

Partial Quality Enhancement Review of the Birmingham Learning Centre of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Outcome Report

June 2019

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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 Partial QER conducted by QAA at the Birmingham Learning Centre of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD). The review took place on 11 and 12 June 2019. The review was conducted by a team of three reviewers:

- Professor John Baldock
- Sarah Riches
- 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/University-of-Wales-Trinity-Saint-David

About the Birmingham Learning Centre of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David ('the University'; 'UWTSD') is a royal chartered university established in October 2012 through the merger of Swansea Metropolitan University with the previous University of Wales Trinity Saint David, itself formed through the merger of the University of Wales, Lampeter and Trinity University College, Carmarthen in 2010. The University is part of a dual sector university structure, known as the UWTSD Group. As part of this development, Coleg Sir Gâr and Coleg Ceredigion merged into the UWTSD Group in 2013-14. The University is also working towards a merger with the University of Wales, its former validating body, and integrated governance arrangements between the two universities have been in operation since October 2017.

The University has campuses in Carmarthen, Lampeter, London and Swansea. Through its dual sector partners and through outreach facilities, it also offers provision at a range of other locations in South Wales. It has two learning centres, in Cardiff and in Birmingham. There is no single 'main' campus and most of the faculties work across at least two locations. Staff have a 'home' campus in the sense of an office base, but the majority are expected to work across campuses and locations, travelling as and when required.

In March 2019, the University had a total of 10,315 enrolled students, including those studying at its collaborative partner institutions. 8,643 students (around 84%) were undergraduates and 2,454 students (around 24%) were studying on a part-time basis.

The University mission is described as 'transforming education; transforming lives'. Its vision, values and strategic priorities are set out in its Strategic Plan 2017-2022. The first strategic priority of the Plan is 'Putting Learners First', the supporting objectives of which include 'the promotion of participation by under-represented groups' through 'providing accessible learning opportunities and by removing barriers to participation. A companion objective is to 'offer attractive and relevant academic programmes that enable learners to develop the skills that they need for employment and to ensure that they can, in turn, make a direct contribution to the well-being and prosperity of their communities'.

The Birmingham Learning Centre opened in March 2018. It is located in the Sparkhill area of Birmingham where it was established to 'provide opportunities for people of all backgrounds to study a higher education programme in their community'. It is attracting students from a variety of backgrounds, in many cases students who would not otherwise have dreamt of entering higher education as well as older students who are seeking employment and life skills or who wish to develop their family businesses. The provision began with a single Level 4 Certificate of Education programme in Skills for the Workplace, a programme already well-established within the University, and delivery of BA programmes have already begun.

This review considers the strategic purpose and focus of the University in opening the Centre, how the Centre is meeting the University's strategic objectives and the performance of the Centre to date. This will enable the University to evaluate the progress of its delivery in Birmingham to date and to identify enhancements for the future.

Overarching judgements about the University of Wales Trinity Saint David in respect of its Birmingham Learning Centre

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

- In respect of its Birmingham Learning Centre, the University of Wales Trinity Saint David **meets** the requirements of the ESG Part 1 for internal quality assurance.
- In respect of its Birmingham Learning Centre, the University of Wales Trinity Saint David **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 two commendations, which are summarised below.

- Personalised student support throughout the student journey - including mechanisms for preparing, socialising, inducting and enrolling students.
- Steps taken to adapt programme delivery to ensure students engage effectively with their learning.

Affirmations

The QER has identified two affirmations, which are summarised below.

- The steps taken to address retention issues in a systematic way.
- The introduction of programme-based symposia and working groups to ensure consistency of delivery of programmes at different sites.

Recommendations

The QER makes three recommendations.

- That the University puts in place mechanisms to strengthen the assurance that the academic standards of awards at different sites are comparable.
- That the University ensures greater clarity of the information provided to students about the availability and nature of the Certificate of Higher Education in International Hotel Management programme.
- That the University systematically collects and analyses student satisfaction data at module and programme level at the Birmingham Learning Centre.

Further information

- 1 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.
- 2 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](#).
- 3 Further information about QAA and QER can be found on the [QAA website](#).

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