Welsh Language Standards Annual Report
August 2024 – July 2025

Introduction

This document reports on the period from **1 August 2024** to **31 July 2025**.

Welsh universities are required to comply with the Welsh Language Standards (No. 6) Regulations 2017 which were established under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

The Welsh Language Standards (WLS) explain how the University is expected to provide specific services in Welsh, ensuring that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language. In accordance with the requirements of the Standards, this annual report notes how we complied with the WLS and includes the required information listed below.

- **Compliance with the Standards**
  How the university has complied with the service delivery standards, policy standards and operational standards during the year.

- **Welsh Language Skills of the Workforce**
  The number of employees with Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question.

- **Training**
  The number of staff who attended training courses offered in Welsh during the year; and if a Welsh version of a course was offered during the year, the percentage of the total number of staff who attended the Welsh version of the course.

- **Posts**
  The number of new and vacant posts that were advertised during the year which were categorised as posts where —
  - Welsh language skills were essential,
  - Welsh language skills needed to be learnt on appointment to the post,
  - Welsh language skills were desirable, or
  - Welsh language skills were not necessary.

- **Complaints**
  The number of complaints that were received during the year which related to compliance with the service delivery standards, policy standards and operational standards.

This report has been approved by the University Council for publication on our website www.aber.ac.uk/en/cgg .

Appendix 1 includes descriptions of the Welsh Language Skill Levels (A0 - C2) referred to in this report. **Appendix 2** includes a description of the Learn Welsh levels (Entry – Proficiency).

Developments 2024-25

Welsh Language Plan / Strategy 2030s
This year the University launched its new strategy - [Strategy 2030s](). One of the key priorities of the strategy is **Strengthening Wales** – *We foster a prosperous, globally engaged Wales, in Aberystwyth and beyond, and work to promote the vitality of the Welsh language.*

To support the implementation of the strategy, our [University Plans]() outline what we intend to do to foster a sustainable, flexible, future-oriented institution.

Through the **Welsh Language Plan**, we aim to lead the sector in Welsh-medium teaching, working with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, and encourage the use of Welsh across campus. By 2030, we aim to increase by 50% the number of our staff and students developing their Welsh skills.

Assistant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellors (Welsh Language)
As the University changes to a two-faculty structure from the start of the 2025-26 term, there have been appointments to new academic roles within the new faculties. As part of the new structure there will be an Assistant Faculty Pro Vice-chancellors in each Faculty with dedicated responsibility for the Welsh language. These posts will provide strategic direction for the Faculty's Welsh language provision and support the University's bilingual culture and support relevant external cultural events.

- **Faculty of Humanities:** Mandi Morse (Assistant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor – Welsh)
- **Faculty of Science:** Professor Rhys Jones (Assistant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor – Welsh)

Welsh Language Standards Compliance Review (Mystery Shopper Exercise)
During 2025 the Centre for Welsh Language Services conducted an internal monitoring exercise to review the compliance of our services with WLS. The review focused on key services provided to students and the public. This offered a 'snapshot' of compliance across different services, and the enquires were designed to replicate routine enquiries from students and the public in the following areas.

- Telephone Services
- Correspondence
- Videos
- Documents/Forms
- Website
- Social Media Accounts

The findings of the review were shared with the Welsh Language Operational Group, the University Executive and the Governance and Culture Committee. As a result of the review, we have strengthened our quality and compliance assurance and will look to incorporate this review into the Centre for Welsh Language Services' annual programme of work.

Professional Services WLS Questionnaire
Since 2021 Professional Service (PS) departments have been self-reporting on an annual basis to the Centre for Welsh Language Services (CWLS) on their compliance with the Standards. This exercise was completed in February 2025, and the results were shared with the Welsh Language Operational Group, the University Executive and the University's Governance and Culture Committee.

Departments were asked to rate their compliance across various areas of the WLS, which included:

- Correspondence.
- Telephone services.
- Meetings / Events / Public Lectures.
- The Website / Social Media.
- Reception Services.
- Signs.
- Documents and Forms.
- Welsh Language Impact Assessments (policy decisions).

Updating the Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance (policy decisions)
During 2024-25 we updated our guidance, procedures and impact assessment forms with regards to policy decisions and the Welsh language. The updated guidance defines 'Policy Decision' within the context of the WLS, and we have also created a simple tool for staff to be able to identify whether a Welsh language impact assessment needs to be completed.

Aberystwyth University Welsh Language Awards
Celebrating the dedication and commitment of students and staff to promoting the Welsh language is very important to the University. At an awards ceremony on 4 December 2024, the winners of the Aberystwyth University Welsh Language Awards were announced after being nominated by the University's staff and students. As learners and first-language Welsh speakers, students and staff, the winners were awarded for the following categories:

- **Exceptional Learner (Staff)** – Vicki Jones

- **Promoting the Welsh Language in the Workplace** – Dr Hanna Binks and Dr Lloyd Roderick
- **Welsh Medium Study Award (Student)** – Ellie Norris
- **Welsh Language Champion (Student)** – Celyn Bennett
- **Supporting the Welsh Language in the Workplace** – Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Office Team

Elain Gwynedd, Welsh Culture Officer and UMCA President was also awarded the **Panel's Special Award** for her work promoting the Welsh language and culture at the University.

Each winner was presented with a personal *englyn* composed by either Professor Mererid Hopwood, Dr Eurig Salisbury, (Lecturer in Creative Writing - Department of Welsh and Celtic Studies) or Dr Hywel Griffiths, (Reader - Department of Geography and Earth Sciences).

Promoting Welsh-medium Education

As part of our work promoting Welsh-medium higher education, there were 58 visits to Welsh-medium schools during the year. In the summer of 2025, 'Access All Aber' took place; a free participation expansion residential course for year 12 students. 65 students attended, with 28 (43%) proficient in Welsh. Similarly, a day of activities was held on campus to support year 12 students with their individual Welsh Baccalaureate projects. 3 Welsh-medium schools visited the campus in June.

UMCA / Undeb Aberystwyth

Following the 50th anniversary celebrations of UMCA (Aberystwyth's Welsh Students' Union), it has been a very active year developing Pantycelyn Hall as a venue for events, including Welsh Language Courses. Another key development this year was the approval of Elain Gwynedd's (President of UMCA 2023-2025) proposal to change the name of the Aberystwyth Students' Union to **Undeb Aberystwyth**.

Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards

Supervisory Arrangements
In accordance with the standards, the University has a document outlining the steps taken to ensure we comply with the standards - Welsh Language Standards Supervisory Arrangements

WLS Compliance Questionnaire (Professional Services)
In February 2025, Professional Services departments submitted responses to an annual WLS Compliance Questionnaire (see page 3).

Centre for Welsh Language Services
CWLS is responsible for assisting university's departments to implement the WLS and

offers advice to staff to ensure compliance across the University. The Centre includes a translation team which provides a written and simultaneous translation service to university departments. Guidance on complying with the Welsh Language Standards, as well as the university's policies and strategies regarding promoting the Welsh language, are available on the [Centre for Welsh Language Services' website](#) .

Welsh Language Operational Group

Three meetings of the Welsh Language Operational Group were held during the academic year **(October 2024, March 2025 and May 2025).**

The Welsh Language Operational Group leads and monitors the University's strategies and policies to promote the Welsh language and reports on university-wide compliance with the WLS, developing appropriate training and advice.

In each meeting, the Welsh Language Operational Group receives an update report on the University's **Bilingual Skills Strategy**. These reports include data on:

- The Welsh language requirements of each post advertised.
- A summary of the Welsh language skills of appointees.
- The percentage of Professional Services staff with Welsh language skills at level B1 or higher.
- Data on the number of staff attending Welsh courses.

Policy Standards

During the year, the University's guidance and arrangements were updated in relation to considering the impact of policy decisions on the Welsh language. Heads of department were given an update by the Welsh Language Services Manager in January 2025, and the update was shared with staff via the weekly bulletin. In addition, [a new tool was developed](#) to help identify which decisions are likely to require a Welsh Language Impact Assessment. The [Welsh Language Impact Assessment form](#) has also been updated following consultation with the Welsh Language Operational Group.

The university undertook a professional services review during 2024-25, and as part of this process, each business case was reviewed and subject to a Welsh language impact assessment. Following consultations and appointments, the university will continue to review the assessments and consider any impact on Welsh services, as well as any further actions that may be required. This work will continue in 2025-26.

Developing or Adapting Academic provision

The Welsh-medium studies committee met three times during the academic year**.** A sub-committee of the Academic Board, the committee is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for Welsh-medium academic provision. In accordance with the requirements of Standard 104, when there are proposed changes to the academic provisions, clear processes are in place to assess the effect on opportunities to use the Welsh language as well as not treating the Welsh language less favourably.

Welsh Language Internal Use Policy

Our [Policy on the Internal Use of Welsh](#) builds upon the commitments made in our Strategic Plan and the University's tradition of supporting bilingualism in the workplace. The policy notes the University's commitments in terms of operating bilingually and supporting staff to use the Welsh language in their work.

Policy Targets

- *90% of the staff who are fluent in Welsh using the Welsh language daily at work (B2-C2).*
- *50% of the staff who are learning the language or who do not consider themselves fluent (A1-B1) using the Welsh language daily at work.*
- *50% of the University's Professional Services workforce having Welsh-language skills (at B1-C2 level) by 2029.*

Staff language use surveys will be held biennially, and we will conduct the next survey during **2025-2026**.

As of **31 July 2025**, the Welsh language skills of **39.7%** (414/1044) of the Professional Services workforce were at levels B1 or above. Note: this figure reflects individual staff members, not employment contracts, and the percentage only includes the members of staff who have recorded their language skills on Aber People (**94.2%** of Professional Services staff). ***Appendix 1*** *includes descriptions of the Welsh Language Skill Levels (A0 - C2).*

Posts

A total of **238** posts were advertised by Aberystwyth University between 1 August 2024 and 31 July 2025 *(not including posts under 3 months, and ABERforward / AberWorks posts).*

Category	Number	%
Welsh language skills essential (A1-C2). *Posts where (oral) Welsh language skills are essential at* **level A1** *or above.*	119	50.0%
Posts where Welsh language skills were not essential (A0). *Posts where (oral) Welsh skills were not essential (**A0**). The ability to understand the bilingual nature of the University and an awareness of the arrangements in place to support working bilingually, is an essential requirement of all **A0** posts without a language requirement.*	119	50.0%
Total	238	100%
Category	Number	%

Welsh language skills desirable (not essential). *Of the 119 posts where Welsh language skills were not essential (A0 posts), number of percentage of posts with Welsh language skills (oral) as desirable at level A1 or above.*	100	84.0%

Every post is assessed for Welsh language requirements via the *E-Recruiter* system and all assessments are checked by the Centre for Welsh Language Services in accordance with the University's Bilingual Skills Strategy and the requirements of Standard 145.

Every post is advertised bilingually and states either that a specific level of Welsh (A1-C2) is an essential or desirable skill or that an awareness of the bilingual nature of the University is necessary where the ability to use the Welsh language is not an essential requirement (A0).

Please note that some Welsh Essential posts adverts at level B1 or below allow applicants *"to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to learn Welsh to this level"* and those applicants are supported in attending Welsh lessons. This is to further develop the Welsh language skills of staff and the bilingual capacity of teams.

All job descriptions include the following statement:

We are a Bilingual Institution which complies with the Welsh Language Standards and is committed to Equal Opportunities. Welsh language skills are considered an asset to the institution, and we encourage and support staff to learn develop and use their Welsh language skills in the workplace. You are welcome to apply for any vacancy in Welsh or English and any application submitted will be treated equally.

Complaints

2 formal complaints regarding the Welsh Language Standards were received during the reporting period.

Category of Standards	Direct complaints received
Service Delivery Standards	**2**
Policy Making Standards	**0**
Operational Standards	**0**

The complaints were in relation to correspondence to prospective students and a research pamphlet. Both complaints were resolved at stage 1 and 2 of the University's complaints procedure. Details of the University's complaints procedure with regard to the Welsh Language Standards can be found on our website. The University's Governance & Culture committee receives an annual report detailing any complaints

received in relation to the Welsh Language Standards.

Improvement Actions
Improvement measures including system corrections have been adopted as a result of the complaints and CWLS will look to issue guidance on the bilingual requirements for publications relating to research activities. As well as complaints, CWLS looks to informally resolve issues that arise from feedback or discussions with staff, students and the public.

Welsh Skills in the Workforce

On **31 July 2025** the information regarding the Welsh language skills of all staff who have updated their details was analysed. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is used for the levels – See **appendix 1**.

Number of staff with Welsh Language Skills (31 July 2025)				
Levels	**Number Oral**	**% Oral**	**Number Written**	**% Written**
A0	613	33.83%	744	41.06%
A1	334	18.43%	279	15.40%
A2	160	8.83%	114	6.29%
B1	118	6.51%	139	7.67%
B2	126	6.95%	130	7.17%
C1	108	5.96%	84	4.64%
C2	271	14.96%	215	11.87%
No Data	82	4.53%	107	5.91%
Total	**1812**	**100.00%**	**1812**	**100.00%**

The following table compares data from last year's annual report (31 July 2024) with data from this year (31 July 2025).

Comparison between 31 July 2024 and 31 July 2025				
Level	**Number Oral**	**% Oral**	**Number Written**	**% Written**
A0	-26	+0.18%	-32	+0.20%
A1	-19	-0.16%	-19	-0.29%
A2	-10	-0.12%	+5	+0.55%
B1	-7	-0.07%	-8	-0.07%
B2	-15	-0.47%	-22	-0.83%
C1	+1	+0.33%	+9	+0.69%

C2	-1	+0.64%	+2	+0.65%
No Data	-10	-0.31%	-22	-0.88%
Total	-87		-87	

The percentage difference for each level (A0–C2) reflects the change in the proportion of staff with Welsh language skills at each level between 2024 and 2025. This means for example, that the percentage may increase even if the number of staff on a particular level has decreased. This is because it is based on the relative share of each level rather than the total count.

Training (Standard 135)

Health & Safety Training

The following Welsh medium health and safety courses were provided to staff during the year.

Course	Number of Courses	Dates	Number of Attendees	% of Staff who attended the course in Welsh
Risk Assessment	2	14/10/2024 11/12/2024	8	11.8%
Fire Wardens	2 (Arranged)	Cancelled due to low registration numbers		

Other Training Courses

The Welsh medium training courses below were offered during the year.

Course	Number of Attendees	Dates	% of Staff who attended the course in Welsh	% of Staff who attended the course in English
Understanding how to support staff through sickness absences	96	02/06/25 - 13/06/25	16 (16.7%)	80 (87.3%)

Beyond the areas listed above, staff also undertake the following training courses which are available in English and in Welsh.

Course	Number who completed the training in Welsh

Data Protection (GDPR)	61
Remote Working	64
Social Engineering (Cyber Security)	62
Unconscious Bias	2
Diversity in the Workplace	13
Awareness of the Prevent Duty	26
Let's Talk About Race in the Workplace	9
Phishing	65
Everyday threats (Cyber Security)	64

Learn Welsh Training

See descriptions of the Learn Welsh levels in **appendix 2.**

'Cymraeg Gwaith' Courses 2024-25

The Cymraeg Gwaith Scheme is funded through the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol under the auspices of the National Centre for Learning Welsh. The aim of the scheme is to improve Welsh language skills in the workplace, with an emphasis on applying what is learned in the workplace, whether it be academic jobs or professional services.

Staff were required to complete 60 hours per year of learning, in order to complete a level, through a combination of weekly courses (usually 2 hours per week). Furthermore, one-to-one tutor support sessions, independent study and attendance of one-day courses) were offered. As part of the scheme, a mentor (another member of staff who speaks Welsh within the University) is offered to support learning and the optional *Cinio Cymraeg* (Welsh Lunch) / *Sesiynau Sgwrsio* (Welsh chat sessions).

Course	Number of staff registered / started Cymraeg Gwaith	Number of Staff who have completed Cymraeg Gwaith	Progression (Number of staff who were Learning on CG courses in 2023-24)
Entry 1	10	8	-
Entry 2	12	11	7
Entry Self-Study	4	3	1
Foundation Self-Study	9	8	8
Foundation 1	7	6	4
Foundation 2	8	7	4
Intermediate 2	8	7	5
Advance 1 (part 1)	7	6	5

Advance 2 (part 2)	4	4	3
Cymraeg Gwaith +	4	4	-
TOTAL	**73**	**64**	**37**

Welsh in the Community Courses

Several staff also attended the classes in the community as follows:

Community Course Level	Number August 2024 – July 2025
Entry	27
Foundation	11
Intermediate	5
Advance	6
Refresher	2
Intensive Summer Course 2025	10
Welsh in the Home	5
Ceredigion Schools Parents Project	9
Supplementary Courses	11
Coleg Cambria	1
Total	**87**

Some learners enrol on more than one course e.g. a community course and a supplementary course, or a Cymraeg Gwaith course and the Intensive Summer Course.

Short Courses for Staff

A 5-week short course (1 hour at lunchtime) was arranged for staff during Spring term 2025.

Short Course Level	Number of registrations
Taster	11

The Taster level learners were keen to continue to Entry level 1 therefore a progression course was arranged for them to start in September 2025 as part of Cymraeg Gwaith.

Contact Details

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Appendix 1 – Welsh Language Levels (A0 – C2)

Language Level	Speaking (interaction and production)	Writing
A0	I cannot speak Welsh at all.	I cannot write Welsh at all.
A1	I can : • interact in a simple way provided the other person is willing to speak slowly, repeat or rephrase things, as well as being willing to help me • use basic expressions and phrases, e.g. introducemyself or another person, • ask and answer questions on familiar topics e.g.'Where do you live?'.	I can : • write a short simple message as an email or note, including the time, date and place. • fill in forms with personal details, e.g. name, addressand telephone number.
A2	I can: • communicate in simple Welsh on familiar topics. • contribute to very short social conversations, even though I can't, usually, keep the conversation going myself. • use a series of phrases to describe and answerquestions on my family and other people, the weather. • convey instructions or very simple telephonemessages.	I can: • write short simple notes and messages, connecting together simple phrases with simple connecting words such as 'and', 'but' and 'because'. • write a very simple letter or email, e.g. thanking someone for doing something.
B1	I can: • take advantage of a range of simple language to deal with most situations which are likely to arise in my work. • understand the general meaning of emails and letters on topics of personal interest, as well as theoretical letters within the context of my work. • enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and	I can: • take fairly accurate notes in meetings or seminars where the subject is familiar and foreseeable. • write letters or emails to describe events, experiences and impressions • write memoranda or informal emails to convey information.

Language Level	Speaking (interaction and production)	Writing
	current events. • offer advice on simple matters to clients within thecontext of my work. • describe experiences and events, hopes andambitions. • give reasons and explanations for my opinions andplans concisely	
B2	I can : • listen to, understand and contribute to discussionsin meetings and seminars. • take an active part in discussion in familiarcontexts. • clearly express an opinion. • present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide rangeof subjects related to work • expand and support ideas with supplementarypoints and relevant examples. • explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options. • give a clear presentation on familiar topics.	I can: • write short pieces of business correspondence, as a letter or email, on a wide range of topics related to my work or my field of interest, and this in standardWelsh without using a template (but using a spellchecker, dictionary, technical resources etc. when necessary). • take notes or write reports, passing on information orgiving reasons in support or against a particular point of view.
C1	I can : • express myself fluently and unprompted. • use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes, and contribute confidently tomeetings and oral presentations. • formulate ideas and opinions, and ensure that mycontributions are relevant to others. • respond appropriately to different cultural and socialsituations.	I can: • write clear well-structured texts, expressing points ofview at some length. • write detailed explanations of complex subjects in the form of email, letter, essay or report, underlining the salient issues. • write different types of texts in styles that are appropriate to the reader in mind.

	• present clear detailed descriptions of complex subjects, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points, and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	
C2	I can: • understand reports and articles I come across in my work, including complex ideas expressed in complexlanguage. • take part effortlessly in any discussion. • express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. • If I do have a problem I can revise and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it. • advise on complex, difficult and contentious matters such as financial or legal matters, to the extent that my specialised knowledge allows me • present descriptions or arguments well, smoothly and clearly, in the appropriate register and context,and with a logical and effective structure which helps to draw the listeners' attention to relevant points.	I can : • take full and accurate notes and continue to take part in meetings and seminars. • write well-structured and smoothly flowing texts inthe appropriate register. • write complex technical reports or articles which helps the recipients to notice significant points. • write reviews of professional and/or literary works.

Appendix 2 – Learn Welsh levels (The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

Name of level	Description	Learning levels of the Common European Framework	Recommended minimum number of contact hours
Entry	Courses for beginners, introducing simple vocabulary and linguistic patterns and everyday phrases. The emphasis is on speaking the language.	A1	120
Foundation	This level builds on Entry and requires some experience of Welsh. The main emphasis is on speaking, with an opportunity to discuss everyday subjects such as family and friends, work and hobbies.	A2	120
Intermediate	This level builds on Foundation and is suitable for those who are familiar with the main patterns of Welsh. There is an opportunity to develop conversational skills, with a little more writing, reading and listening. The main aim is to create confident speakers.	B1	120
Advanced	This is an opportunity to discuss all kinds of subjects and themes. Learners also develop their reading, writing and listening skills. The main aim is to create confident speakers.	B2	360*
Proficiency	Proficiency courses, suitable for fluent learners and first language speakers, are tailored to the needs of the class. The general aim is to further develop students' existing skills and help them gain confidence.		

National Centre for Learning Welsh https://learnwelsh.cymru/media/10646/ad-blyn-2020-argraffu-print.pdf

* Advance level consists of 3 courses – U1, U2 and U3 (each is 120hours)