

Welsh Language Standards – Policies

Under the Welsh Language Measure [Wales] 2011 Aberystwyth University has a statutory duty to comply with 11 Policy Making Standards which refer to formulating or revising a policy and to consultations in regard to a policy. These Standards are in place so that the Welsh language is considered before the policy decisions are implemented. They refer in particular to the opportunities for using Welsh and to not treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language.

Definition of a Policy Decision

The Welsh Language Regulations define policy decisions (in a university) as decisions that relate to

- the admission and selection of students
- information provided to students and prospective students about the body
- the welfare of students
- complaints
- disciplinary proceedings in respect of a student
- careers service
- virtual learning sites and learning portal sites
- graduation and award ceremonies
- the assessment or examination of a student
- the awarding of grants and the provision of financial assistance
- public lectures
- learning opportunities
- courses (including individual modules and degree schemes)
- signs on the university's buildings
- student accommodation, libraries and arts centres.
- allocation of a personal tutor
- calls to a main telephone number (or numbers), helpline numbers and automated telephone systems.
- the content of legislation
- the exercise of statutory powers
- the content of policy statements
- strategies or strategic plans
- internal structures
- office and building locations
- the recruitment or use of volunteers
- Human Resources policies

Definition of Opportunities to use Welsh

This is defined as opportunities to:

- get services in Welsh
- use Welsh at work
- speak Welsh socially or in the community
- receive Welsh language education

Definition of Not Treating Welsh Less Favourably

A person wishing to use Welsh should not be under any disadvantage and the impression that English is the default language should not be given in the context of the following:

- look and feel
- accessibility
- accuracy
- inconvenience
- cost
- delay
- default language

How to consider the Welsh language when formulating/revising a Policy

When formulating/revising a policy you must

- consider whether the policy decision would have an effect on the Welsh language, in particular on the opportunities to use Welsh.
- consider whether that effect is negative or positive.
- consider whether the policy decision would be treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language.

Having considered the above, if you believe that the effect would be negative you must

- consider how the policy could be changed so that the negative effect would be mitigated and become a positive effect or become less negative

If you believe that the effect would be positive you must

- consider how the policy could be changed so that the positive effect would be increased.

In order to facilitate the process and to ensure that the Welsh language is considered we have drawn up a **Language Impact Assessment Tool** and this should be completed each time a policy is formulated or revised.

Consultation Documents – Welsh Language Considerations

Before making a policy decision the University sometimes produces a consultation document in order to ensure that the best decisions are made when making a policy decision. When such a document is published it is necessary that a question about the Welsh language is included when seeking and considering people's opinion. The consultation document should include a clause similar to:-

Yn unol â gofynion y Safonau Iaith, fel rhan o unrhyw broses ymgynghori, mae'n rhaid i'r Brifysgol ofyn eich barn a fyddai hyn yn cael effaith ar a) gyfleoedd i bersonau ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg, a b) peidio â thrin y Gymraeg yn llai ffafriol na'r Saesneg. Rhaid gofyn hefyd a ydych yn ystyried bod modd llunio neu addasu'r polisi fel y byddai'n cael effeithiau positif neu mwy positif, neu a oes modd llunio neu addasu'r polisi fel na fyddai'n cael effaithiau andwyol, neu fel y byddai'n cael effeithiau llai andwyol yn eich barn chi? Ac os felly sut?

Under the terms of the Welsh Language Standards, the University as part of any consultation process must seek your views on whether this would have any effect on a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language. Your views are sought also on whether you consider the policy could be formulated or revised so that it would have a positive or increased positive effect, or whether the policy could be formulated or revised so that it would not have adverse effects, or so that it would have decreased adverse effects. And if so, how?

Awarding Grants and Providing Financial Assistance

When making a decision in relation to the awarding of a grant or providing financial assistance you must

- consider whether awarding the grant or providing financial assistance would have an effect on the opportunity of people to use the Welsh language.
- consider whether that effect is negative or positive
- consider whether this would be treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language.

Having considered the above, you must

- consider how the decision could be implemented (for example, by imposing conditions) in such a way that there would be positive, more positive, or less adverse effects on the Welsh language.

You must also consider

- whether you need to ask the applicant for any additional information in order to assist you in assessing the effects of awarding the grant or providing financial assistance would have on the Welsh language.

Commissioning or Undertaking Research for a Policy Decision

If you commission or undertake research to assist you with making a policy decision you must ensure that the research considers what effects the policy decision under consideration would have on

- the opportunities for people to use Welsh.
- not treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language.

And you must ensure that the research

- considers how to implement the policy decision under consideration in such a way that it would have positive, more positive or less adverse effects.

Developing, revising or deleting a course or a component of a course

When you develop or revise a course or any component of a course you must consider

- what effects (if any) that course, or deleting that course, would have on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language
- whether those effects are adverse or positive
- whether the course, or deleting the course, would treat Welsh less favourably than English
- how the course, or deleting the course, could have positive effects or increased positive effects
- how the course, or deleting the course, could not have adverse effects, or could have decreased adverse effects

Flowchart – Guide to the Welsh Language Impact

Assessment

Will the policy decision have an effect on the Welsh language?

No.
End of process.

Yes.
Is the effect positive?

No. It is negative.
Can the negative effect be changed into a positive one?

Yes.
Can it be made more positive?

Yes.
Note the changes necessary so that there is no adverse effect.

No.
Is it possible to make the adverse effect less adverse in any way?

Yes.
Note the changes necessary so that it is more positive.

No.
Note this in the assessment.

Yes.
Note the changes necessary so that the effect is less adverse.

No.
Note this in the assessment explaining that you have given consideration to this but have failed to find a solution.