



**Q: What is the current position with regard to the University of Wales?**

A: The University is in the process of merging with the University of Wales: Trinity Saint David and Swansea Metropolitan University.

**Q: Has this merger taken place?**

A: The process of integration has started. The legal constitutional merger can only be finalised when the University of Wales has completed its legal obligations to current international students, international collaborative centres and other stakeholders. University of Wales: Trinity Saint David and Swansea Metropolitan University formally merged on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012.

**Q: Who had the authority to take such a decision regarding merger?**

A: The Council of the University of Wales is the sovereign decision making body and is the authority able to take such decisions.

**Q: Where there other options considered?**

A: Yes. The Council considered the full range of options presented within the McCormick review. It decided that the best option was to seek constitutional merger. The University Council had received more than one proposal. A second proposal from another University in Wales also recommended full institutional merger, and a letter of strategic interest was also received from a different University.

**Q: Why did the University of Wales decide to merge?**

A: The decision to merge was taken as a direct response to the policy directives by the Welsh Government in the area of higher education.

**Q: What were the key policy directives?**

A: The Welsh Government had charged the Higher Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) with recommending a new all Wales reconfiguration proposal for higher education. This proposal included a range of recommendations which suggested a number of mergers and strategic relationships for all Universities in Wales. The HEFCW plan clearly outlined a substantial reduction in the number of Universities in Wales. This could only be achieved through mergers. The Minister responsible for higher education consulted upon the proposals and then presented his recommendations to the Welsh Government. The proposal that the University of Wales should transform itself through merger was accepted. The proposals for higher education restructuring were also approved by the Cabinet of the Welsh Government.

**Q: Were there other policy recommendations which influenced the decision to merge?**

A: The University of Wales, HEFCW and the Welsh Government also had regard to the numerous recommendations presented within the McCormick Review on the governance of higher education in Wales. The Review was tasked to consider in detail the current and future role of the University. The report highlighted a number of policy issues and options. One of the key recommendations presented was that if the University was to have a meaningful role within a higher education context in Wales that it would have to merge into another University. The University of Wales reflected upon this key policy document and decided to act upon the recommendation.

**Q: What are the key stages incurred within such a merger?**

A: Any merger undertaken should be regarded as a process rather than a single event. In this context, both Universities are governed under Royal Charters. The decision taken by the University of Wales to merge into the University of Wales: Trinity Saint David meant that the transformed University would be established through the 1828 Royal Charter of University of Wales: Trinity Saint David. As a result, on the actual date of merger the current University of Wales charter would be revoked and presented back to Her Majesty the Queen. It would not be possible to retain two royal charters. The 1828 Charter is the oldest University Royal Charter in England and Wales after those representing the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

**Q: What are the practical stages involved in such a process?**

A: Both Universities will have to adhere to a range of constitutional and structural issues. This will include full engagement with the Privy Council, the Welsh Government and the UK Government. Merging royal chartered Universities is a complex issue. The last such merger in Wales was between Cardiff University and the Welsh College of Medicine. As the University proceeds through the various legal stages associated with completing its legal obligations it will be necessary to present a Bill to the Welsh Government for the final stages of the merger process.

**Q: Has the University started on this process?**

A: Yes. A draft bill was presented for consideration to the UK Government last year and the University initiated a consultation process which would have included all interested parties both within and external to the University. The draft Bill was presented to Westminster rather than Cardiff because at the time, the final procedures for considering private bills had not been finalised by the Welsh Government. Once those procedures had been introduced, the Bill was transferred to the Welsh Government, and hence withdrawn from Westminster. Before the Bill is taken forward, the University has to address a range of legal obligation issues associated with current international activity. At the time of initial presentation, the University had yet to complete the full risk evaluation regarding legal obligation.

**Q: Why is it not possible to merge the University of Wales immediately?**

A: The University of Wales has to honour its legal commitments to the thousands of international students and the international centres who have entered, in good faith, into legal contractual agreements with the University of Wales. This is a complicated and detailed engagement process and needs careful management. The current termination process instigated by the University of Wales is one of the most important stages in this merger process.

**Q: How will the University honor its legal commitment to students who have matriculated on a Wales award?**

A: The University Council has made a public commitment that any student who has enrolled on a Wales award will be given the opportunity to complete their studies. This has also been shared with the current international collaborative centres offering programmes of study under the former validated model.

**Q: What does this merger mean for existing students and for student who are about to start their programme of study?**

A: The University will permit existing students at all stages of their studies to continue until completion of their current programme. Students that are about to start their studies or are part of a future intake that has been agreed between the collaborative centre and the University will be registered with the University of Wales and permitted to complete their programme.

**Q: How long will students have to complete their degrees (including re-sits) and who will be awarding the degree?**

A: All students that have commenced their studies at agreed intake points specified in each centre's validation agreement will be permitted to complete their studies under the prescribed timescales in the University's Regulations. The University of Wales will continue to be the degree awarding body to all current students for the duration of their course.

**Q: Will degree certificates have "University of Wales" on them as the degree awarding body and has the value of the degree changed?**

A: A student currently studying for a University of Wales degree will, on successful completion, be awarded a degree certificate which will bear "University of Wales" as the degree awarding body. The University of Wales degree and the name University of Wales have a strong history and are widely recognised and highly regarded by employers worldwide.

**Q: Does the University of Wales still act as an accrediting body for other Universities in Wales?**

A: The University of Wales Council resolved in October 2011 that it would give leave of notice to all Universities in Wales that it would no longer act as an accrediting body for those institutions which had their own degree awarding

powers. The University is currently working through the legal agreements with all current accredited institutions in Wales.

**Q: Are the old University Constituent Colleges [Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff and Swansea] still members of the University of Wales?**

A: No. The original constituent institutions all left the University of Wales after they had received their own degree awarding powers. This was in line with Welsh Government policy. The original constitutional institutions all gave leave of notice and left. In leaving the University they relinquished their trusteeship responsibilities for the various activities associated with the institution. In doing so, the constituent institutions also had no legal responsibilities for any liabilities identified in the name of the University of Wales.

**Q: Who was responsible for all of the structural changes that happened after the four constituent colleges left?**

A: The University of Wales established a review group in 2003/4 to restructure the University of Wales. The review group included membership from within the University of Wales and from the constituent institutions which were leaving. The group was chaired by the then Pro-Chancellor, Lord Wigley of Caernarfon. Significant changes were proposed and accepted by all parties. These included drafting a new supplemental charter, bringing an end to the University Court and the original committee of the Guild of Graduates and appointing an independent Vice-Chancellor. A key consideration by all parties was that structures such as a Court and Guild of Graduates should not compete with similar structures within Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff and Swansea. This was accepted by the University of Wales Council.

**Q: What is the University of Wales Alumni Association and who are its members?**

A: Every student who has successfully completed a Degree, Diploma or Certificate awarded by the University of Wales, be it studying at an institution in Wales or at one of our many international collaborative centres, is entitled to become a member of the University of Wales Alumni Association. Membership of the Association is free, and with alumni in all four corners of the world, members are able to connect with people on a global scale. As well as a way of keeping in touch with the University and each other, members may be entitled to a range of benefits and be kept up to date on alumni news and events happening worldwide.

**Q: What will happen to the other services offered by the University of Wales?**

A: The University of Wales Council has a trusteeship duty. A public statement has already been made that they have established ADDUNED CYMRU - The Welsh Pledge which will entail a range of strategic arrangements to safeguard some of the traditional services associated with the University. Further information regarding this will be available in due course.

**Q: Does the University Council have the power to give such an undertaking?**

A: Yes. The Council is the designated body who is responsible for all of the activities and functions undertaken in the name of the University of Wales.

**Q: What will happen to the small number of land that is yet to be sold as part of the legacy of the Welsh Churches Act?**

A: The land will be sold and the funding received will be shared in accordance with the legal deed between the Universities of Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff, Swansea, the National Library of Wales and the University of Wales or its successor body.