents and understood within the broader context of existing and emerging strategic developments, including as set out in our Fee Plan Guidance circulars for the period, Our *Strategic Equality Plan*⁶, the *Agreement on Skills and Employability for Wales*⁷ and our *Part-time Higher Education Position Statement*⁸.

The purpose of the Strategic Approach to Widening Access is to provide a fuller picture of our strategic intentions and promote a clear understanding of widening access (WA) policy and practice in Wales, as we recognise inconsistencies in meaning and messages are unhelpful for the sector, our partners and for

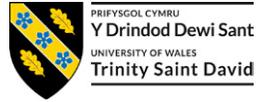
learners. Our intentions in setting out our Approach, are to be: challenging in our aspirations; clear on our agenda for action; realistic in managing expectations, and transparent in providing a mechanism for measuring progress and demonstrating success.



Notes (click for more information)

1. HEFCW Corporate Strategy 2013-14 to 2015-16
2. The then Welsh Government's strategy for higher education, *For Our Future*
3. HEFCW's *Strategic Approach to Widening Access 2013/14 to 2015/16*
4. HEFCW's *Strategic Approach to the Student Experience 2013/14 to 2015/16*
5. HEFCW's *Child Poverty Strategy*
6. HEFCW's *Strategic Equality Plan*
7. HEFCW's *Agreement on Skills and Employability for Wales*
8. HEFCW's *Part-time Position Statement*





University of Wales Trinity Saint David Reading Dragons Literacy Project



PARTICIPANTS

Year 5 and 6 primary school pupils.

PARTNERS

Education Effectiveness Service
Swansea Local Education Authority.

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The Reading Dragons project, established in 2010/11, was developed following consultations between the university and Swansea's local education authority Education Effectiveness Service as a collaborative community engagement project.

The Reading Dragons project supports primary school pupils in the Swansea area with literacy skills to enable them to make a successful transition to secondary level learning.

Reading Dragons contributes to improving literacy skills. University students studying Education Studies or Performing Arts degrees act as Reading Dragon Literacy Mentors for primary school pupils in Years 5 and 6. Priority is given to those pupils identified as needing additional support by the local education authority and the Education Effectiveness Service.

Volunteer Literacy Mentors are trained by the Education Effectiveness Service on reading behaviours and they support pupils to move through specifically-designed resource packs and on to selected texts and activities. Literacy Mentors support small groups of primary school children weekly for a term and they remain in some schools to support learning beyond the life of the project.

Annual project evaluation shows an increase in the positive attitudes displayed by children towards reading and the continued voluntary participation of the schools is testament to the fact that schools value the project.

“A great way to benefit the school, children and students wanting to become teachers!”
Student Literacy Mentor



First Campus - South East Wales Reaching Wider Partnership Pre-GCSE Student Mentoring Scheme



“It's always good to have advice from someone who has been through it.”
Student Mentoring participant

PARTICIPANTS

Secondary school students in Years 9-11.

PARTNERS

Priority secondary schools and some Communities First Partnerships.

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The Pre-GCSE Student Mentoring Scheme supports pre-GCSE pupils in Years 9-11 to improve their GCSE performance and achieve their potential by raising awareness of higher education opportunities.

Trained undergraduate mentors meet pupils in selected schools in South East Wales, as part of a planned programme of engagement. Mentors work with pupils on a one-to-one basis to agree personal achievement targets and timescales for action. Study skills work improves learners' confidence and commitment to study and develops greater self-esteem, motivation, confidence and resilience.

Evaluation of the mentoring scheme includes pre- and post-participation analysis of participants' experiences, plus analysis of schools' pupil attainment data. Focus groups and interviews are held to capture impact and to promote the scheme to new participants.

“I didn't think I needed the support... I don't really get one-to-ones about my work and my life choices... I found it easier to speak to my mentor about my goals and aims in life.”
Community College, Year 10 Student Mentoring participant

“It's very successful and we are getting good staff out of it and see it as beneficial. We produce the material for them to use and the mentors are very enthusiastic and they are fantastic role models. They're younger than us and sometimes it's better for our kids to meet a 20 year old who's cool.”
Head of Department, English





First Campus – South East Wales Reaching Wider Partnership University Residential Project – Year 9



PARTICIPANTS

Year 9 pupils from Communities First areas in South East Wales.

PARTNERS

Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and priority schools in South East Wales.

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First Campus, the South East Wales Reaching Wider Partnership, works with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to offer some Welsh medium schools in South East Wales the opportunity to participate in a campus-based residential experience. Welsh medium Year 9 pupils choose study options which include law, business studies, sport and health/medicine. The Welsh medium Year 9 residential pathway is part of a wider programme of engagement with schools, including a range of residential campus-based experiences.

The programme is designed to reflect 'Freshers Week' and includes team building exercises with other school pupils and undergraduates. Pupils live the life of a student for three days, choosing their 'degree' study options. Each subject studied contains an introduction to theoretical knowledge and practical skills and is followed by assessment to improve learning and encourage confidence and success. As well as raising awareness of higher education and campus life, the programme provides participants with specialist information, advice and guidance about Welsh medium study opportunities in colleges and universities.

School teaching staff attend the residential programme to learn more about new study options and other developments. Families and

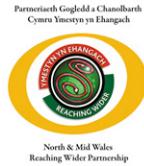
friends are invited to an end of programme 'graduation' event, and workshops for families provide them with information about progression opportunities at regional colleges and universities. For some families without a tradition of higher education this is the first time they will have visited a university campus.

Pupils say:

“It has confirmed what I thought it [University life] would be...; A brilliant three days, and the graduation was a great way to finish.; Good to look at the subjects available at university.”

Parents say:

“An excellent week, my son was enthusiastic about what he had learnt.; He is considering what would be involved in attending university, it has made him think more about what he wants to do.; My daughter has really enjoyed the experience and gained a lot from attending the three days.”



North and Mid Wales Reaching Wider Partnership Improving Educational Outcomes and Employment Opportunities



PARTICIPANTS

Foster carers, looked after children and care leavers.

PARTNERS

local authorities, further education colleges, Third Sector and community groups, housing and homelessness organisations.

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The North and Mid Wales Reaching Wider Partnership works collaboratively with other public and third sector organisations across region to improve the educational outcomes and employment opportunities of looked after children and care leavers.

The Partnership's work includes courses for foster carers, regional further and higher education staff and contributes to the Childhood Studies undergraduate programme and postgraduate teaching programme (PGCE) at Bangor University. The project increases awareness of support in universities and colleges for care leavers to encourage progression and it provides networking opportunities for universities, colleges, care organisations and carers.

The foster carers' training course provides foster carers with information about university and college life and study to enable them to advise young people in their care about learning opportunities. Foster carers advise the Partnership of young people's perceptions of university and college and the potential barriers to learning and success faced by the young people in their care. Foster carers who did not experience higher education themselves often reflect on their own learning journeys and are encouraged to be learning

role models for the young people in their care. Training material for work with foster carers has been shared with universities in Wales and the Raising Aspirations Partnership in Newcastle University.

Training for university and college staff on the barriers to learning and success for looked after children and care leavers, including through undergraduate and postgraduate education courses, encourages staff and students to reflect on their understanding of care-related issues and their learning aspirations for looked after children and care leavers.

“Thanks ever so much for sending me the foster carer training details, you will be pleased to know I delivered our first session last month and it was a storming success!”



“Since becoming involved with the summer school in 2010, 27 young people have attended with me...”

Sarah, Education Key Worker

PARTICIPANTS

15-19 year old looked after children and care leavers from South East Wales.

PARTNERS

Cardiff local authority social services/ education departments, University Student Union.

CONTACT

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First Campus – South East Wales Reaching Wider Partnership Confident Futures Summer School



“...every one of them has been enthused and motivated enough to try harder in their GCSEs and aim higher in life. The young people thoroughly enjoyed the summer school - it has been a great success.”

Sarah, Education Key Worker

“I would say that the mentoring project and summer school are essential in providing support and advice that motivates looked after children into considering their life beyond foster care and shows them how important education is in finding a career that will allow them to lead a positive lifestyle. The summer school is invaluable to make young people aware that there are options for them post 18. Without this project I genuinely believe that neither J. nor A. would have sat their respective AS level and GCSE exams. It has provided the motivation and encouragement for them to succeed.”

Rachel, Key Worker

The Confident Futures Summer School contributed to Cardiff University being awarded 'exemplary status' by the Buttle UK. The Confident Futures Summer School is a two-day residential event for young people in or leaving care to experience university life and understand more about the differences between school and university life.

Confident Futures delivered by Cardiff University, a First Campus partner, is an integral part of a broader programme of activity offered to care leavers before and after they apply and enter university or college. All Welsh universities have attained the Buttle UK Quality Mark and are committed to supporting care leavers to and through higher education. Confident Futures is also linked with projects provided by Cardiff Metropolitan University.

The Confident Futures Summer School, for 25-30 participants a year, includes an overnight stay in student accommodation. Students are introduced to undergraduate student ambassadors and they undertake everyday student activities including shopping for food, cooking in student flats, going out for a meal, taking different forms of transport, attending a social event, campus orientation and academic taster sessions.



“The project has received positive feedback from parent school governors.”

PARTICIPANTS

Parents, carers, grandparents and children at key stage 2 in Communities First area schools.

PARTNERS

Communities First areas, SARN Associates, Mark Wright Associates, Electric Mountain, Techniquest Glyndŵr.

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North and Mid Wales Reaching Wider Partnership The Family Learning Together



The Family Learning Together project was developed from a successful science pilot for Year 8 pupils which was positively recognised by ESTYN.

The Family Learning Together is a North and Mid Wales Reaching Wider Partnership project working collaboratively with a Communities First organisation. The inter-generational project encourages parents, carers and grandparents to learn science alongside their children in a shared learning environment. The project has received positive feedback from parent school governors.

Family Learning Together develops adults' skills in, and knowledge of, science-related subjects to help them support their children's classroom learning and encourage confident learning as they progress to secondary school. Adult learners themselves gain greater confidence and learn new ways to help their children with science projects, homework and explanations of how some aspects of science and technology relate to everyday life. Children and adults together study energy efficiency and how it can be applied in their homes and communities. Energy efficiency also contributes to tackling poverty. Visits to energy-related organisations and businesses provided adults with skills and the confidence to facilitate

discussions and increase their understanding of, and confidence in, the workplace.

The Family Learning Together project includes access to technology and adults have the opportunity to complete a course studying computer hardware and to enroll on further, higher-level, science-related courses at local colleges or universities.

For children, the project supports the transition of key stage 2 pupils to secondary school and provides professional, female role models/mentors to raise the profile of women in science-related careers. The project contributes to upskilling adults in skills shortage areas in the economy of North Wales and building a more sustainable, prosperous society and community.





PARTICIPANTS

Young people from schools where participation in higher education is low.

PARTNERS

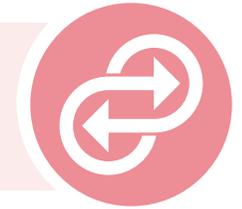
Further Education Colleges, Third Sector Organisations and professional bodies.

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Cardiff University Step Up Scheme



The Step-Up Scheme aims to raise aspirations, attainment and provide support for secondary school students. Step Up develops a three-year relationship with pupils in schools from which there have traditionally been low rates of progression to university.

University staff visit priority schools and work with Year 11 pupils to promote the benefits of joining Step Up. Once enrolled on the Scheme pupils receive newsletters, access e-mentoring and attend general and subject specific events during Years 11/12. More than 150 participants a year attend the residential Step Up Summer School. In Year 13, pupils receive specialist information, advice and guidance during their university application process. Those applying for healthcare courses are also guaranteed interviews, subject to their academic ability. In addition, all Step-Up members have reserved places for other University events such as public lectures, MedWales and Open Days.

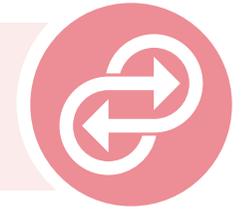
Pupils' progress is monitored and tracked throughout the three-year period. Typically, there are around 3,000 pupils (in Years 11, 12 and 13) on the Scheme at any one time and all of the University's academic schools contribute to the Scheme which is primarily focused on Communities First areas of South East Wales, but health elements of the Scheme are also available in parts of Mid and North Wales.

“The Scheme brings together pupils, student mentors and academic staff at a variety of events. Current undergraduate students give talks about their experiences at University and information is available on routes into higher education, university accommodation, costs of being a student and much more.”
Step Up Coordinator

“The Step-Up Scheme has been fantastic especially the support I received during the Step-Up Summer programme. I think the work they [the University] do is fantastic and very important, especially targeting students entering Year 11 as it motivates and interests them to do better and aim for something.”
A graduate of the Step-Up Programme, now studying Pharmacy at Cardiff University



Bangor University Talent Opportunity Programme (TOP)



PARTICIPANTS

Priority Year 9 to 11 school students studying living in areas where participation in higher education is low.

PARTNERS

Regional priority schools.

CONTACT

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Bangor University's Talent Opportunities Programme (TOP) was established more than sixteen years ago. In 2013/14 the Talent Opportunities Programme worked in 22 regional schools with school pupils in Years 9 to 11. TOP works with school pupils across North Wales to raise educational aspirations and increase awareness of higher education and what it has to offer them.

TOP has developed close collaboration between Bangor University and bilingual comprehensive schools in North Wales and its provision includes two or three day residential visits to Bangor University for pupils from priority schools.

Working with partner schools, including schools in Communities First areas, TOP identifies Year 11 school students with potential, and supports them to develop skills and to prepare them for higher education by providing revision classes and other activities aimed at improving attainment.

TOP measures its contribution to encouraging transition from school to university by benchmarking the progression rates of post-16 learners against local education authority averages.

“It's part of Bangor University's commitment to widening access, by attempting to raise the aspirations of pupils who may previously have thought that University wasn't for them.”

Head of Student Recruitment, Bangor University

“We are delighted that [our school] is part of the Talent Opportunities Programme and look forward to the scheme contributing towards many of our pupils accessing higher education in the near future.”

Headteacher



“...gave me a much better understanding as a tutor of how difficult it is for some students to consider HE – I was privileged – had a supporting family.”
Participating tutor

PARTICIPANTS

Further Education College Tutors.

PARTNERS

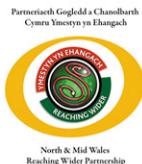
North and Mid Wales Partnership partners.

CONTACT

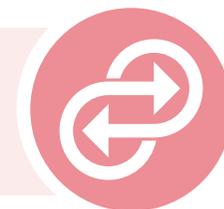
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North and Mid Wales Reaching Wider Partnership Tutor Training – FE to HE Progression



Participating tutors said...

“...can we have a Dummies guide to – everything!

...training needed early in the year, and more of it!”

To support successful student transition from further education to higher education the North and Mid Wales Reaching Wider Partnership has developed a bilingual, staff development workshop for college tutors. Workshop resources include an information pack for college tutors to use when supporting their students through the higher education application process.

Quizzes are designed to help tutors reflect on their own knowledge of current higher education provision. Interactive materials help tutors understand more about the benefits of higher education, progression routes from further education to higher education, the application process and current financial support arrangements, as admissions processes and study options have changed considerably in recent years. Resources provide information about support for care leavers, mature students and Welsh medium study opportunities and signpost tutors to relevant websites such as UCAS and Student Finance Wales. The programme also provides networking opportunities between the university and college and encourages tutors to have high aspirations for their students, to understand more about the barriers to learning at higher levels and to support their students to achieve their potential.



PARTICIPANTS

Adult learners.

PARTNERS

Community-based social enterprises, Further Education Colleges, Third Sector organisations, lifelong learning and adult community learning partnerships.

CONTACT

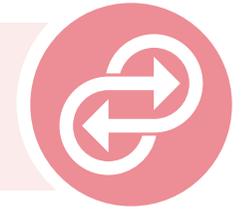
t : 01792 295277

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w : swansea.ac.uk/dace/



Swansea University Community-based Part-time Degree Programme



The community-based part-time degree programme, established in 1990, by the Department of Adult Continuing Education (DACE) at Swansea University operates in thirteen community venues across South West Wales and on a university and a college campus.

The programme prioritises disadvantaged and isolated communities including eight Communities First areas in the region and in 2012/13 approximately 29% of all participants were from Communities First areas.

A ten-week BA Preparation Programme for learners without a tradition of higher education underpins the part-time degree and supports progression to part-time study. Free, impartial educational and careers advice is available on an ongoing basis. Support for students on the part-time degree is flexible and encourages student involvement and active participation and provides extensive study skill support to ensure retention and success. Support is available by telephone, email or face-to-face at community venues and students have access to a dedicated library at the South Wales Miners' Library. Video conference facilities enable courses to be delivered at Pembrokeshire College from Swansea University.

To date 450 part-time degree students have attained university degrees and currently 253 part-time students are studying in the community and at the two campuses.

Students score the part-time degree very highly in the National Student Survey and retention rates have averaged 87% over the last three years with 73% of students achieving a first or 2:1 degree qualification.





PARTICIPANTS

Adult learners from black and minority ethnic communities, including refugees and asylum seekers whose first language is not English.

PARTNERS

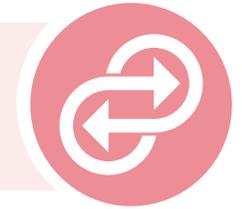
Communities First areas in South East Wales.

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w : cardiffmet.ac.uk/wideningaccess



Cardiff Metropolitan University Preparing for International English Language Testing



This community-based study programme promotes social inclusion and equality of opportunity by encouraging increased participation and success in higher education. The programme tutor won the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) Essential Skills for Life Tutor Award.

Community engagement and consultations exploring the barriers to higher education for people whose first language is not English found that many of the adults who speak English as a second language have the potential and aspiration to study in university or college, but not the required level of academic English to enter or succeed in their studies.

Cardiff Metropolitan University has developed a 'roll on roll off' community-based programme for learners to improve their academic English in preparation for taking an English language test, which demonstrates their ability to engage fully with higher education study through the medium of English. The flexible, 'roll on roll off' nature of the programme enables students to leave when they are ready to sit the International English Language Testing System examination. Some participants might join the programme for weeks while others might need to study

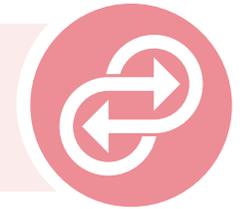
for over a year. All learners are provided with sessions on applying to university to help smooth the transition from community-based learning to higher education-level campus provision.

The 'Preparing for International English Language Testing System' programme is delivered, free of charge, to approximately 30 learners at any one time. Communities First partners host the programme and participants are normally from the Communities First areas in South East Wales.

“The course timings were right for me. It's a good University and I would like to do my Dental Technology courses there in the future.”
Course participant



Reaching Wider and the Open University in Wales Reaching Wider OpenLearn Champion Project



PARTICIPANTS

Adults from Communities First areas and groups under-represented in higher education.

PARTNERS

North and Mid Wales Reaching Wider Partnership including local community groups, libraries, Careers Wales, Job Centre Plus, trade union learning representatives.

CONTACT

t : 0300 303 5303
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Through OpenLearn the Open University has over 10,000 hours of free learning and Open Educational Resources including podcasts, videos and interactives, alongside a wide range of introductory courses such as: beginners Welsh, debt management, study skills, science, and creative writing.

The Open University in Wales leads the OpenLearn Champions project using its extensive range of resources to engage learners and encourage the move from informal to formal learning. Using a 'train the trainers' approach, with Reaching Wider North and Mid Wales partners, Champions are trained to support adults into learning. The training package includes a day event, networking, refresher events and webinars.

Learning Champions use OpenLearn in a variety of ways including organising regular OpenLearn sessions at community centres, incorporating OpenLearn materials in other study courses or promoting OpenLearn alongside specific national learning campaigns such as Adult Learners' Week or Carers' Week.

There are over 120 trained Champions across North and Mid Wales. They include Communities First learning officers, training providers, librarians, community learning

tutors, college and university staff, trade union representatives, careers and Job Centre Plus advisors. The Wrexham, Anglesey and Gwynedd library services are also engaged with the OpenLearn programme.

“I deliver job search sessions to parents who are furthest away from the labour market but are required to be available and actively seeking employment. Some of the activities [on OpenLearn] are a great introduction to using IT and career options...”
Learning Champion

“I'm using [OpenLearn] with a family learning group and group of 'silver surfers'. We have taster sessions then the learners chose a course and followed it in my library with me acting as a support...”
Learning Champion



South West Wales Reaching Wider Partnership GCSE Grade Boosters



PARTICIPANTS

Year 11 and 12 students from Communities First schools.

PARTNERS

Schools and a college.

CONTACT

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e : reachingwider@swansea.ac.uk
w : swansea.ac.uk

GCSE Grade Boosters supports GCSE core subject learning. The South West Wales Reaching Wider Partnership, with local schools and a college, has developed activities that encourage a positive attitude towards learning and revision together with effective strategies to prepare for examinations and improve GCSE performance in English, Mathematics and Science.

Participants are Year 11 GCSE students or Year 12 college students re-sitting GCSE core subjects. The school/college identifies those students who would benefit from extra support to achieve at least a grade C GCSE in core subjects.

GCSE Grade Boosters participants hear first-hand accounts from current college students who previously attended their school. They talk about the importance of GCSEs for their current courses and for applying to university. Participants are encouraged to find out more about progressing to college or university. College staff, who are also experienced WJEC examination board assessors, contribute to workshop sessions designed to showcase a range of effective revision strategies and skills. GCSE Boosters includes a tour of the college with college student ambassadors and a meal in the college cafe.

Participants say they enjoy...

“...getting tips from teachers and the techniques they used.

...the support from staff.

...seeing the different learning environment.”

95% of participants say that

“The day has made me feel more confident about sitting my GCSE exam.”

97% say

“The day has shown me that people like me do go on to study in college.”



Aberystwyth University Expanding Horizons



EHANGU GORWELION EXPANDING HORIZONS

PARTICIPANTS

Priority school pupils studying GCSEs.

PARTNERS

Schools across Wales.

CONTACT

t : 01970 621890
e : wpsi@aber.ac.uk
w : aber.ac.uk

Expanding Horizons is a GCSE residential, revision course. In 2013 over 170 school pupils from across Wales attending GCSE revision sessions in Maths, English, Welsh and Science.

Expanding Horizons also provides weekly GCSE revision sessions for local secondary schools to raise attainment and skills supporting young people to attain GCSE core subjects at grade C or above to improve their chances of progressing to, and succeeding in, school or college and higher level study.

“I would just like to thank the University, people should know about this course. My son really enjoyed it and it has helped him make lots of new friends and really helped him with his study, thanks again.”

Phone call received from a parent

“I have only had chance to speak to five of the ten pupils that attended the course and they have said they had a great time and learnt a great deal. So a big thank you to you and your team.”

email sent from a teacher

“Thank you for including me in this year’s maths teaching programme... I had the pleasure of teaching two of the best groups I’ve ever had. The students were extremely well behaved, mature, funny and worked very hard. They are all a credit to their schools and more importantly themselves.”

An email send from an Expanding Horizons tutor

Expanding Horizons participants say:

“I feel a lot more confident about my upcoming exams and the course was really helpful.”

I have had fun on the course and I would like to do it again, I will definitely recommend this to a friend.

I found this course very helpful. Thank you to everyone who helped.”





First Campus – South East Wales Reaching Wider Partnership Creative Arts Summer School



PARTICIPANTS

10-18 year olds from Communities First areas across the South East Wales Region.

PARTNERS

E3 After School Provision, Big Learning Company, TurnipStarfish.

CONTACT

t : 01443 482550
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w : firstcampus.org

The Creative Arts Summer School, established in 2001, enables one hundred young people aged 10-18 years old to develop their knowledge and skills by creating short, live action films, animations and writing and recording original music for promotion purposes. Undergraduates and academics provide information on study routes in college and university while industry professionals offer information, advice and guidance about apprenticeship opportunities, industry standards and skills requirements.

The Creative Arts Summer School is the culmination of a programme of continuous engagement with young people from Communities First areas across South East Wales as the young people's attendance at preparatory skills-building events is essential to enable them to engage fully and achieve level 3/4 Agored Cymru accreditation.

The Big Learning Company and TurnipStarfish support small groups or individuals through a film-making process exposing them to a range of skills including writing a script or storyboard, creating characters and backgrounds and shooting and editing a short, live action or animated film. Music industry professionals and music technology lecturers from the University of South Wales work with

two bands who are assigned a professional producer and together participants audition for, write, record and produce original songs. The films are showcased at a celebratory event attended by family and friends where participants deliver a brief 'how it's done' workshop to explain the film-making processes and skills.

In addition to confidence and team working, participants learn and develop key skills including communication, teamwork, time-management, project management and organisational skills. All participants develop literacy skills in creating stories and writing scripts. Animators use numeracy in the multiplication of frames per second and scaling, dimension and perspective while musicians use numeracy skills for counting, timing and identifying patterns.

Nine former Summer School participants are now undergraduates studying Music, Engineering and Production or Film, six participants are studying Btec courses in Further Education Colleges, four are studying Foundation Art and Design, and three are studying A level Art with a view to studying Animation in university.





Aberystwyth University Summer University



PARTICIPANTS

School/College students aged at least 17 years. Priority places for those who live or go to school/college in a Communities First area; from care or low income backgrounds; first in their family to go university.

PARTNERS

Schools in Wales; Further Education Colleges in Wales; Leaving Care/Social Service teams.

CONTACT

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w : aber.ac.uk/wpsi

The Aberystwyth Summer University is an established widening access initiative which began in 2000. More than three quarters of Summer University students attend university or college within three years of the programme and the retention rate is better than the sector average.

The Summer University is a six-week, residential, study programme. It prepares students, who may not otherwise fulfill their potential, for university or college study and student life. Between 70 and 100 students a year from across Wales experience university-style teaching, learning and living in a campus setting. Participants are introduced to new subjects, improve their academic skills and have the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to succeed in higher education. Learning is underpinned by pastoral support provided by trained undergraduate and postgraduate student leaders who act as role models and mentors and participants receive individual tutor support which includes study and career information, advice and guidance. Summer University success is celebrated with a 'graduation' ceremony, hosted by the Vice Chancellor and university staff and attended by families, friends and carers. On completing the programme students normally return to school

or college to complete their qualifications and the Summer University programme provides ongoing support to progress to, and succeed in, university or college.

All participants that successfully complete the Summer University are offered a guaranteed progression route to an appropriate scheme at Aberystwyth University on condition that specific requirements are met.

“We talk all the time about the importance of ‘transition’. The Summer University is a six-week vehicle for change and combined with the continued intervention and support over the following year (when the Summer University graduates are continuing their education) it makes this transition process as smooth as we can make it, regardless of which university or college they enter.”

Summer University Manager, Centre for Widening Participation

“The Summer University literally changed my life completely and I wanted to do that for someone else. Without it I would not have come to university. This course brings you out of your shell, it shows you that there are other people out there like you. It made me want to come to a university where I feel that I fit.”

Summer University Student Leader, psychology undergraduate who is now planning to train as an Educational Psychologist with a more immediate aim of becoming a primary school teacher





PARTICIPANTS

People living and working in the South Wales Heads of the Valleys region.

PARTNERS

Partner Further Education Colleges, regional employers.

CONTACT

t : 0800 1223 220
e : uhovienquiries@southwales.ac.uk
w : uhovi.ac.uk



University of South Wales Universities Heads of the Valleys Institute (UHOVI)



UHOVI is a large-scale, community regeneration, economic upskilling and widening access initiative, established in 2010. UHOVI works with people living and working in the Heads of the Valleys area (Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen) to improve their vocational skills and qualifications.

In 2013/14 UHOVI worked with 497 full-time students and 1,677 part-time students. There were 1,235 part-time students studying bite-sized modules including 412 learners studying in their place of work.

UHOVI and its regional partners continue to build sustainable, regional progression pathways for learners from the age of 16 enabling them to make the transition from schools or colleges onto higher level learning and skills.

Vocationally-related bite-sized courses with clear progression routes to further learning and employment encourage adult learners without a tradition of higher education to try a new subject or find a new career path. Bite-sized modules may include personal finances, preparing to teach, essential English and mathematics for teaching careers, counselling, introduction to anatomy and

physiology, introduction to the criminal justice system and introduction to social work. In addition, university-level courses are available in communities, colleges, training facilities and workplaces offering a wide range of study opportunities, including Foundation Degrees.

With employers, UHOVI offers staff training and development specifically designed to reflect the needs of industry in the region and helping create a better skilled workforce to boost the local economy and tackle poverty.

UHOVI students say:

“I’ve gained invaluable experience in the workplace and I know the course will give me that helping hand to find that IT career I’ve always wanted.”

“I was shy before joining this course and had no idea what I wanted to do in the future. Now I am a lot more confident and have started a job because of the confidence and knowledge I have acquired. I am now looking forward to opportunities that I never had before.”





Cardiff Metropolitan University Widening Access Through Hospitality Skills



PARTICIPANTS

Category D prisoners from Prescoed Prison.

PARTNERS

Clink Restaurant at Cardiff Prison.

Cardiff Metropolitan University's Widening Access through Hospitality Skills training with prisoners at the Clink Restaurant at Cardiff Prison was nominated for a Guardian Higher Education award and a National Institute of Adult Community Education (NIACE) award.

The Hospitality Skills project provides transferable business and hospitality skills to prisoners at the Clink restaurant to improve participants' soft skills in a hospitality setting. The project has also piloted a mentoring scheme with a participant who graduated from the restaurant focusing on supporting his education and training choices and future options. This project works with Category D prisoners who have a licence to work and are normally a quarter of the way through their sentence.

Across the UK Clink has 85 prisoners training in its restaurants and has helped 25 people released from prison to gain employment. The Clink re-offending rate for Clink prisoners is 12.5% compared to 47% for other inmates released from prison. Integral to the Clink provision is education and training provided by Cardiff Metropolitan University.

The university gathers feedback from attendees, all of whom said they would

recommend the course. On release all learners will be provided with information about further learning opportunities. The mentoring contract is evaluated on a three-monthly basis. The mentee has continued in employment, secured his own accommodation, enrolled on an Access to Higher Education programme with a Further Education College and has not re-offended. The mentoring aspect of this provision may be incorporated into future widening access projects.

Clink Cymru General Manager, Jason Lawrence, said

“Clink Cymru is delighted to be partners in this innovative project which has served to change the lives of those involved. Participants gained team building skills, learning how to plan ahead, improve customer service, work within budget and gain confidence in setting up events. The change within those who took part is incredible.”

CONTACT

t : 02920 416288
e : wideningaccess@cardiffmet.ac.uk
w : cardiffmet.ac.uk/wideningaccess





PARTICIPANTS

School and college students from priority widening access groups studying level 3 qualifications.

PARTNERS

National Science Academy, Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), Careers Wales, Bro Morgannwg University Health Board, priority regional secondary schools.

CONTACT

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South West Wales Reaching Wider Partnership Technology in Medicine – TIM



Technology in Medicine (TIM) is a collaborative programme. The South West Wales Reaching Wider Partnership, working with professional bodies and other organisations, provides participants with current, expert knowledge and equipment which would not otherwise be available to them. Opportunities include a spectroscopy workshop delivered by the Royal Society of Chemistry and a medical physics workshop delivered by Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board.

TIM is designed for year 12 students from priority schools studying A level science subjects or appropriate level 3 vocational courses. TIM builds on and complements participants' current studies and introduces them to a range of medicine- and healthcare-related careers. The short, residential course supports skills development and builds confidence in studying science, technology and mathematics at a higher level. Workshops also provide information, advice and guidance about studying science-related subjects in university and encourages participants to actively consider a career in science-related professions. Daytime only places are provided for participants preferring not to 'live as a student' on campus. Undergraduate student leaders act as mentors providing small groups

of participants with an insight into university study and student life. TIM is part of an ongoing programme of science, technology, engineering and mathematics opportunities offered to regional, priority schools.

91% of participants reported that they were more confident about going to university after attending the programme; **69%** were more sure about what course they'd like to study in HE and **71%** were more sure about the type of job they'd like to do.

“ I'm much surer about the type of decisions I need to make in consideration of my career and I know which direction I want to go in science subject wise.”
TIM participant

- ✓ Develop skills graduate employers want
- ✓ Make the most of work related experience
- ✓ Get a great reference
- ✓ Create a super CV
- ✓ Perform better at interviews
- ✓ Launch your graduate level career

PARTICIPANTS

Undergraduates including those from Communities First and other areas where participation in higher education is low.

PARTNERS

Further Education Colleges delivering higher education courses in partnership with the University of South Wales.

CONTACT

t : 01443 654450
 e : careers@southwales.ac.uk
 w : gradedge.southwales.ac.uk/



University of South Wales Grad Edge



Grad Edge at the University of South Wales is designed to provide undergraduate participants with additional employability skills as universities recognise that some students, particularly from widening access backgrounds, require additional skills and support to access high-level careers and the professions. Priority students in University of South Wales partner Further Education Colleges also participate in the programme and are encouraged to reflect early in their studies on regional and national employment opportunities following graduation.

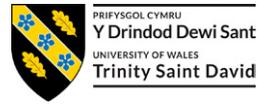
Grad Edge offers a programme of events led by graduate employers and careers advisers as well as up-to-date, on-line, interactive resources that are available 24 hours a day, together with one-to-one careers information, advice and guidance. Participations can undertake the University's Grad Edge Award to demonstrate their employability skills to prospective employees.

The Grad Edge Award includes an interactive skills assessment to identify personal strengths and weaknesses, goal setting exercises, activities to explore career options, tips on finding work experience and networking skills. In addition, participants undertake and capture 70+ hours' experience made up of

a minimum of 35 hours of career-related experience with the remaining hours spent gaining general employability experience, such as, part-time work, volunteering or acting as a course or society representative. Career-related experience enables participants to obtain a reference from their employer. Participants complete work-related application forms and CVs to demonstrate their employability skills and they receive practical advice on interview techniques before undertaking a mock interview.

“Students... are encouraged to reflect early in their studies on regional and national employment opportunities...”





University of Wales Trinity Saint David Creative Bubble



PARTICIPANTS

Undergraduates, graduates, local people, local businesses and the Swansea community.

PARTNERS

Swansea Business Improvement District and City and County of Swansea.

CONTACT

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w : uwtsd.ac.uk

Creative Bubble creates links and encourages cooperation between companies and the University to benefit economic and social regeneration within the region.

Since its launch in 2013, Creative Bubble has grown rapidly with increasing numbers of students and the general public engaging with it. Creative Bubble has a large social media following and has attracted positive interest from the press, local businesses and other organisations.

University of Wales Trinity Saint David was given the use of a city-centre commercial space by Swansea Business Improvement District to create economic and social impacts for the city through the arts.

Creative Bubble provides a high-street area where students can plan their creative practice and develop entrepreneurial and business developments. During their time with Creative Bubble, students gain employability skills and apply entrepreneurial thinking to their studies.

Creative Bubble coordinates a range of activities including 'Have a Go' workshops led by students/graduates for other students and the public; Bubble Slam Saturday morning bilingual, writing and literacy workshops for young writers run by students and graduates;

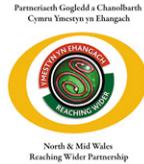
arts events in collaboration with Locws International, Mess up the Mess Theatre Company, National Theatre Wales and 15 Hundred Lives; supporting local campaigns including Get Welsh Day; pop up craft shops and enterprises; and sustainable fashion workshops.

“Another lovely day kicking off at #likeaboss enterprise workshops with Year 5 girls from Townhill School. Quiet group today but still lovely girls! Done their t-shirts now onto brand names.”
Creative Bubble Tweet

“As part of Enterprise Week, Zoe (our Community Bubbler) is working with Townhill Primary tomorrow and Friday to encourage enterprise/entrepreneurial thinking amongst young girls. This is part of the #LikeABoss initiative (empowering women of all ages through inspirational talks, mentoring and creative workshops).”
Creative Bubble Tweet

“Not only does it benefit the students in their studies and employability in the future but also helps recruit more people into the city centre, plus adding adding to the atmosphere. It's certainly something different, adding to dynamic of the city centre.”
Chief Executive of Swansea Business Improvement District





North and Mid Wales Reaching Wider Partnership Teachers Inside Industry Days



PARTICIPANTS

Priority schools.

PARTNERS

Techniqust Glyndŵr, Engineering Development Trust, Business in the Community, Careers Wales, Kingspan, Scottish Power, International Power, Ipsen Pharamaceuticals, Theatre Clwyd, P&A Group of Companies.

CONTACT

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w : reachingwider.ac.uk/index.php.en

Teachers Inside Industry Days are designed to bring teachers in priority schools and regional employers together. Each company is chosen for its link to teachers' specific curriculum interests to broaden teachers' knowledge about current working practices and skill requirements.

Teachers Inside Industry Days upskill teachers to enable them to help their students understand more about the diversity and availability of employment opportunities in the region and more widely.

Regional employers host teachers' visits providing them with in-depth site visits including presentations and demonstrations from apprentices, graduates and other employees. Employers and employees benefit from Teachers Inside Industry Days as they enable employers to make links with regional schools for possible future recruitment exercises and they provide current employees with a chance to develop their presentation and communication skills and increase their awareness of local education and training opportunities.

“...if young people don't know what jobs are out there and how to get into them, this could lead to a serious lack of appropriately skilled applicants in future. What we've aimed to develop with the schools is a sustainable partnership, which both benefits the school and the pupils, but us as well through making us a better neighbour, bringing us closer to our community and developing the skills of our future workforce.”

Chair of the Reaching Wider North Wales Employers Forum and Network Operations Director for Scottish Power, Guy Jefferson

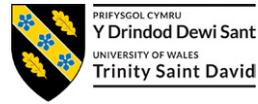
“The visit helped to bring the focus on the important skills learners need to be successful in industry.”

Maths teacher who visited Ipsen Pharmaceuticals

“It has been an excellent opportunity for us to broaden our network and to re-focus our work on preparing young people for the world of work particularly in relation to employability skills businesses require.”

School, Head Teacher





University of Wales Trinity Saint David Recognition and Accreditation of Experiential Learning (APEL)



PARTICIPANTS

Employed adults with at least five years' workplace experience that can be mapped to higher education learning levels.

In 2012 University of Wales Trinity Saint David was highly commended by the Universities Association of Lifelong Learning (UALL) for its work in partnership with Murco on the accreditation of its staff development provision. The APEL programme has built on this earlier work to provide high-level learning opportunities in South West Wales

The recognition and accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) programme at University of Wales Trinity Saint David supports non-traditional, work-based learners to evidence their workplace experiences and, where appropriate, receive university-level credits towards higher-level qualifications. Award of higher education credit is against an Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning framework which has been quality assured against UK standards and meets the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW) and all relevant codes of practice.

The APEL project provides opportunities for employees without higher-level qualifications to progress in their careers, fulfill their potential and make a greater contribution to their workplace and the economy.

The programme is fully bilingual, recognising that many employees operate in Welsh medium work environments.

Participants comment positively on how their study has improved their working practices, skills and competence.

“I am surprised at the amount and significance of the learning that I have achieved through reflecting on my practice and skill set...”
Participant

CONTACT

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w : uwtsd.ac.uk





Open University in Wales Widening Access for Health and Social Care Support Workers



PARTICIPANTS

Adult learners working as support workers.

PARTNERS

UNISON trade union, Wales TUC, supported by NHS employers, the Welsh Government, Wales Union Learning Fund.

CONTACT

t : 0300 303 5303
e : wales-partnerships@open.ac.uk
w : open.ac.uk/Wales

This widening access programme was established in 2007 and has over 1400 participants across Wales. Along with allied activity in Northern Ireland, the programme was awarded the Times Higher Education Widening Participation Award of the Year in 2010. The Wales TUC has awarded its Quality Mark to the Open University Openings modules and enhanced workplace information, advice and guidance. The Open University is the only university recipient of this award. The employer engagement activity in Wales that developed from this activity was shortlisted for the Times Higher Education Employer Engagement Initiative in 2012.

Support workers in the National Health Service are predominately female and they face multiple barriers to learning including shift work, peripatetic roles and personal care commitments. Many health and social care support workers lack formal academic qualifications and many live in Communities First areas. This Open University in Wales programme provides targeted support and guidance to help support workers study and access higher-level health-related skills and employment.

The collaborative partnership between the Open University in Wales and UNISON is a key

feature of the provision. UNISON's network of workplace Union Learning Representatives act as peer-advocates supporting learning and encouraging progression on to the Open University's introductory Openings programme. The Open University offers enhanced workplace learning information, advice and guidance and UNISON fund an introductory 60 credit module on service and employer needs around person-centred care and dignity in care. NHS employers see the funding contribution and vocationally relevant learning as fundamental to engaging learners without recent experience of study.

NHS employers regard this approach to upskilling its workforce as integral to its workforce planning and to developing a pool of talent to replace 'baby boom' professionals retiring over the next ten years.





PARTICIPANTS

Adults including those living in Communities First areas, younger people not in employment, education or training, adults made redundant or about to be made redundant; care leavers, people with disabilities.

PARTNERS

North and Mid Wales Reaching Wider Partnership, Careers Wales, Third sector organisations, Job Centre Plus, local businesses.

CONTACT

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Learning for Employability supports adults who are seeking a new direction in education, training or employment by offering workplace experience and the chance to learn new, vocational skills. As a result of this community-based provision, participants have gained employment, progressed to Access to Higher Education or other further education courses or to university degrees. Learning for Education contributes to tackling poverty, community learning and to supporting individuals to become lifelong learners.

Learning for Employability combines an industry visit with specialist information, advice and guidance on regional employment and education opportunities, presentations from Third Sector organisations as well as an introduction to employability skills. Techniques for getting organised, making effective presentations, team working, people skills, mock interviews and building a portfolio demonstrating skills contributes to increasing participants' confidence and motivation. The personal portfolio enables participants to demonstrate to colleges, universities and employers their experience, commitment and potential.

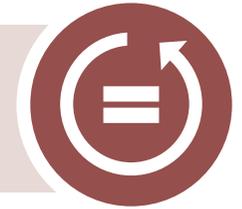
The provision is part of a foundation degree in Professional Education and Training and

successful completion enables participants to gain 20 higher education-level credits and a certificate of completion. There are no course fees for Learning for Employability and childcare is available to help remove some of the barriers to study.

Learning for Employability courses are held across the North East Wales region and priority is given to Communities First and other areas identified as having low participation in higher education, higher-level skills or employment.



First Campus Reaching Wider Able Radio



PARTICIPANTS

Year 10 students studying the Welsh Baccalaureate in Communities First schools.

PARTNERS

Able Radio.

CONTACT

t : 01443 482550
e : fc@firstcampus.org
w : firstcampus.org

Able Radio was founded in 2006 by a group of volunteers passionate about improving the lives of disabled people. In addition to on-air broadcasts, Able Radio works with organisations across the UK to deliver broadcast training.

Participants from priority schools use the skills gained on this programme to demonstrate their learning as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification.

Participants learn about radio production, including programme types and structure and audience tastes. They have hands-on sessions using studio equipment to make a test recording, before finalising scripts, learning interview techniques, planning running orders and recording a 'show'.

Through this training the participants explore disability issues, learn more about equality and diversity and contribute to their community. The programme is an accessible way to develop communication and other technology-related skills, raise confidence in using various forms of media technology and inspire learning. The Able Radio programme is part of a wider programme of activity which includes exploring learning choices beyond Year 11 and opportunities to study in further and higher education.

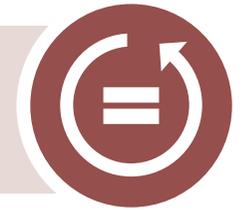
“The very varied programme of the event that we offered the pupils was praised by the Welsh Bacc Moderator. Not wanting to sing our praises too much but she was very impressed. The evidence of the event... was well-received. The pupils themselves have thoroughly enjoyed their experiences... What was very pleasing was a few pupils were very reticent about attending in the beginning and took a bit of persuading. But, after they had been they were very glad to have been part of it.”

Senior member of school teaching staff





South West Wales Reaching Wider Partnership Gypsy and Traveller Engagement



PARTICIPANTS

The Gypsy and Traveller school pupils community in the South West Wales region.

PARTNERS

Gypsy and Traveller Education Service and a priority secondary school.

CONTACT

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e : reachingwider@swansea.ac.uk
w : swansea.ac.uk

The South West Wales Reaching Wider Partnership and Pembrokeshire Gypsy Traveller Education Service has worked collaboratively with a school over four years to support gypsy and traveller children. Pupils attend events developed in consultation with partners while activities in art, design and science are planned according to the participants' interests.

In addition to art and design workshops delivered on campus by university lecturers, science-themed events took pupils to university laboratories to find out about DNA extraction, volcanic chemical eruptions, new-Newtonian fluids and to learn about electric cars and engineering. The social programme of activities includes an overnight campus stay in student halls of residence.

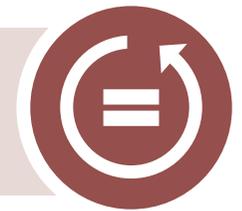
The activities contribute to the school curriculum and introduce participants to new skills and experience as well as introducing the idea of higher education as a possible future pathway.

Pupils say: 62% of pupils said they wanted to continue their studies after school.

“I've learnt loads; I thought it was interesting and I enjoyed...”

A teacher says:

“For many pupils the concept of university was completely unknown to them and none of the pupils who attended the sessions had family members who have ever enrolled in university education... The education provision for these pupils is based in a classroom with limited facilities so the use of university equipment and facilities such as a science laboratory has provided learning experiences that would not normally be available to them... The curriculum was enriched and School Project staff were also enthused by the content of the sessions and continued with follow up activities in the classroom.”



First Campus – South East Wales Reaching Wider Partnership Discovery Summer School

“ I thought it was brilliant. The whole experience of it makes university much less nerve racking... I would definitely recommend it. ”
Pupil with ASD who progressed to university

PARTICIPANTS

14-19 year olds with ASD from Wales with their parents, carers, teachers.

PARTNERS

National Autistic Society, School Special Education Needs Coordinators, Student Union, Student Volunteering at Cardiff University.

CONTACT

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The Discovery Summer School gives young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) the opportunity to experience student life. The Summer School offers 14-19 year olds with ASD from across Wales, with their parents, carers and teachers, an opportunity to find out more about university life.

The two-day, residential Discovery Summer School has a strong emphasis on the social and interactive aspects of university life. ASD students often find living as a student more challenging than the academic study while parents, carers and teachers are usually concerned about how participants will adapt to university life and are unaware of the support available. The Summer School is the centrepiece of a broader programme of engagement offered to young people with ASD which includes a university visit and mentoring. Twenty-five to thirty pupils attend the Summer School at Cardiff University each year, a partner of the First Campus Reaching Wider Partnership.

“ Every barrier that T. had, they just took down... We've both been to the summer school and think it's excellent. They integrate everybody, whether you're a parent, a child or a carer. The programme enables the child to become more independent – even over the two days! It gives parents the confidence that the child can become independent. It's unique. I wish every university would run it. ”
Parent of the pupil quoted above





PARTICIPANTS

Learners of any age with a visual impairment and an interest in music.

PARTNERS

Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, a partner of First Campus.

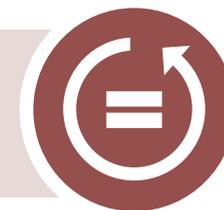
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ROYAL WELSH COLLEGE
OF MUSIC & DRAMA
COLEG BRENHINOL
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RWCMD and First Campus Reaching Wider Partnership Musicians in Focus



Musicians in Focus is a unique project in Wales which provides opportunities for visually impaired musicians. The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (RWCMD), a First Campus partner, works collaboratively with Musicians in Focus to offer visually impaired learners musical training and support. Jackie Clifton from Musicians in Focus received a MBE in 2011 for her work on behalf of visually impaired musicians.

Since 2004 the RWCMD and Musicians in Focus have provided training and support for visually impaired musicians of school age through its Junior Conservatoire. Building on this success, the partnership extended its scope to include visually impaired musicians of all ages. To achieve this objective specialist additional information technology equipment was obtained for a free evening class for visually impaired adults.

To support the project a summer school was developed for students to further their experience of music technology, braille music and improvisation with other participants from similar backgrounds and interests.

Working and developing musical skills through technology has enabled more visually impaired musicians to become confident working in

a conservatoire setting. Developing personal and educational confidence can be a major challenge for many people with visual impairment and supporting this development is an important educational priority for the RWCMD and First Campus.

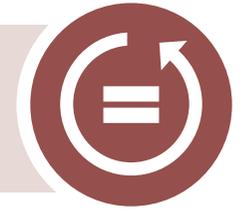
There are around four visually impaired students attending weekend classes, ten to fifteen students with visual impairment attending the Musicians in Focus evening class and 26 visually impaired participants attended the 2013 Musicians in Focus Summer School.

Rachel Starritt has become the first blind Junior Conservatoire student to gain a place on a four-year BMus course at the RWCMD, starting in September 2014. Rachel commenced her studies in the Junior Conservatoire in 2004.





Open University in Wales Access to Education for Carers



PARTICIPANTS

Adults and young carers.

PARTNERS

The Waterloo Foundation, The Carers Trust and carer organisations in Wales.

CONTACT

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This widening access project was developed between 2010 and 2013 with Waterloo Foundation funding and the lessons learned from the project have now been embedded into Open University policy UK-wide. Across Wales 171 carers have engaged with the programme and 47% have continued to study with the Open University in Wales.

The Access to Education for Carers project prioritises carers, aiming to raise their educational aspirations and increase study opportunities to improve confidence, skills and knowledge as well as providing the chance to network with other, like-minded learners.

The flexible, distance learning methods suit carers who often study at unconventional times to fit in with their caring roles. Over 500 flexible learning courses are available to carer students. One participant studied through the night as she was awake to tend to her daughter's medical needs.

The project has five strands including: providing targeted information, developed by the Open University and endorsed by The Carers Trust in Wales, to address carers directly and answer any study queries; working through carers groups and networks to disseminate information; working directly with

a smaller number of carers groups; providing bursary support for fees if funding is not available; and sharing best practice both within the Open University and more widely.

The project outcomes have influenced the Open University's policy work across the four UK nations. Carers are now identified as a priority group and flagged through management information systems to enable their learning to be tracked and provide additional support, if required.

“ We have been running a number of courses... including IT, Welsh, Employability, CV writing. The Open University offers opportunities to progress from these courses into higher education and many of the carers we are working with are keen to develop themselves and enhance their job opportunities for the future.”

Simone Percy, NEWCIS, Carers Trust

