

# Quality Enhancement Review

Cardiff Metropolitan University

Outcome Report

January 2021



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## 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.<sup>1</sup> You can also find more information about the [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education \(QAA\)](#).<sup>2</sup>

## About this review

This is the Outcome Report of the QER conducted by QAA at Cardiff Metropolitan University. The Review Visit was originally scheduled to take place during May 2020. This was after the national lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in the Review Visit being postponed. In discussion with the University and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, the review visit was rescheduled firstly to take place in December 2020 and then on 18-25 January 2021. QAA made some amendments to the QER process to accommodate the ongoing pandemic, most notable of which was that the review visit was conducted entirely online. The review was conducted by a team of five reviewers:

- Professor John Baldock
- Ms Tessa Counsell
- Professor Diane Meehan
- Dr Osian Rees
- Mr Matthew Kitching (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 4, followed by any commendations, affirmations and recommendations.

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

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<sup>1</sup> About QER: [www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/types-of-review/quality-enhancement-review](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/types-of-review/quality-enhancement-review)

<sup>2</sup> About QAA: [www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us)

<sup>3</sup> Technical Report: [www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/quality-assurance-reports/Cardiff-Metropolitan-University](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/quality-assurance-reports/Cardiff-Metropolitan-University)

## About Cardiff Metropolitan University

The University can trace its origins back to 1865 when the School of Art first opened in the Old Free Library in Cardiff. During the 20th century, a number of Cardiff colleges - specialising in teacher training, technology, nautical studies, commerce and food technology - merged to form 'South Glamorgan' and then Cardiff Institute of Higher Education which, in 1996, was renamed the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff (UWIC). UWIC secured research degree awarding powers in 2009. Following the dissolution of the University of Wales the University was renamed Cardiff Metropolitan University (Cardiff Met) in 2011.

The University regards itself as a global university rooted in Wales with the purpose of delivering high-quality and high-impact, practice-focused and professionally-recognised education to students from around the globe. Its vision is 'to enable every student to fulfil their full potential to make outstanding graduate-level contributions and generate sustainable economic growth and social cohesion for Cardiff, Wales and the wider world'. The current strategic plan includes a programme of seven priorities, supported by enabling strategies, based on its four Core Values of Innovation, Creativity, Freedom and Diversity.

The University's academic portfolio concentrates on practice-focused and professionally recognised provision across art and design, education and public services, business and management, sport and health sciences, and digital, data and design technologies, including a provision in the Welsh medium which it continues to grow. Programmes are developed to align with the University's research, innovation and enterprise objectives and to meet student demand and employer need. The University is particularly focused on addressing local and global challenges by contributing to the development of inclusive economic growth and a sustainable environment for future generations in line with the *Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*.

Cardiff Met is structured into five academic schools: Cardiff School of Art and Design (CSAD); Cardiff School of Education and Social Policy (CSESP); Cardiff School of Management (CSM); Cardiff School of Sport and Health Sciences (CSSHS); and Cardiff School of Technologies (CST).

In 2018-19, the University had enrolled a total of 19,992 students. 10,663 students (9,153 FTE) were Wales-based of whom 173 students were studying at partner institutions within Wales. The University also had 9,329 students based in 17 partner institutions outside Wales. Undergraduate students constitute 80% of enrolments, with 19% of students enrolled on postgraduate taught degrees and the remaining 1% on research degrees. Full-time students comprise 86% of enrolments and part-time account for the remaining 14%.

In the previous QAA institutional review (hybrid model) review in 2014, there were five recommendations. The first recommendation was to ensure that policies and guidance for formative assessment feedback include equitable treatment of draft coursework assignments in all taught provision. The relevant modifications were made to the *Academic Handbook* and guidance issued to staff. The second recommendation called for a review and clarification of complaints procedures for collaborative provision and to ensure that these are consistently and accurately communicated to students. The relevant documentation was updated although the review team found that further clarity is required. The third recommendation was to apply a consistent university-wide approach to the training, support and monitoring of postgraduate research students engaged in teaching and assessment. An initial training framework was developed. The fourth recommendation was to ensure that all collaborative and articulation arrangements were covered by completed, signed and current inter-institutional agreements. Outstanding documentation

was signed and archived and the monitoring processes were tightened. The final recommendation was to ensure the clarity of formal documentation with regard to articulation arrangements. Parameters for articulation were clarified and training given to relevant staff.

The University asked the review to consider five areas of focus, selected to reflect areas of enhancement at different levels of development: Student Engagement; Partnership; Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility; The Use of Data to Drive Quality; and Graduate Employability. The latter two areas of focus had been chosen by the University as areas where there were identified challenges.

## Judgements about Cardiff Metropolitan University

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

- Cardiff Metropolitan University meets the requirements of the ESG Part 1 for internal quality assurance.
- Cardiff Metropolitan 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 several commendations, which are summarised below

- The strong contribution made by the Associate Deans Student Engagement (ADSE) in consolidating student engagement and partnership between students and the University.
- The particularly proactive approach of the Library and Information Services (LIS) to further increase the level of support to students, particularly during the pandemic.
- The impact of the Quality Enhancement Directorate (QED) initiatives in ensuring the consistent management and enhancement of the quality of the student learning experience.
- The well-embedded and robust oversight of TNE partnerships which ensures that academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience are not at risk.
- The consistent and highly-effective organisation and management of placement activity across the institution.

### Affirmations

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

- The steps being taken to further develop and expand the current doctoral academy in order to strengthen the postgraduate research community.
- The significant progress in the use of data sources to support the student experience.
- The actions being taken to address concerns raised by students on a franchised programme in one further education partner in relation to the quality of their learning experience.

## Recommendations

The QER makes the following recommendations.

- That arrangements for supporting student representation in partnership institutions are applied consistently and effectively.
- That the University ensures that all postgraduate research students who teach undertake appropriate formal training before taking responsibility for teaching including specific training for online delivery where appropriate.
- That the University ensures that its requirements for handling academic complaints and appeals are fully understood by all partners and that these requirements are clearly and consistently communicated to all partner students.

## 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](#).

**QAA2590 - R10477 - April 21**

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