

# UCML Executive Committee

Friday 2 November 2018      12.30 – 16.00  
Monnet Room, Europe House  
32 Smith Square, London SW1P 3EU



## Wales Report

Firstly, I would like to thank members for electing me to the role of UCML representative for Wales. I look forward to working with colleagues across Wales to explore how UCML can support and facilitate institutions in maintaining recruitment, and in delivering excellence in student experience.

Activities since the last meeting:

### **1. Routes into Languages Cymru**

Since the last update in April, here are some key activities from Routes into Languages Cymru.

- On the 27th June, 167 pupils from 5 schools in North Wales attended the 'Blas ar Iaith/Languages Feast' event at Bangor University. Students were given a 'taste' of many languages and cultures in sessions organised in partnership with over 12 providers.
- The National Final of the Spelling Bee competition was held at Swansea University on the 4th July and was attended by 72 competitors from 26 schools from across Wales. After nail-biting rounds, the final winners for the French, Spanish, German and Welsh Second Language competitions received their prizes from the Lord Mayor of the City and County of Swansea, Councillor David Phillips.
- Routes into Languages Cymru took part in Cardiff Commitment's 'Open your Eyes' week, visiting two primary schools in the Cardiff area. In the same vein, over 100 primary pupils attended the International Day at Bangor University.
- Routes Cymru has been formally invited to be part of the Welsh Government's Global Futures Steering group.
- On the 13th October, Routes Cymru supported the organisation of the Cardiff-Oxford Creative Multilingualism Day for year 11 students in Wales in collaboration with the Seren Network, Jesus College Oxford, Cardiff University, Oxford University, and the Creative Multilingualism Project.

### **2. Student Mentoring Programme**

The MFL Student Mentoring Programme continues to play a key role in supporting MFL recruitment and attainment in schools. A partnership between Cardiff, Bangor, Swansea and Aberystwyth Universities, the project is a flagship model promoting partnerships across education levels to promote a common cause. MFL Mentoring is funded by the Welsh Government under its Global Futures Strategy 2015-2020. The Student Mentoring Programme has grown year-on-year and over the past three years the total reach of the project has been 96 schools and over 2000 mentors.

### **3. Parliamentary visit**

The Student Mentoring Programme and Routes into Languages Cymru were among those presenting on Welsh initiatives to boost languages uptake at the meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group for MFL on October 11<sup>th</sup>. Claire Gorrara gave a presentation on 'Working together: How universities can boost language learning in schools and the wider community – lessons from Wales'. A report will be produced by one of the student mentors, and this will be uploaded to the UCML Wales pages.

#### **4. Bangor**

Bangor has recently undergone a significant restructure, and languages are now part of the School of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics. While this means that there have been some uncertainties in the short-term, languages colleagues are looking forward to developing new modules/programmes with new colleagues in the longer term.

Bangor hosted the annual conference of the Association for German Studies at the end of August, which was very successful and brought 75 Germanists to Bangor (as well as Alexander Kluge as President's Guest - albeit virtually).

#### **5. Swansea**

Swansea are preparing for the upcoming 2019 'CALT' (Computer Assisted Literary Translation) workshop on 25-26 January 2019. The workshop combines presentations with hands-on training, and is free of charge. The call for papers, and further details, can be found at: <https://languagestranslationandmediaatswansea.wordpress.com/2019-calt-workshops/>

Swansea have also issued a call for papers for the OWRI conference on Multilingual Literatures to be held 17-19 July 2019 at Gregynog. Confirmed keynote speakers are Professor Doris Sommer (Harvard), Professor Carl Tighe (Derby) and Professor Daniel Williams (Swansea). Further information can be found at: <https://multilingualliteratures.wordpress.com>

#### **6. Cardiff**

Cardiff has been focussing on the implementing a new UG curriculum, with a focus on the transnational. The new curriculum came about from Size and Shape review, and colleagues are looking forward to getting student feedback on the new courses.

Recruitment has been buoyant for the second year running, reaping the benefits from a change of policy, which has removed the requirement that students need to have studied languages to 'A' level. Despite the positive recruitment figures, colleagues remain alert to the challenges of the current market.

#### **7. The Languages Trends Wales survey**

The latest report on languages trends in Wales will be published on October 25<sup>th</sup> 2018 (in between the date of submission for the report and the meeting). I will give an update in the meeting, and upload the report to the UCML Wales pages.

#### **8. Future planning**

I would like to hold a symposium in January, bringing together colleagues from across institutions in Wales, to explore new responses to the challenging language climate, the university-school interface

in Wales, ways of supporting Welsh-medium MFL learning, and the security of MFL in schools and universities in Wales. I would like to explore the possibility of setting up more regular meetings between Welsh institutions, rotating the location of the events to ensure accessibility and equality. Future meetings might engage key stakeholders beyond the academy, but I would like the future direction of how UCML supports colleagues in Wales to be set by colleagues from across Welsh institutions.

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