Using Welsh at Work in Aberystwyth University

Policy Statement for using Welsh internally

<u>Background</u>

Aberystwyth University has a commendable tradition of supporting bilingualism in the workplace and is proud of the progress that has been made in operating bilingually and enabling colleagues to use and develop their Welsh language skills. Indeed, the University has been amongst the pioneers in this regard for decades.

This is confirmed in the document, 'Towards the next 150 years: Strategic Plan 2018-2023', and in the Welsh Language and Culture Sub-Strategy. Amongst the aims for the Welsh language and culture, we will:

- Encourage staff to use Welsh in the workplace and to have opportunities to learn and improve their Welsh;
- Give new staff a better understanding of the opportunities available to learn Welsh and of the cultural and socio-economic context of Wales;
- Act as a catalyst for increasing cultural awareness, understanding, activities and integration.

The aim of the Policy on the Internal Use of Welsh, therefore, is to build on this tradition and the commitments in the Strategic Plan while also ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards that came into force on 1st April 2018. We are also conscious of the role the University has to play with regards to the Welsh Government's target of creating a Million Welsh Speakers.

<u>Aberystwyth University's Commitments beyond the Standards</u>

In addition to meeting the statutory requirements the University is intent on developing an ambitious programme to promote Welsh amongst staff, students and the public in general. We wish to do this by building upon the progress seen since the introduction in 2015 of the Integrated Strategic Plan for the Welsh Language. This work is recorded in the Welsh Language and Culture Sub-Strategy and the Integrated Plan for Welsh.

<u>Targets</u>

In line with the targets previously set out in the Integrated Strategic Plan for Welsh, the University's aim is that 90% of its staff who are fluent Welsh speakers use their Welsh daily

in the workplace and that 50% of the staff who are learning Welsh or who do not consider themselves completely fluent also use Welsh daily in their work.[1]

The University considers itself a partner in the Welsh Government's ambition to reach a Million Welsh Speakers by 2050. In this respect, the University is working in partnership with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, the National Centre for Learning Welsh and Ceredigion's Language Forum ('Dyfodol Dwyieithog – Bilingual Future') to develop opportunities for staff to learn and improve Welsh language skills. This policy is an opportunity to set an ambitious but achievable target which aims to show the University's commitment to support the Strategy for a Million Welsh Speakers.

The Work Welsh scheme funded by the National Centre for Learning Welsh has laid the groundwork for encouraging and giving practical support to Welsh learners and to those who are less confident in using the language at work. In conjunction with the University's department of Learn Welsh the University will develop a programme with the aim of reaching the target that 50% of the University's Professional Services' workforce will be able to speak Welsh (at levels B1 to C2) during the next ten years.

The Policy's Measurable Targets

90% of staff who are fluent Welsh speakers use Welsh daily at work (B2-C2).

50% of staff who are learning Welsh or do not consider themselves as fluent speakers (A1-B1) use Welsh daily at work.

50% of staff in the University's Professional Services able to use Welsh (at Level B1-C2) by 2029.[2]

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[1] According to data collected in February 2019 91% of the fluent Welsh speakers who completed the questionnaire were speaking Welsh on a daily basis in the workplace. Of the less fluent Welsh speakers 35% of them were speaking Welsh every day or nearly every day at work.

[2] Currently 35% (456) of non-academic staff are at Level B1-C2. A total of 264 (20.3%) are at Level A1-A2. Of the 1298 total, there is no information for 159. Data current on 22 March 2019.

Policy for the Internal Use of Welsh

1.0 **Scope**

1.1 The aim of this policy is to implement the requirement of Standard 105 of the Welsh Language Standards, by outlining how the University will promote and facilitate the use of Welsh internally with its staff.

1.2 The aim is to increase the use of Welsh in the University's workplaces by encouraging and supporting staff to use Welsh and ensure that the Welsh language flourishes as a language for work.

1.3 This policy will also provide a strong foundation for the Welsh services provided by the University to its students and the public, and will reinforce the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards.

1.4 The University will continue to implement its Bilingual Skills Strategy and will keep a record of the language levels of staff, giving them the opportunity to update them as they develop their skill. The University will keep a record of the language choice of staff on the AberPeople system.

1.5 Managers will have a good understanding of the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards and will play a practical role in promoting the commitments of this Policy when promoting the use of Welsh in the workplace.

1.6 Unless stated otherwise, the following section relates directly to Welsh Language Standards imposed from the 1st of April 2018.

1.7 Further information about the Language Standards that the University are subject to can be found here https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/cgg/bilingual-policy/ and there is a section including guidelines which will be added to regularly, here https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/cgg/bilingual-policy/safonau/guidelines/. Any enquiries regarding the Welsh Language Standards or this policy should be referred to the Centre for Welsh Language Services.

2.0 **Correspondence**

2.1 The University welcomes correspondence from staff in both Welsh and English.

2.2 Written official correspondence, by letter or e-mail, by all the faculties, academic departments and professional services of the University sent to groups of staff or to individual members of staff will be bilingual, or in the preferred language of the individual if known.

2.3 If an e-mail is sent to an individual member of staff with the intention that it be forwarded to a group of staff (e.g. within a department) then the original e-mail will be bilingual.

2.4 If it is necessary to forward information from a third party via e-mail to a group of staff, it is not necessary to translate the third party material but a bilingual note should be included at the beginning of the e-mail (e.g. anfonir y neges hon ymlaen ar ran.../ the following message is sent on behalf of...). A bilingual version of the document should be requested if the third party is located in Wales.

2.5 Individual members of staff will have the right to correspond in Welsh with the University and to receive a response to that correspondence in Welsh.

2.6 When corresponding with individual members of staff the University will initiate correspondence in Welsh with those who have indicated that Welsh is their preferred language, and with those to whom Welsh has been spoken face-to-face, or on the telephone, in the past. In each case, the language of any subsequent correspondence may be changed if that is the expressed wish of the recipient.

2.7 The University is committed to ensuring that correspondence through the medium of Welsh will not lead to delay in receiving a reply and the Translation Unit has specific guidelines to ensure that translation of correspondence does not cause undue delay in replying.

2.8 Proofreading service is provided as required for staff who draft documents in Welsh.

3.0   **Telephone calls**

3.1   Staff who answer the phone on behalf of a department or service will do so with a bilingual greeting.

3.2   The bilingual service that is available for students and the public in reception areas and on the University's main telephone numbers and helplines, will also be available for staff.

4.0   **Meetings**

<u>With individuals</u>

4.1   Staff will have the right to use Welsh in meetings in relation to the following, and the University will make the appropriate arrangements throughout the process:

- Performance Management
- Complaints
- Disciplinary matters
- Consultations on the restructuring of a department or service
- Job interview

If the persons responsible for holding the meetings above cannot do so in Welsh then arrangements will be made so that another appropriate Welsh speaking member of staff can do so. Where this is impossible or in situations where it would be inappropriate, a simultaneous translation service will be provided.

<u>Group meetings</u>

4.2   If an invitation is issued to all members of staff to attend a particular meeting or a special meeting (e.g. a presentation on the University's strategy) staff will have the right to use Welsh in that meeting. Simultaneous translation will be provided to facilitate this.

5.0   **Committees**

5.1   Committees can operate in Welsh only or bilingually.

5.2   Any committee may prepare its minutes or documents bilingually and may request simultaneous translation. The University will encourage the use of Welsh in internal meetings.

6.0   **Documentation**

6.1   The University will provide documentation in Welsh for staff. In the case of draft documents discussions should be held with the Centre for Welsh Language Services to receive further advice.

7.0   **Vocational Training**

7.1   The following training will be available in Welsh for staff:

- Language awareness
- Recruitment and interviewing
- Leadership
- Performance management
- Complaints and disciplinary procedures
- Induction
- Dealing with the public
- Health and safety
- Using Welsh effectively in meetings, interviews and complaints and disciplinary procedures.
- Equality and diversity in the workplace.
- Marketing and student recruitment
- Academic Practice

7.2   When an external provider is used to provide training, the University will consider the importance and relevance of providing the training in Welsh (if different to those listed above). As part of the tendering process, and in accordance with the requirements of Standards 80-84, the University will request information regarding a third party's ability to provide training services in Welsh and every effort will be made to hold a corresponding course in Welsh. The external provider will be responsible for arranging and paying for translation and providing Welsh speaking facilitators where necessary.

8.0 **Using a third party to engage with staff**

8.1 When tendering with an external service provider to engage with University staff (e.g. gathering evidence, holding meetings and/or focus groups, providing questionnaires) it should be ensured that sufficient consideration is given beforehand to how these services can be provided in Welsh. The external provider will be responsible for arranging and paying for translations and providing Welsh speaking facilitators where necessary. The Centre for Welsh Language Services should be consulted in advance.

9.0 **University Website**

9.1 The University will continue to implement its Strategy for Bilingual Websites (see Appendix 1) which has been revised to include the requirements of the Service Delivery Standards and to ensure that the pages relevant to staff only continue to be available bilingually when appropriate.

9.2 The University will have a strategy for the translation of software and apps used for teaching purposes and administrative purposes where appropriate (this is expanded upon in Appendix 1).

9.3 Computer software for checking Welsh language spelling and grammar (Cysgliad) is available on work computers for every member of staff as required (see https://myaccount.aber.ac.uk/protected/software/).

10.0 **Promoting and facilitating the use of Welsh amongst staff**

10.1 The University will provide language awareness training, training about the Welsh Language Standards and training on how Welsh can be used in the workplace. Information about the opportunities to learn Welsh will form part of the induction session for new staff.

10.2 Staff will have the right to attend Welsh language classes for free, from beginners level to improving Welsh level and the Professional Welsh course. Human Resources will develop a policy as a guide for line managers to enable staff to attend classes during working hours.

10.3 The Effective Contribution Scheme will feature a Welsh Language Training section in order to record progress.

10.4   The University will implement the Bilingual Skills Strategy which is the foundation for language planning of the workforce across the University.

10.5   A Survey on the Use of Welsh will be held for staff every two years in order to ascertain attitudes towards the use of Welsh, determine training needs and enable strategic planning.

10.6   Staff are encouraged to show their ability to speak Welsh, either as a fluent speaker or as a learner, by wearing a badge or lanyard and by displaying the relevant logo as part of their e-mail signature.

10.7   The University will hold events to promote Welsh and to acknowledge the contribution of Welsh speakers and learners (e.g. Gwobrau Gŵyl Dewi Aber Awards). Activities will also be held which bring Welsh speakers together to socialise in the language (e.g. Clwb Coffi, Mentoring Scheme).