Swansea University
Alumni Research

Research debrief prepared by
Gerard Kennedy, Development &
Alumni Relations Manager.
March 2019
Research Objectives

To understand to what extent and the ways in which alumni want to be engaged with Swansea University.

Specifically:

• To gauge how connected and engaged alumni are with the University and how engaged they would like to be.
• To understand the range of careers alumni go into after Swansea.
• To analyse ways in which alumni viewed the University while they were here and how that perception has changed since they have left.
• To determine what alumni think of our communications and how they wish to be communicated with.
• To gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which alumni would be willing to support the University.
Methodology & Respondents

Online Survey – promoted by email and social media

3,426 responses from the online survey
3,400 responses in English
26 responses in Welsh

Survey Respondents by Gender

5 respondents identified as “Other”.
8 respondents identified as “Prefer not to Say”.

Female
Male
45%
55%
Respondent Profile

Highest qualification received at Swansea

- Undergraduate Degree: Over 65% of respondents completed their first degree at Swansea.
- Master's Degree: Almost 30% of respondents hold post-graduate qualifications.
71% of our alumni respondents live in the UK. 8% are based in Europe with Germany, France and Greece showing the highest populations of alumni. 21% are spread throughout the rest of the world.
The responses to the survey reflect the size and age of our Colleges.

The largest number of responses came from COAH alumni.
Alumni Employment

The unemployment rate for Swansea graduates in the survey is below the UK national average of 4%.

Nearly 18% of respondents have retired from work.
Alumni Employment

How our alumni are currently employed

- Employed by a Company: 50.0%
- Employed by a Government or Publicly Funded Organisation: 30.0%
- Employed by an NGO: 10.0%
- Self employed/running a business: 0.0%

Nearly 15% of respondent are self-employed or running a business.
Alumni Employment

The top areas in which our alumni work.
Key Findings:

Almost all alumni (93.8%) feel that Swansea had a positive impact on their lives.

78% of alumni felt that Swansea was a positive Social experience.

73% of alumni feel that Swansea has had a positive impact on their Career.

The most important aspect of people’s time at Swansea is their Academic Achievement and Friendships made.

15% of alumni feel connected to the University. 44% of alumni would like to be more connected to the University.
Key Findings:

Alumni connections to the University are reinforced through University emails and via connections with fellow graduates.

46% of alumni would be highly likely to recommend Swansea as a destination for prospective students.

76% of alumni have stayed in touch with fellow graduates in the past 2 years.

47% have visited the University website in the last 2 years.

For younger alumni social media and contact with fellow graduates is the main way to retain a connection to Swansea. For older alumni the University magazine and emails are more important.
Connections to Swansea
Email and contact with fellow graduates are the main ways that alumni retain their connection with the University.
Connections to Swansea

Ways in which connections are reinforced / date of graduation
20.3% of respondents feel that their connection to the University has increased in the last 5 years.

34.7% of respondents feel their connection has decreased in the same time.
Connections to Swansea

43.9% of respondents feel that they would like to be more connected to the University.
Connections to Swansea

Strengthening the connection to Swansea University

Create/Improve alumni networks

- Reunions would be amazing!
- Ability to connect with people from my course
- The ability/opportunity to reconnect with fellow graduates (we left before Facebook was invented); professional networking opportunities; career support

Alumni as helpers as well as donors

- Ask for my support – not financial – for current students
- I run a 150 person business in the US, advising on over $100B of M&A transactions a year. I am sure I could be helpful on recruiting or even to current students on post Swansea life.
- Become a mentor
- Be a guest speaker

Alumni Events

Send me a copy of SAIL
Alumni Experience
Alumni Experience

The impact Swansea has had on the lives of our alumni

93.8% positive
78% positive
74% positive
51.2% positive
For those that selected “Other” comments include:

- “Combination of academic, friendships and preparation for life”
- “I met my future wife”
- “Learning to think critically”
- “It was a time wasting experience”
- “Personal growth”
- “Union Societies”
- “Developing my knowledge of the chosen subject outside of a narrow academic curriculum”
- “Variety of experiences - unknown subjects, organising sport, politics - strike demonstration lobbying, radio, events, beautiful area”
- “Experience studying abroad”
- “Learning how to live independently”
When asked how they wish the University to strengthen the engagement with alumni nearly 35% of respondents indicated that they would like more reunions, networking events and events at Swansea they could get involved with.

25% of alumni said they would prefer more targeted communications that referred to their subject of study and era of graduation.
13% of alumni said that they would like ways to find and network with other Swansea alumni. Of the “other” responses, many alumni commented that they would like more career support post graduation, incentives to study postgraduate qualifications at Swansea or to get involved with the research at the University.
Alumni Experience

Ways in which alumni have stayed connected to Swansea in the last 2 years

- Provided a placement for a Swansea University student: 0.00%
- Attended a Swansea University Alumni Chapter event: 0.00%
- Attended a Swansea University event: 0.00%
- Provided an internship for a Swansea University student/recent graduate: 0.00%
- Served as a mentor to a Swansea University student/recent graduate: 0.00%
- Volunteered at Swansea University: 0.00%
- Provided an alumni profile: 0.00%
- Made a financial contribution to Swansea University: 0.00%
- Visited the Swansea University website: 25.00%
- Kept in touch with other Swansea University graduates: 45.00%

Connections to other Swansea Graduates and visits to the website are the main ways that alumni have stayed connected to the University.
Alumni Experience

What is the most significant aspect you took away or learned from your time at Swansea University?

Swansea university taught me independence as well as confidence in my studies and in friendships/sports teams.

Meeting people with different backgrounds, nationalities. Broadened my outlook.

Independence, ability to achieve

The experience opened up the world for me as I came from a small rural community in Powys.

I can achieve anything as long as I put in the work. Also, a strong sense of community and warmth.

My growth as a person, I have matured so much and gained confidence to take into the work place.

Relationships with friends from countries across the globe.
Alumni's overall impression of the University

- On it's way down - not doing enough to keep up
- Gradually declining
- Holding its ground
- Gradually improving
- On it's way up - doing a lot of good things at the moment

The overall impression from alumni is that the University is improving and is on it’s way up.
Propensity to Give
5% of survey respondents report making a gift in the last 2 years.

Student Hardship is the area most alumni would be likely to support.

In the “other” category environmental research was the most commonly cited area.
Willingness to Support
## Willingness to Support

Would you be willing to do any of the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>COAH</th>
<th>Engineering</th>
<th>HHS</th>
<th>Law</th>
<th>Medicine</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>SoM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offer Advice to students/recent graduates</td>
<td>1534</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer at one of our Open Days</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help providing space to host an alumni networking event</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer with our gardening teams on campus</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide an alumni profile</td>
<td>1194</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be a mentor to student/recent graduate</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be a Guest Speaker</td>
<td>851</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer at a recruitment event overseas</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Willingness to Support

416 alumni indicated that they would be willing to offer internships to alumni.

347 alumni said they would be interested in attending our careers fair.

A further 226 said they would be interested in more bespoke careers events at Swansea.
Alumni Communications
49.9% of alumni have not received the main communication piece in our alumni relations programme. There are also some big variations between Colleges.
68.6% of alumni believe that SAIL is good or excellent quality.

Between Colleges the highest quality ratings were reported by College of Science alumni (78%) and the lowest levels were reported by Medical School & Law School alumni (46%)
Alumni Communications

We asked alumni how they feel about our emails

Our email are designed so you can skim read to get the headlines but dig deeper if you want to.

Yes - it allows me to keep up to date without taking up too much time

None of these statements apply to me

No - I would prefer to have more content in the e-newsletter
Alumni Communications

What do you think about the frequency of our email communication?

- Too frequent
- Not frequent enough
- About right

Do you feel that the communications are tailored to your interests or connection to the University?

- No
- Sometimes
- Yes

We seem to be getting the frequency about right but there is a lot we can do to tailor the content for our readers.
Email is the preferred channel for communication with alumni. Whilst we’ve seen significant growth in our social media channels it’s also clear that a lot of alumni do not use social media. This places greater importance on our email and print magazine communications.