

Welsh Language Standards Monitoring Report

Aberystwyth University

1 April 2018 to 31 July 2018

Introduction

Aberystwyth University has been compliant with the Welsh Language Standards since 1 April 2018. This document is a report on the period from 1 April 2018 to the end of the institution's financial year, 31 July 2018.

Until 1 April 2018 the University operated a Welsh Language Scheme and the Scheme's procedures provided a firm foundation for the implementation of the Language Standards. The procedures adopted during the implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme continue and have been strengthened and new procedures have also been adopted to ensure compliance with the new requirements of the Language Standards. This report refers to the processes put in place since 1 April 2018.

The task of preparing this monitoring report, as well as implementing the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards on a daily basis, is the responsibility of the Manager of the Centre for Welsh Language Services (MCWLS), Dr Mari Elin Jones, and the Welsh Language Development Officer (WLDO), Dr Gwenno Piette.

This report was submitted for recommendation to the University Executive.

Communicating the Requirements of the Welsh Language Standards

As part of the preparation for the implementation of the Standards a series of face to face presentations were held with staff to explain the statutory background and procedures along with how to comply. General presentations were given to new staff, administrative staff, as well as tailored presentations to the University's Executive Team, managers and Heads of Departments and staff in the Department of Communications and Public Affairs where there was the opportunity to discuss matters directly relevant to their work.

The Centre for Welsh Language Services' website was updated to include specific pages on the Language Standards, FAQs and several guidelines for the Standards:

- Answering the Telephone
- Correspondence

- E-mail Signatures
- Meetings (public and students)
- Chairing Bilingual Meetings
- Public Events/Lectures and Graduation/Award Ceremonies
- Policy Decisions
- Social Media
- Contracts and Tenders
- Grants and Financial Assistance

During the process of rolling out the Standards across the University it became clear that it was necessary to revise guidelines to give more clarity where needed or to add relevant examples, and so, even though these guides have been published on the website and paper copies are distributed in presentations and when advising individuals, they are live documents which are regularly updated.

Service Delivery Standards

Written Correspondence (Standards 1 – 7)

The University responds in Welsh to correspondence received in Welsh and the following clause was added to the University's official correspondence and to all e-mails sent by Information Services.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Cewch ateb Cymraeg i bob gohebiaeth Gymraeg ac ateb Saesneg i bob gohebiaeth Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English. Correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and correspondence in English will be answered in English. Corresponding in Welsh will not involve any delay.

Under the terms of the Welsh Language Scheme it was the University's practice to record the preferred language of students for correspondence on their student record and this practice continues. This enables us to correspond with individual students in their preferred language.

A staff guide to correspondence was drawn up and the guide is on our website.

Telephone Communication (Standards 8 – 21)

Staff who work on the University's main telephone lines answer the telephone with a bilingual greeting and instructions for staff on the Switchboard and Information Services helplines were drawn up and distributed. A general guide on how to deal with calls made in Welsh is on our website and includes a section on 'linguistic courtesy'.

In order to promote the bilingual service the 'Send us a message' button which appears at the bottom of every webpage links to a contact page which includes the statement:

Rydym yn croesawu galwadau yn Gymraeg / We welcome calls in Welsh

Every student record includes ability to use Welsh and this is used as a record of the language choice for telephoning.

The data base for Alumni records the preferred language for communicating on the telephone for the public (mostly alumni).

Meetings (Standards 24 – 34)

A guide for meetings was drawn up which includes a template that asks contributors whether they wish to use Welsh in the meeting. The guide also includes instructions on how to arrange simultaneous translation in order to ensure that attendees can use Welsh in a meeting if they wish to do so. The guide explains the circumstances for holding meetings bilingually and notes the difference between meetings with individuals and meetings with several people. The guide is on the Centre for Welsh Language Services' website and a copy was sent to the Faculty managers reminding them that students have a specific right to meetings in Welsh.

Public Events (Standards 35 – 38)

In order to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English when providing publicity material for public events these standards have been discussed with the University's Communication team who contact the Centre for Welsh Language Services regularly to discuss the bilingualism of specific public events. A guide on arranging public events has been drawn up and a copy is on the website.

Public Lectures (Standards 40 – 40A)

The University's Communications Team is responsible for the publicity for public lectures and arranges simultaneous translation when necessary and they are aware of the requirements of the Language Standards. The guide to events mentioned above includes a reference to public lectures.

Graduation Ceremonies (Standards 41 – 42)

The information about the University's graduation ceremony arrangements is bilingual every year and a template requesting the preferred language of delivery for the guests who are invited to speak in a graduation or award ceremony is in the guide Public Events / Lectures and Graduation / Award Ceremonies. This guide is on our website. Our usual practice is to provide a written translation of any speech delivered through the medium of Welsh in a graduation ceremony.

Publications (Standards 43 – 52)

Procedures were put in place under the terms of the Welsh Language Scheme to ensure that any document for use by the public/student would be bilingual and that the Welsh language would not be treated less favourably than English with regards to size, quality and accuracy. These procedures continue to be applied.

Forms (Standards 53 – 54)

Every form and the associated explanatory material produced for the public and/or students is bilingual. If separate Welsh and English versions are produced our practice is to send the forms in the preferred language of the student or member of the public.

The Website (Standards 55 – 59)

The University has a Bilingual Websites Strategy which enables the Translation Unit to prioritise their work programme when translating web pages. The Strategy was revised and updated in 2018 in order to reflect the requirements of the Standards.

Grammar and Spellchecker Software (Standard 60)

The software Cysgliad is available to all students on the public workstations' computers. The same software is available for staff on demand to put on their office computers and on laptops that are used for work purposes.

The learning portal used by the University is *BlackBoard* and at present it does not contain a spellchecker for Welsh or English. It is possible that the next update will be able to include this function and if so we will ensure that it will include a spell checker for both languages.

Apps (Standard 61)

The University's updated 2018 Bilingual Websites Strategy includes a section on apps to reflect the requirements of the Standards.

Social Media (Standards 62 - 63)

The University operates different social media accounts including *Facebook* and *Twitter*. Any correspondence received in Welsh via social media is replied to in Welsh. A guide which explains how not to treat the Welsh language less favourably when operating social media accounts has been drawn up. The guide is on the web and a copy was sent to the Communications team.

Self-Service Machines (Standard 64)

There are self-service machines for borrowing and returning books in the library. These are bilingual.

Signs (Standards 65 – 67)

A procedure for ensuring that all signs are bilingual was established under the terms of the Welsh Language Scheme and this procedure still applies.

Receptions (Standards 68 – 72)

There is a sign (laith Gwaith posters) in every reception that is open to the public and the bilingual staff who work there wear a badge to demonstrate this.

Notices (Standards 73 – 74)

The University produces all its notices bilingually with the Welsh language appearing above or to the left of the English.

Grants (Standards 75 – 79)

All the documentation and arrangements for students applying for financial assistance are available in Welsh, including the right to have an interview in Welsh.

Contracts awarded to third parties (Standards 80 - 84)

After consultation with the Procurement Office guidelines were drawn up for tendering and third party contracts which explain that tenderers have the right to submit their applications in Welsh and to be interviewed in Welsh. The guide has been distributed to staff who work with procurement and is also on our website.

In addition to the guide which states tenderers' rights, there is a check list on our website of third party operations which could be relevant to the Standards. The list has also been given to the Procurement Office so that it can be distributed to potential third party providers so that they can see whether they might be required to comply with the Standards.

Advertising and Promotion (Standards 85 – 86)

All the publicity and documents that we produce which advertise our services are produced bilingually and are published on our website.

Corporate Identity (Standard 87)

The corporate identity of the University is completely bilingual.

Learning Opportunities (Standard 88)

Regarding the learning opportunities that are open to the public and that are not part of a course or will lead to a performance, we can refer to the sessions provided by the Sports Centre and the Arts Centre. The Arts Centre employs casual tutors who can speak Welsh and the Centre's Welsh Language Plan (2017 – 2020) refers to gathering data on the preferences of class attendees regarding the language of the classroom to enable planning for the future. Some sessions such as dancing, are bilingual if the tutor can speak Welsh.

Assessments (Standards 90 – 90A)

The University's students have been able to submit Welsh language assessments on English medium modules for several years and there have been robust procedures in place to facilitate this. These include appointing a Welsh medium tutor within the same department to mark the work and if this is not possible the assessment will be translated into English before being marked. The translation unit is very familiar with translating academic assessments. English medium exam papers are also translated into Welsh so that students can sit the exam in Welsh if they wish.

Public Announcements (Standard 91)

The announcements that are made on the public address systems used by the University, in the Arts Centre theatre and in the Hugh Owen library, are bilingual.

Student Accommodation (Standards 92 – 92A)

The University offers Welsh medium residential accommodation to students and the information about the different options are on our website [<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/accommodation/accommodation-options/welsh-medium/>](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/accommodation/accommodation-options/welsh-medium/). Pantycelyn-Penbryn is a catered hall of residence while the accommodation in Fferm Penglais is self-catering flats.

It is the University's intention to re-open Neuadd Pantycelyn in 2020.

Personal Tutor (Standard 93)

The University allocates by default Welsh speaking personal tutors to all Welsh speaking students. When it is not possible to allocate a tutor from the same department then a tutor from the Faculty is provided.

Policy Making Standards

Policy Decisions (Standards 94 – 96)

In order to assess the impact of policy decisions on the Welsh language a Welsh Language Impact Assessment form has been developed. A copy of the form is on the Centre for Welsh Language Services' website and on the equality page of Human Resources' website. (See appendix 1). A guide to assessing policy decisions has been produced and includes definitions of policy decisions and opportunities to use Welsh, and how not to treat the Welsh language less favourably than English. The guide is on our website.

Consultation (Standards 97 – 99)

During consultation processes on policy decisions the University seeks views on the effects that the policy decision would have on the Welsh language. This is done by including a specific question about Welsh, alongside other questions, in the consultation document, or by asking a question orally in a consultation meeting with an individual.

The policies guide includes an example of how ask the question:

Under the terms of the Welsh Language Standards, the University as part of any consultation process must seek 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/Financial Assistance (Standard 100)

Having considered to what extent the University awards grants, and having consulted with the Welsh Language Commissioner, it was decided that the University does not currently carry out relevant actions to require a policy for this element.

Commissioning Research (Standards 101 – 103)

The University did not commission any research to help with a policy decision during the reporting period, but the intention is to use the Welsh Language Impact Assessment for this. The policies guide includes reference to commissioning research.

Academic Courses (Standard 104)

Consideration of the Welsh medium provision when developing or withdrawing degree courses is already part of the procedure and during the reporting period it was the Welsh Medium Provision Development Group along with the chair of the University's branch of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and the Pro Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for Welsh who were responsible for overseeing the process regarding Welsh medium provision.

New academic structures and committees were put in place for the new academic year (2018/19). Preparatory work for this started during the reporting period, including considering how to adapt the relevant forms in order to reflect the more specific requirements of the Standards regarding the effect on the Welsh language when developing/adapting or withdrawing a course.

Operational Standards

Using Welsh Internally in the Institution (Standard 105)

A draft policy for using Welsh internally in the institution was drawn up – *Using Welsh at Work at Aberystwyth University*. The approval process started by consulting with a small group of staff in the first instance and the Trade Unions will also be consulted. The policy will be approved by the Welsh Language Executive Group and the University Executive.

Employment (Standards 106 - 111)

The University uses an electronic system for job applications and the application form is provided on-line. The system can be used in Welsh and the application form specifically asks for the applicant's preferred language of correspondence. A question has also been added to the form which asks the applicant to note their language of choice for the job contract.

The language chosen by staff for correspondence is recorded on the staff record system AberPeople thus all correspondence regarding employment by the University will be provided in the preferred language of the member of staff.

The Effective Contribution Scheme, which is used by the University to consider staff performance, includes training requirements, performance objectives and career plans. The Scheme's form can be completed in Welsh and all the associated material that is on the website is available bilingually. The letter to new staff which refers to the Effective Contribution Scheme also notes that all the Scheme's material is available in Welsh.

The procedure of recording and authorising annual leave, absences and working hours, all happen within AberPeople, which is a bilingual system.

Human Resources Policies (Standards 112 – 118)

All of Human Resources' policies, including those which deal with the matters listed in the Standards, are published bilingually.

Complaints by/about staff (Standards 119 – 122)

Members of staff at the University have the right to make a formal complaint and respond to complaints through the medium of Welsh. A clause was added to the Complaints Procedure which is on Human Resources' website to refer to the rights of staff to use Welsh when complaining or responding to a complaint.

10. Welsh Language – Employee Rights

In accordance with the Welsh Language Standards that came into effect on 1 April 2018 employees have the right to use the Welsh language to

(a) make a complaint

(b) respond to a complaint or allegation

and employees also have the right to use the Welsh language in meetings where they are the subject of

(c) complaints and allegations (or have made the complaint)

(d) disciplinary proceedings

(e) effective contribution scheme discussions

(f) individual consultation meetings

A simultaneous translation service from Welsh to English will be provided at the meeting when the meeting cannot be conducted solely in Welsh.

The letter which invites staff to a meeting to discuss a complaint includes a clause which asks whether the member of staff will wish to use Welsh in the meeting.

Staff Disciplinary (Standards 123 – 126)

Staff have the right to respond in Welsh to allegations made against them in an internal disciplinary process. The Disciplinary Procedure states this right and the right to use Welsh in a disciplinary meeting.

Staff Language Skills (Standards 127 & 134)

All staff have a choice to use a Welsh or English interface on their computers, and the grammar and spellchecker and Welsh dictionary package *Cysgliad/Cysill* is available for all staff on request from the Information Services department.

Data regarding the Welsh language skills of staff is collected as they apply for a post with the University and this is recorded on their staff record on appointment. Current staff can complete or update the language skills box on their staff record. Reminder messages about this are sent regularly to staff.

Staff Training (Standards 135 – 137)

During the reporting period staff were offered training on completing application forms and attending interviews in Welsh. With regards training for using Welsh effectively in meetings, interviews and grievance and disciplinary procedures, the Commissioner has noted that this is being provided by the Learn Welsh Centre via the scheme Workplace Welsh.¹

A guide to using Welsh effectively in bilingual meetings was produced and is on our website.

It was verified that the staff in Careers Services are fully aware of the value of Welsh language skills in the employment sector and promote the opportunities to students.

Language Training (Standards 138 - 141)

The University encourages staff to develop their Welsh language skills and staff have the right to attend Welsh classes held in the community for free. There were 61 members of staff attending such classes during the reporting period.

After a very successful first year of the Workplace Welsh Scheme, funding was received to offer the Scheme for another year. The scheme's financial year runs from March to March and during the reporting period 36 members of staff took advantage of this opportunity to have Welsh lessons that are tailored to the workplace during working hours.

The new staff induction sessions include an introduction to the University's bilingualism and the requirements of the Language Standards. These sessions take place twice a year and one was held during the reporting period. A series of sessions

¹ See notes of a meeting held with a representative from the Commissioner - *Cyfarfod i drafod perfformiad rhwng cynrychiolwyr Comisiynydd y Gymraeg a Phrifysgol Aberystwyth: gwybodaeth bellach ac ymatebion i ymholiadau, 02/10/2018*

about the Language Standards and how Welsh can be used in the workplace were held with the administrative staff of the institutes and professional services and with staff from the Department of Information Services.

Email signatures and trip notes, badges (Standards 142 - 144A)

Staff are encouraged to download wording and a logo from the Centre for Welsh Language Services' website to include in their email signatures to show that they can speak or are learning Welsh. There is a link to the logo from the FAQs on Information Services' website.

Staff are expected to provide a bilingual message for their out of office trip-note and a guide is on our website. *Iaith Gwaith* and *Dysgwr* badges and lanyards were regularly distributed during the reporting period.

Posts (Standards 145 – 149)

Every post is assessed for Welsh language requirements via the E-Recruiter system and the assessment is verified by the Centre for Welsh Language Services. Every post is advertised bilingually and every post states either that a specific level of Welsh is an essential or desirable skill or that an awareness of the bilingual nature of the University is necessary when no Welsh is required.

The University's website that advertises the posts includes the statement:-

We welcome applications for any vacancy in Welsh or English and any application submitted will be treated equally.

Every job advertisement includes the statement:-

We are a Bilingual Institution which complies with the Welsh Language Standards and is committed to Equal Opportunities. You are welcome to apply for any vacancy in Welsh or English and any application submitted will be treated equally.

The electronic E-Recruiter system is used for job applications and the system is fully bilingual. The applicant chooses in which language they wish to use the system and the whole process, including application forms, explanations and information, is in his/her preferred language. Every job description is bilingual.

The application form asks every job applicant which is their preferred language for interview and the form states:-

You may use the Welsh language in an interview and a simultaneous translator will be used if necessary.

Signs (Standards 150 – 153)

A procedure for ensuring that all signs are bilingual was established under the terms of the Welsh Language Scheme and the procedure still applies.

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Record Keeping Standards

Complaints (Standards 154 – 156)

Three complaints regarding the Welsh Language Standards were received during the reporting period. These were complaints that came via the Welsh Language Commissioner. Details of the complaints are recorded and kept by the Centre for Welsh Language Services and the complaints procedure is implemented in dealing with them.

Policies (Standard 157)

The tool for assessing impact on the Welsh language when making policy decisions, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment form, was used 3 times during the reporting period. Records of all the assessments are kept by the Centre for Welsh Language Services.

Staff Language Skills (Standard 158)

The Welsh language skills of all staff were recorded in August 2018. The Common European Framework of Reference for languages is used for the levels.

| | Oral Skills | Written Skills |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| C2 | 146 | 128 |
| C1 | 65 | 56 |
| B2 | 241 | 227 |
| B1 | 214 | 154 |
| A2 | 50 | 48 |
| A1 | 318 | 258 |
| A0 | 797 | 942 |
| Unknown | 226 | 244 |
| Staff total | 2057 | 2057 |

Staff Training (Standard 159)

Two training courses relating to recruitment and interviews were held for staff during the reporting period. Welsh and English sessions were held separately.

| | Number who attended the Welsh medium session. | Percentage of staff who attended the Welsh medium session. |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| <i>Interview Confidence</i> | 8 | 6.1% |
| <i>Effective Applications</i> | 7 | 7% |

Posts (Standards 161- 162)

Since the launch of a robust technical system in October 2016 which facilitates the full implementation of the Bilingual Skills Strategy we are confident that 95% of posts advertised have been considered for Welsh language skills requirements.

During the reporting period new and empty posts which were advertised were categorised thus:²

| Welsh language skills required | Number |
|--|---------------|
| a) Posts where Welsh language skills are essential | 19 |
| b) Posts where Welsh language skills need to be attained (if the applicant cannot speak Welsh already) | 29 |
| c) Posts where Welsh language skills (at all levels) are desirable. | 69 |
| ch) Posts where Welsh language skills are not necessary. | 54 |

Supplementary Standards

Welsh Language Standards Document (Standards 163, 169, 175, 181)

The document *Welsh Language Standards Aberystwyth University* outlines the Standards that the University is under a duty to comply. The document is on our website and upon request in each of our offices open to the public and students.

Complaints Procedure (Standards 164, 170,176)

We have a complaints procedure which deals with all the complaints received by the institution about compliance with the Standards and complaints regarding the Welsh language. This procedure is published on our website and a copy is available on request in each of our offices open to the public. Complaints can be made by using the interactive electronic form on our website or by contacting the University via email, letter or telephone. The complaints procedure, including the Commissioner's process of dealing with complaints, were referred to in the presentations on the Language Standards to staff.

² Please note. The data includes 21 posts that were open to staff on the University's prior consideration list only in the first instance. Only if no applicants from this list were appointed was the post advertised internally and subsequently externally.

Monitoring (Standards 165,171,177)

The document *Arrangements for Overseeing the Welsh Language Standards* explains our arrangements for overseeing how we comply with the Standards. A copy is available in each of our offices that are open to the public and on our website. We monitor our progress against a set of targets in an Annual Action Plan.

Annual Report (Standards 166, 168, 172, 174, 178, 180, 182)

For our first report we were asked to report on the period since the beginning of implementing the Standards up to the end of our financial year, from 1 April 2018 to 31 July 2018. The report includes

- i. no. of complaints received
- ii. no. of employees who have skills in Welsh
- iii. no. and percentage of the members of staff who attended training courses offered in Welsh.
- iv. no. of new and empty posts and their category regarding Welsh language requirements.

Compliance Document (Standards 167, 173,179)

The document *Welsh Language Standards Aberystwyth University* explains how we comply with the Standards. The document is available on our website and upon request in each of our offices open to the public and students.

January 2019