Stakeholder Engagement Statement

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1. INTRODUCTION

Definitions

1.1 Stakeholder engagement refers to the process used by a university to identify, understand, involve and respond to its stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement can help universities gather information to inform decisions and assessments of impact and performance, and build trust, confidence and understanding in their stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement can be delivered through a wide range of mechanisms, may involve one-way or reciprocal interactions, and can be passive or participatory in nature.[1]

1.2 Stakeholders are individuals, groups or organisations with an interest in the activities of a university. Stakeholders may be internal or external to a university. Their interests may occur as a consequence of being affected by a university's actions, objectives, policies or decisions or because they seek to influence these. Stakeholders may be concerned by actual or potential impacts. Stakeholders may be connected to a university as a consequences of a contract, formal or informal affiliations or associations, or an interest that is not manifested through any direct relationship with the university. Stakeholders may have a past, present or future interest in a university, may have an enduring or transitory interest, and the extent of their interest may vary over time.[2]

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[1] Effective stakeholder engagement, a good practice guide for Welsh Universities, David Price Consulting May 2022

[2] Effective stakeholder engagement, a good practice guide for Welsh Universities, David Price Consulting May 2022

Context

1.3   Our mission is to *inspire and enable through higher education, research and engagement; working together with our students, staff and partners*. Our activity is underpinned by our core values of accessible, supportive, innovative and ambitious.

1.4   We have continuous dialogue with wide groups of stakeholders and we aim to seek and take into consideration their views in the development and implementation of our Vision and Strategy and other key supporting strategies as well as about how we operate and perform our role in the community, the region, nationally and internationally.

1.5   We are civically engaged and collaborate externally across sectors, industries and local and national government and work in close partnership with our students and staff. We are best able to serve our stakeholders when we are well informed about the nature and needs of those stakeholders.

1.6   In all that we seek to achieve, the part played by our students, staff and external partners is crucial, in the context of the University's core values:

2.   HOW DO WE ENGAGE WITH OUR STAKEHOLDER GROUPS?

Our students

2.1   Students are at the forefront of our working, and we look to them and their voice to help shape what we do and how we do it, through close partnership working with the Students' Union and directly with students through various means.

2.2   The Vision and Strategy 2025 and our Strategy for Supporting Student Learning and Achievement (SSSLA) articulate the University's priority to *work with students as partners to develop a culturally embedded approach to student engagement* as we work more effectively together.

2.3   We have a [Student Charter](#) is in place developed jointly with the Students' Union which sets out what we can expect from each other as partners in a learning community.

2.4   We also have in place a [Framework for student engagement](#) which articulates the ways in which we engage with students and explains what happens to the information we receive through those engagements.

2.5   Students are present and have a voice in key decision-making bodies of the University: the Board of Governors, Academic Board and the Vice-Chancellor's Board. They also play a key role in some of our interactions with regulatory and review bodies such as the Higher Education Funding Body for Wales (HEFCW) and the Quality Assurance Agency.

Our staff

2.3   The professionalism of our staff is key in enabling our Vision and Strategy to be realised, and we support, engage and listen to our staff to ensure that what we deliver is achieved, whilst ensuring that this is done in a fair and responsible manner.

2.4   We are committed to engaging with our staff through a range of mechanisms including through focus groups, staff representative bodies, conferences and workshops. A wide range of staff development opportunities are offered every year, at university-wide or local department level as well as externally.

2.5   We monitor the quality of our staff engagement every two years through a staff engagement survey and the results themselves are discussed through staff focus groups to determine how to address improvements identified through the survey. Areas explored in the survey include how people feel they are led, inspired and empowered; how their performance is managed and rewarded; how well we communicate and whether people are satisfied with working conditions. Survey data are captured and benchmarked by an independent external organisation.

Our External partners

2.6   **External partners, supporters and friends are essential to ensuring the relevancy and realising the value of the University in driving the economic, social and cultural successes of the communities we serve; our partnerships enrich our offer.**

2.7   We have in place a corporate social responsibility statement which sets out our aims for engaging in our relationships and operations. In addition, our Civic Mission Framework sets out how we do transformative cross-cutting work with local authorities, health bodies, education and national partners, involving students and staff. This positions the university as one of the 'Leaders of Place' in our community, expanding our partnerships, underpinning social benefit and providing active citizenship opportunities which have real impact.

2.8   We invite all stakeholders to our Annual Open Meeting where we report on our prior year performance and future plans; and employ a range of mechanisms where we seek external stakeholder views such as on advisory boards and committees.

2.9   The Vice-Chancellor, and members of the senior Executive Team supported by ~~its~~ their own teams, are charged with maintaining stakeholder relationships at corporate level, and briefing the Board of Governors and senior management colleagues about their engagement with external stakeholders, which may be on a one-to-one basis or in formal structures. The University periodically reviews the status and mapping of external stakeholder groups and identifies where there may be gaps. External stakeholder relations are nurtured in a flexible and responsive manner.

Principal Stakeholders

2.10   The table below presents the University's principal stakeholder categories and sets out the purpose and nature of our engagement with them.

Stakeholder Category	Stakeholder Examples	How we engage with them
Students	Current, potential, visiting	Dialogue through open days and related recruitment activity. Partnership working with the Students' Union. Annual review of the Student Charter with the Students' Union Student representation on University Committees, at programme validation and review events, at external quality enhancement reviews and other audits and institutional inspections.

Stakeholder Category	Stakeholder Examples	How we engage with them
		Student representation at Faculty, course, committee and Board level and on relevant working groups Student Voice Forums Responses to student surveys *for example:* National Student Survey, Graduate Outcomes Survey, Student Evaluation of Module Survey and Students' Union's on-line feedback tool. Reponses and learning from students' complaints processes. Governing body engagement through visits to academic services departments
Staff	Current, potential, emeritus, visiting	Day to day dialogue, meetings, and committees Responses and learning from biennial Staff Engagement Surveys and periodic 'pulse' surveys Staff representation on University decision-making bodies Governing body engagement through visits to academic and professional services departments
Business, Industry and commerce	Regional Fora such as the Confederation of British Industry, Institute of Directors, Federation of Small Businesses, Chambers of Commerce	Proactive membership of regional and national groups including North Wales Economic Ambition Board and the Mersey Dee Alliance.
Employers within public/private/third sectors and wider community platforms.	Major/significant employers in the region and/or relevant to university. Public Statutory Regulatory Bodies.	Interactions at academic programme and professional services levels focusing on skills needs, curriculum development, research opportunities and graduate employability. Civic engagement, placements and volunteering initiatives involving staff and students. On-campus conferences and events.
Local communities	Local residents, local businesses, local community associations/ interest groups, local arts & sports organisations	Engagement through our Civic Mission activities. Active membership of community interest groups such as the Wrexham Gateway Partnership.
UK, Welsh and Local Government,	UK government, Welsh government, MPs, MSs and Welsh and English Councils and councillors, British Council, University Board of Governors, UKVI, public and third sector organisations	Dialogue with political representatives and senior civil servants. Contributions and constructive inputs to national and regional fora. Engagement and influencing through correspondence and networking. Purposeful engagement to demonstrate accountability for the University's performance and compliance with regulations, directives and reporting requirements. Proactive approaches to opportunities for funding. Direct engagement as well as through sector bodies or board membership. Regular interactions with the Board of Governors though the committee structure.
Funding and Regulatory and Umbrella Bodies	HEFCW/CTER, OfS Charity Commission, accreditation & professional bodies, UKVI, Health & Safety	Contributions and constructive inputs to national and regional fora. Engagement and influencing through correspondence and networking.

Stakeholder Category	Stakeholder Examples	How we engage with them
	Executive, Welsh Language Commissioner, UKRI, charities, business & industry, university donors, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, lenders, GuildHE, Learned Society for Wales, UCEA	Purposeful engagement to demonstrate accountability for the University's performance and compliance with regulations, directives and reporting requirements. Proactive approaches to opportunities for funding. Direct engagement as well as through sector bodies or board membership.
Higher education sector organisations	UUK, Universities Wales, UCEA, Advance HE, Jisc, OIA, QAA, HESA, UCAS. BUFDG,	University membership and/or representation on relevant bodies. Exchange of information and sharing of good practice.
Friends of the University	Honorary Fellows, Alumni	Alumni network: continued support through Careers Service and local academic departments Honorary Fellows: keeping updated through sharing VC Office communications and invitations to university events.
Media (print and online)	TV, radio, newspapers, digital media	Press releases about corporate, staff or student developments and achievements which enhance the university's reputation. Opinion pieces/responses to queries. Blogs, vlogs and social media posts.
Other educational providers	Partners, [competitors], local FE colleges, schools	Collaborations, networking and benchmarking with peer institutions in the University sector (within and beyond Wales). Specialist HE networks for functional areas. Progression agreements with feeder schools and colleges, UK and international. Partnership delivery through an expanded portfolio (UK and international).
Public authorities	Local authorities, police, fire & rescue authority, local health boards.	Exchange of information and sharing of good practice. Collaborations and specialist networks to enhance understanding of the safety and operations of both parties. Interactions at academic programme and professional services levels focusing on skills needs, curriculum development, research opportunities and graduate employability.
Recognised Trade Unions	UNISON University and College Unions (UCU)	Formal engagement through established Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee (JNCC) Membership includes members of VCET.
Funded pension schemes	USS, LGPS, TPS	Direct engagement.
Suppliers	Providers of contracted-out services, private providers of student residential accommodation, suppliers of goods & services	Engagement through procurement processes and learning from completed projects or service contracts

Internal stakeholders are indicated in red

3. Monitoring and Review
This statement will be reviewed at least every three years.