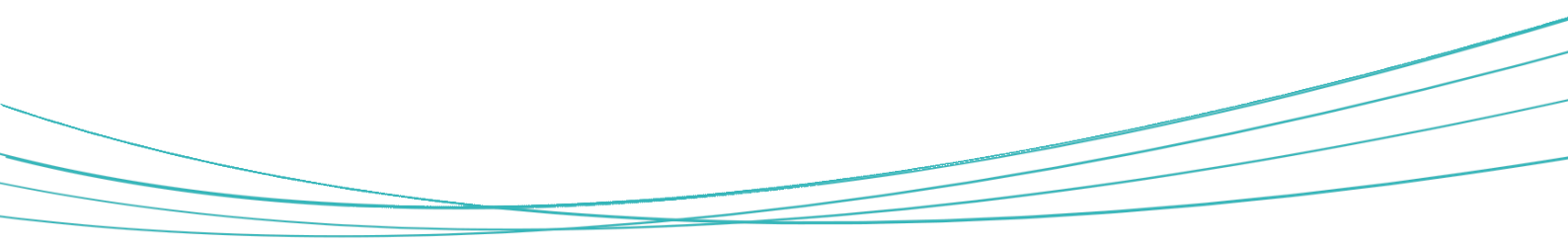




Welsh Language Standards Annual Report
Reporting Period 01.08.2022 – 31.07.2023



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1.0 Introduction and Overview

Since April 2018, Adult Learning Wales (ALW) has been legally required to comply with Welsh Language Standards, as established by the Welsh Government under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The Welsh Language Standards set out how the Welsh Language should be used and treated in different situations, and establish equal rights for Welsh speakers and English speakers, based on two principles:

- 'In Wales, the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language'
- 'Persons in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of the Welsh language if they choose to do so'

Our aim is to exceed the requirements of the standards wherever possible and to become an exemplary provider of Welsh language services and delivery.

This is ALW's annual report on our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards listed in our Statutory Compliance Notice. The report covers the period 1st August 2022 to the 31st July 2023.

2.0 Developing Welsh Language and Bilingualism and Monitoring Compliance

In order to mainstream activity, key issues on Welsh language and bilingualism are discussed and ideas developed at regular Operational Management Team (OMT) meetings.

Progress in relation to all aspects of the Welsh language, including the Welsh Language Standards, is reported to and monitored and scrutinised by our Learner Experience Committee and Council.

There is a clear commitment to and advocacy of the Welsh language amongst the Senior Leadership Team and ALW's Council (our governing body), as demonstrated by our organisational requirement that all Council meetings are bilingual. Our Chief Executive has developed her Welsh language skills to Intermediate level and regularly leads and participates in bilingual meetings.

We continue to work in partnership with Welsh language organisations such as Y Ganolfan Dysgu Cymraeg Genedlaethol / the National Centre for Learning Welsh and Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to support strategic and operational developments relating to Welsh and bilingualism.

During the 2022/23 academic year we continued our collaborative work with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, Grŵp Neath Port Talbot College, Bridgend College, Merthyr College and Coleg Gwent, funded by the Welsh Government's Professional Learning Fund.

The project has developed online e-learning packages for practitioners and case studies of best practice to share across the sector, along with establishing a professional learning community and providing continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities for staff.

Working closely with Sgiliaith, during 2022/23 the project has focused on staff development for embedding Welsh Language and Bilingualism into Teaching and Learning Practices. These practices were presented at the Project's first Sharing Best Practice Conference in June 2023.

The organisation is also registering with the Gwreiddio Scheme, in order to further support and develop the Welsh Language skills of its workforce. It has been agreed with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, that we will register for the Scheme as an organisation rather than individual staff members.

3.0 Welsh Medium and Bilingual Provision

One of our key challenges is to increase our levels of Welsh medium and bilingual provision and for 2022/23 we were just 1 percentage point away from meeting our organisational targets of 15% total courses and 12% of total hours (excluding English for Speakers of Other Languages/ESOL) to include an element of Welsh. These targets were underpinned by our Welsh Medium and Bilingual Provision Action Plan, which aligns with the national 'Further Education & Apprenticeships Action Plan', in support of 'Tuag Cymraeg 2050'

During the 2022/23 academic year, 9.4% of learners identified as either a fluent Welsh speaker or Welsh speaker but not fluent. Amongst our Welsh speaking learners, successful completion was excellent at 87%, which is 5% points above the success rate of adult learning activities in academic year 2021/22, according to the publication *"Learner outcome measures for work based learning and adult learning, August 2021 to July 2022 (Revised) – 20/03/23 SFR 10/2023(R)."*

All areas of delivery have targets for Welsh medium and bilingual curriculum provision which align with the overarching Curriculum Plan and Welsh Medium and Bilingual Provision Action Plan. Actions for the development of Welsh medium and bilingual provision and increased opportunities for our learners to use and develop their Welsh language skills are included in our Quality Development Plan.

We continue to appoint delivery staff who can deliver courses bilingually and through the medium of Welsh. Delivery staff have access to a range of resources to support bilingual pedagogy, including the FE Handbook for Practitioners and 6 online modules, which were developed as part of the PLF Collaborative Project.

Funded by Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's Development Grant, the role of Welsh Medium and Bilingual Provision Champion continues. The Champion supports the development and implementation of all aspects of the Welsh Medium and Bilingual Provision Plan Action and the outcomes of relevant Welsh Medium and Bilingual projects. The post holder also carries out Welsh Medium and Bilingual teaching in accordance with the Curriculum Plan and supports the achievement of organisational targets relating to Welsh Medium and Bilingual delivery.

4.0 Compliance with Service Delivery Standards

4.1 Translation

Efficient and effective translation underpins the quality of our internal and external communication, and we currently draw upon a combination of internal and external translation services. All staff, learner and member communications are bilingual.

We have an internal translator post within our staffing structure. This part-time post provides a translation service for the organisation, whilst also reviewing our Welsh language communications, particularly those in the public domain such as the website and social media, to ensure accuracy.

We allocate as many strategic and public documents to our internal translator as possible to develop a consistent Welsh voice and have created a bilingual organisational glossary of terms to ensure consistency in the use of Welsh.

4.2 Complaints

During the reporting period there have been no complaints received relating to compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

There have been no written complaints received relating to our compliance with the service delivery, policy or operational standards imposed.

4.3 Correspondence and Telephone Calls

Language preference for contact has been recorded to date using a link in the email signatures for all staff. However, we are currently developing a new system which will enable individuals to record their preferred language for correspondence in a more centralised location.

All documents and forms for learners and the public are produced bilingually wherever possible or are produced in both Welsh and English if a bilingual version is not feasible.

The post of National Bilingual Receptionist continues as the key feature in our 'active offer' of a national bilingual telephone service. All callers to our main telephone number are greeted bilingually and given the opportunity to select their language option. Those wishing to speak in Welsh or bilingually are automatically directed to our National Bilingual Receptionist, who will deal with the call in its entirety, unless there is a need to transfer the call to a member of staff with specialist knowledge.

The National Bilingual Receptionist is also the administrator for the translation service providing access to translation, advice and information and has developed excellent working relationships with staff in each of the regional offices.

4.4 Meetings

Simultaneous translation is provided during all meetings of our governing body (Council). This includes both online meetings via Zoom and face to face meetings.

Our key public meetings, such as our Annual General Meeting and various conferences, are provided in both Welsh and English, giving attendees the ability to participate in the meeting in the language of their choice.

We continue to use as much Welsh as possible during internal meetings. Many meetings are carried out in Welsh or bilingually naturally without the need for translation services, especially in our Bangor office where the majority of staff are Welsh speakers.

Simultaneous translation is provided during learner forum meetings where required, and attendees are encouraged to use the Welsh language should they wish.

4.5 Displaying Material in Public

All material displayed in public, including signage, course posters, information regarding organisational events, etc. is provided bilingually. All signs are provided in English and Welsh, with the Welsh positioned so it is likely to be read first.

4.6 Receiving visitors at the organisations' buildings

Our offices are not public facing and as such, we do not provide a dedicated face-to-face reception service at our office venues. Appointments to visit offices are made directly with the appropriate member of staff, and that member of staff will make arrangements to greet the visitor (in Welsh if this has been pre-arranged or if we already know that the visitor will require a Welsh language service). If necessary, arrangements will be made for a translation service during the meeting/appointment.

4.7 Social media

We have continued to monitor our social media to ensure compliance whilst encouraging engagement, and have considered readability, register and tone to develop the quality of all our course advertising during 2022/2023.

4.8 Promoting Welsh language services

We promote our Welsh language services via a variety of channels including our website, social media, marketing materials, signage, organisational strategies and documents, and internal and external policies.

We participated in the Eisteddfod in Boduan in summer 2023, and used our organisational stand to promote the organisation and the Welsh language services we offer, along with career opportunities with Adult Learning Wales as a Welsh medium tutor.

Our learner induction processes and materials include the promotion of our Welsh language services. We include options for Welsh and bilingual services in our learner application and enrolment forms and have a section on learner rights to Welsh medium services in our learner handbook.

We support Welsh Language Rights day in December each year. To mark the day, we promote our Welsh language services and remind our stakeholders of their rights to access services in Welsh.

5.0 Compliance with Policy- Making Standards

All organisational policies are provided in Welsh. All policies developed or updated during the reporting period have been assessed for equality impact assessment, which includes assessment of the impact on the Welsh language.

To ensure that we are fully compliant with the policy-making standards, we implemented a new Tendering Policy, setting out our approach to awarding grants, during this reporting period.

6.0 Compliance with Operational Standards

We have a Welsh Language Policy which sets out our arrangements for using, promoting and facilitating the Welsh Language.

6.1 Staff Training

During the reporting period and as part of the collaborative stream of the Professional Learning Fund (see 2.0 above), we have developed further our approach to Welsh language and culture awareness raising through our induction processes and ongoing continuing professional development (CPD) provision, drawing on support from our partner organisations as appropriate.

Our online Welsh Language Awareness Training launched in December 2021 continues to support with the upskilling staff awareness and use of the Welsh language, during the reporting period 75 have completed. Our delivery staff are asked to complete an online module - Bilingual Teaching and Learning Pedagogy in Adult Learning in the New Normal developed through the collaborative project through PLF, within this reporting period 38 staff have engaged with this module.

With support from Sgiliaith during our September CPD week they provided the following sessions:

- Embedding Welsh Language Workshop
- Sgiliaith Designing Bilingual Resources
- Using Welsh in the Workplace

These were bilingual sessions and attended by 40 staff

Induction training is provided on an individual basis and all organisational documents are bilingual. The Human Resources Officer responsible for induction provides individual guidance and support to Welsh speaking new employees in Welsh.

There were no training courses provided or requested internally in Welsh on the other areas listed in Standard 135 (recruitment and interviewing; performance management; complaints and disciplinary procedures; dealing with the public and health and safety). However, where guidance documents and briefing notes have been provided, these were all provided bilingually.

6.2 Welsh Language Skills of Staff

According to the records held on 31 July 2023, staff were recorded as having Welsh language skills as shown in the table below.

Level	Understanding	Speaking	Reading	Writing
0 No Skills	35	30	42	61
1 Entry	78	84	73	65
2 Foundation	23	30	23	22
3 Intermediate	13	14	12	13
4 Advanced	18	11	18	16
5 Proficiency	26	24	25	16

The above is based on a completion rate of 67% of staff. We are in the process of encouraging all staff to complete a new survey by the end of January 2024. The updated survey data will inform Welsh language continuing professional development opportunities (CPD) for our staff.

6.3 New and vacant posts

Vacant posts are categorised in terms of the oral and written Welsh language skills required for the role.

There were 14 new or vacant posts during the reporting period which were assessed and categorised as follows:

Date	Post	Welsh Language Requirement	Level
Aug 22	Digital Development Officer	Desirable	3
Aug 22	Digital Support Administrator	Desirable	3
Aug 22	HR Assistant	Desirable	3
Oct 22	NPT Learner Support Assistant	Desirable	3
Oct 22	Regional Support Administrator (Swansea)	Desirable	3
Nov 22	Finance Administration Assistant	Desirable	Ability to speak, read, write fluently
Nov 22	ESOL Tutor (Maternity cover)	Desirable	Ability to speak, read, write fluently
March 23	Marketing & Communications Manager	Desirable	Ability to communicate through medium of Welsh
March 23	Curriculum Development Coordinator (NPT, Swansea & Carmarthen)	Desirable	4
April 23	Regional Support Administrator (Cardiff)	Desirable	3
May 23	ALN Officers x 3	Desirable	Ability to communicate through medium of Welsh
July 23	(Internal) – Citizens Curriculum Coordinator	Desirable	3

In addition to the above, we regularly advertise for teaching staff to deliver through the medium of Welsh or bilingually.

7.0 Conclusion

Throughout this reporting period we have continued to demonstrate our commitment to the principles of the Welsh Language Standards. We have endeavoured to maintain compliance with the Standards during this time, including compliance with service duties, promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language, providing opportunities for staff to develop their language skills and assessing the Welsh language skills for posts during recruitment.

We have continued to widen our focus to include areas outside the standards which link to other organisational drivers around the Welsh language, for example, the Estyn quality

indicators for Welsh and 'Cymraeg 2050', by further developing our Welsh medium curriculum and continuing to embed Welsh and the Welsh dimension in teaching and learning.

Overall, the staff response to the Welsh Language Standards continues to be very positive, and we have embraced the opportunity to work towards becoming a fully bilingual organisation.

8.0 Further Information/ Contact Details

If you have any queries regarding this report or any aspect of Adult Learning Wales' compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, please contact Cath Hicks, Head of Learner Services and Resources: cath.hicks@adultlearning.wales