



Welsh Language Standards Annual Report August 2021 - July 2022

Introduction

This document is a report on the period from **1 August 2021 - 31 July 2022**.

Since 1 April 2018, 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 explain how the University is expected to provide specific services through the medium of Welsh, ensuring that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language. Universities are required to publish an Annual Report on their compliance with the Standards.

In accordance with the requirements of the Standards, the annual report notes how we complied with the Welsh Language Standards, 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 who have 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, and **appendix 2** includes a description of the Learn Welsh levels (Entry – Proficiency).

Developments in 2021-22

The Welsh Language and Culture Sub-Strategy 2019-2023

This is the third year of implementing the [Welsh Language and Culture Sub-Strategy 2019-2023](#).

The aim of the sub-strategy is to highlight the main activities that make Aberystwyth University (AU) an ambitious bilingual institution which facilitates and promotes the use of the Welsh language.

During 2021-22 events were arranged to celebrate the Welsh language as part of the University's 150th celebrations in 2022. There was a joint initiative with Urdd Gobaith Cymru to form the peace and good will message, with a group of students taking part in workshops to create this year's message. The message was launched with the First Minister for Wales and the Vice Chancellor at the Nobel Peace Centre in Oslo on 18 May 2022, and highlighted the contribution of the Aberystwyth University students.

The University conducted the Staff Welsh language use survey (October 2021), and Professional Services departments continued to implement their 'Welsh language plans' which have a dual aim of promoting the use of Welsh and to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Welsh language standards.

Welsh-medium Academic Provision Strategy

During the year, the work of developing a new strategy has been ongoing in consultation with several key stakeholders including the University Executive, Council members, students & staff, and the University branch of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. The final version of the Strategy will be approved by the Executive and presented to Council by the end of September 2022.

Aberystwyth University Welsh Language Awards 2021

The winners of the [AU Welsh Language Awards](#) were announced following Shwmae

Su'Mae Day in October 2021. Due to COVID restrictions a video was published to celebrate the winners.

As learners and first language Welsh speakers, students, and staff, the four winners were selected for the following awards

- **Exceptional Learner (Staff)** – Kate Wright
- **Promoting Welsh in the Workplace** – Annette Edwards
- **Welsh-Medium Study** – Llŷr Tomos
- **Welsh Language Champion (Student)** – Elen Roach

Each winner received a personal 'Englyn' from Mererid Hopwood and Eurig Salisbury from the Department of Welsh and Celtic Studies at the University.

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/cgg/welsh-language-awards/>

<https://www.cambrian-news.co.uk/news/education/awards-for-contribution-to-welsh-language-at-university-114482>

Aberystwyth University Staff Welsh Language Use Survey

In October 2021, a fourth survey was conducted regarding staff Welsh language use. The surveys are conducted every two years in accordance with the University's policy on the internal use of Welsh. The aim of the survey is to:

- Measure the use of Welsh.
- Identify Welsh language use trends amongst staff.
- Assist in planning activities to promote Welsh internally.
- Identify Welsh training needs.
- Measure progress against the targets within the Policy on the Internal Use of Welsh.

A total of **317** of responses were received (16.3% of all University staff as of 30 September 2021). The main finding showed that

- **80.9%** of fluent Welsh speakers (B2-C2 levels) speak Welsh daily/almost daily, with **89.7%** speaking Welsh on a weekly basis.
- **15.2%** of those with Welsh language skills (A1-B1 levels) speak Welsh daily/almost daily, with **44%** speaking Welsh on a weekly basis

There was a strong positive response to the statements below, which has increased since the last survey in 2019. The results showed that the vast majority of staff felt that the University supported the Welsh language and supported their use of the Welsh.

- ***The University as an institution supports me to use my Welsh language skills at work.***
78% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, which is an increase of +8.1%

compared with 2019.

- ***The University as an institution supports the use of Welsh across the organisation.***
91.1% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, which is an increase of 4.2% compared with 2019.
- ***My colleagues support me to use my Welsh language skills at work.***
70.5% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, which is an increase of 5% compared with 2019.
- ***I have a good understanding of the University's Bilingual Policy and how it affects my work.***
89.2% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, which is an increase of 3.3% compared with 2019.

One of the questions the survey asked was regarding the effect of the lockdown restrictions on the opportunities to use Welsh. When the survey was conducted national health regulations were operational and many staff had been working from home since March 2020. Although most responses indicated that there had been no change, a number had indicated that there were fewer opportunities to use Welsh since working from home, and several comments also supported this. During 2022-23, we will look to implement an action plan to increase those opportunities for staff as they return to work on the campus.

Impact of Lockdown – Opportunities to Use Welsh

	More Opportunities	No Change	Fewer Opportunities
A1-A2-B1	16%	46%	38%
B2-C1-C2	4%	63%	32%

Scholarships

The University's Scholarships for studying through the medium of Welsh were revamped, with students receiving £200 for studying 5 credits through the medium of Welsh and an additional £50 for every additional 20 Welsh-medium credits, up to a maximum of £400.

A series of in-person events were held during the year to promote and market the AU and Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol scholarships. Three presentations were given to potential candidates at each open day, as well as talks during the visiting days. There was a good number of applications from university students for the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Incentive Scholarships and 5 students won the main Coleg Cymraeg scholarships.

New Veterinary Science Provision

In September 2021 we welcomed our first veterinary science students, and these courses offer Welsh-medium provision for the first time in this area of work.

New Nursing Provision

During 2021-22, Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) awarded a contract to the University to train adult and mental health nurses. Students studying for the new degrees from September 2022 will be able to complete half their course in Welsh. The provision will make a valuable contribution not only to the students but to improving the Welsh-medium provision in this field locally and nationally. Students will start these degrees in September 2022.

'Understanding the Requirements of the Welsh Language Standards' Training Sessions

A series of training sessions were held for staff during the year focusing on implementing and understanding the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. The sessions were launched on Welsh Language Rights day (7 December 2021) and 4 sessions were held during the year to raise awareness of the requirements of the Standards and to the University's commitments to providing bilingual services to students and staff.

'Sesiynau Sgwrsio' (Welsh Chat Sessions)

Regular 'chat sessions' were provided during the year via Zoom to support staff who are learning Welsh. The Learn Welsh team and the Centre for Welsh Language Services launched a timetable of regular Welsh chat sessions for staff at the Arts Centre on 24 June 2022.

Welsh Mentoring Scheme

The Welsh Mentoring Scheme is ongoing and enables staff attending the Work Welsh Courses to meet regularly with a mentor to practise their conversational Welsh and develop their confidence in using Welsh. Some of the learners at Advance levels are also mentors to learners at lower levels.

Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards

Compliance Arrangements

In accordance with the Standards, the University has a document explaining the steps that we have taken to comply with all the standards - [Arrangements for Overseeing the Welsh Language Standards](#)

During 2021-22, Professional Services departments continued to implement their departmental Welsh language plans. The plans are reviewed annually and is an opportunity for the Centre for Welsh Language Services to engage with Professional Services departments and to identify opportunities to promote the use of Welsh internally within upcoming work department work programmes, and also to assess compliance with the Welsh language standards.

Centre for Welsh Language Services

The Centre for Welsh Language Services is responsible for assisting the University's departments to implement the Welsh Language Standards 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.

Simultaneous interpretation arrangements in virtual meetings are well established, and the University has specific procedures to approve the use of Zoom in meetings where simultaneous translation is required. This means that we have been able to continue to provide the simultaneous translation service during a year when the majority of our meetings were held virtually.

Both the **Shwmae Su'mae day** celebration on 15 October 2021, including the Aber Gŵyl Dewi Awards 2021, and the 'Mae gen i hawl' ('I have a right') day on 7 December 2021 were promoted in association with Coleg Cymraeg and UMCA staff.

Similarly, **Welsh Language Music Day** was promoted virtually on 4 February 2022 and the Arts Centre invited messages on Twitter nominating Welsh lyrics to be placed on the building stairway. The Arts Centre also organised a series of online events including visual arts activities as well as live events and performances.

Advice and Guidance

Guidance on complying with the Welsh Language Standards, as well as the University's policies and strategies with regard to promoting the Welsh language, are available on the Centre for Welsh Language Services' website www.aber.ac.uk/en/cgg

14 sets of guidance have been published, as well as a summary of the requirements of the Standards to assist University staff to comply.

A key part of the Centre's work is to provide advice and guidance to departments, and during the year members of staff offered advice on a wide range of queries regarding the Welsh language. The support includes guidance on the Welsh Language Standards as well as discussing and identifying opportunities to develop the use of the Welsh language in departments.

The Centre worked closely with the provision offered by Learn Welsh Ceredigion, Powys and Carmarthenshire to support staff to develop their Welsh-language skills.

During 2021-22, a series of training sessions for staff on understanding the requirements of the Welsh language standards were held (see page 5).

Welsh Language Operational Group

Three meetings of the Welsh Language Operational Group were held during the academic year (October 2021, March 2022, and June 2022).

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 Welsh Language Standards, developing appropriate training and advice.

During the year the University's Executive received several reports on the Group's activities. The Pro Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for Welsh-medium academic provision updates the Group on the work undertaken by the Welsh-medium Studies Committee in relation to Welsh-medium academic provision at the University.

Policy Standards

The arrangements in terms of considering the effect of policy decisions on the Welsh language have been established and are continuing. The University has a [Language Impact Assessment](#) form which is available on the Centre for Welsh Language Services' website and on the equality page of the Human Resources website. The University's cover sheet for committee reports includes a question about the implications in terms of the Welsh Language Standards and it is expected that an impact assessment is completed if implications have been identified.

The [guidance](#) on assessing the effect of policy decisions on the Welsh language includes assistance to define policy decisions, opportunities to use the Welsh language and how not to treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language.

Developing or Adapting Academic Provision

The Welsh-medium studies committee met three times during the academic year (December 2021, February 2022, and May 2022). A sub-committee of the Academic Board, the committee is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for Welsh-medium academic provision, and membership includes the Associate Deans with responsibility for the Welsh language, the AU Branch Officer of the Coleg Cymraeg

Cenedlaethol, Welsh Language Services Manager, a member of the marketing team, a member of the Information Services team, the Academic Registry, and the president of UMCA.

In accordance with the requirements of Standard 104, clear processes are in place to consider the effect on opportunities to use the Welsh language as well as not treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language with any proposed changes to the academic provision.

Policy on the Internal Use of Welsh

This is the second year of implementing our [Policy on the Internal Use of Welsh](#) which builds upon the commitments made in our Strategic Plan 2018-2023 '*Towards the Next 150 Years*' 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 are held every two years. Please see results for October 2021 on **page 3** above.

As of 31 July 2022, the Welsh language skills of **39.3%** of the Professional Services workforce were at level B1-C2. It should be noted that this figure represents individuals rather than contracts, and the percentage only represents the members of staff who have noted their language skills on Aber People (**85.8%** of Professional Services staff).

The Welsh Language Operational Group receives a report at each meeting giving an update on the University's Bilingual Skills Strategy. The reports include the following data:

- (a) Information on the language requirements of all posts advertised.
- (b) A summary of the language skills level of those appointed.
- (c) The percentage of the workforce (Professional Services) who have Welsh language skills at level B1 or above.
- (d) Information about the number of staff on Welsh language courses.

Posts

A total of **653** posts were advertised by Aberystwyth University between 1 August 2021 and 31 July 2022 (not including *ABERforward* and *AberWorks* posts).

Category	Number	%
<u>Welsh language skills essential.</u> <i>Posts where (oral) Welsh language skills are essential at level A1 or above.</i>	204	31.2%
<u>Welsh language skills desirable.</u> <i>Posts where (oral) Welsh language skills are desirable at level A1 or above (if Welsh language skills were not essential – A0 posts).</i>	432	66.2%
<u>Posts where Welsh language skills were not necessary.</u> <i>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.</i>	449	68.8%
<u>Welsh language skills needed to be learnt on appointment</u> <i>The data is not available for this reporting period due to changes in data protection regulation changes. A new method of obtaining the data for the next reporting period will be sought.</i>	-	-

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 every post 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).

Complaints

A total of **2** 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
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The complaints were regarding the website for postgraduates and signage on the campus.

Details of the University's complaints procedure with regard to the Welsh Language Standards can be found on our [website](#)

Welsh Language Skills of the Workforce

On **31 July 2022** the information regarding the 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 2021)				
Levels	Number Oral	% Oral	Number Written	% Written
A0	617	30.88%	788	39.44%
A1	345	17.27%	278	13.91%
A2	146	7.31%	88	4.40%
B1	133	6.66%	138	6.91%
B2	150	7.51%	165	8.26%
C1	94	4.70%	72	3.60%
C2	247	12.36%	188	9.41%
No Data	266	13.31%	281	14.06%
Total	1998	100.00%	1998	100.00%

Training (Standard 135)

Health & Safety Training

No Welsh-medium Health & Safety courses were delivered during the year.

Other Training Courses

During the reporting period, no training was provided in either Welsh or English in the following areas.

- Recruitment and interviewing
- Complaints and disciplinary procedures;
- Dealing with the public

No Welsh-medium performance management courses were delivered during the year. A

number of Welsh-medium performance management courses have been arranged for 2022-23.

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

Course	Number of staff who completed the training in Welsh
Data Protection (General Data Protection Regulation)	38
Information Security	40
Unconscious Bias	7
Diversity in the Workplace	7
Awareness of the Prevent Duty	7

Learn Welsh Training

Please see description of the Learn Welsh levels in **appendix 2**.

'Cymraeg Gwaith' (Work Welsh) Courses 2021-22

The Work Welsh scheme runs from April to March and is funded through the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol under the aegis of the National Centre for Learning Welsh. The aim of the scheme is to improve Welsh skills in the workplace, with a specific emphasis on applying the learning to the workplace, whether in academic or professional services job roles.

Staff were required to complete 120-hours of learning annually to complete a level, through a combination of weekly courses (usually 2hours), one to one support sessions with a tutor, independent study and one day courses. As part of the scheme staff are offered a mentor (another Welsh speaking member of staff in the University) to support their learning.

Course	Number of staff registered
Entry 1 & 2 Self-Study	8 (+5 that have completed Entry 1)
Entry 2	9
Foundation 1	11
Foundation 2	7
Intermediate 2	8
Advanced 2	6
Total	54

In 2021-22, hour long courses over 30 weeks were arranged for **Information Services** and **Human Resources** staff. 2 members of staff were on Intermediate 1, 5 on

Foundation 1 and 8 on Entry level 1. An intensive 15-hour Workplace Welsh course was arranged over 5 days for 6 Academic Registry staff in September 2021.

Welsh Taster Course for Students

A Welsh taster course for University students was arranged between late November 2021 and June 2022, and 10 students registered on the course but not participants all were able to complete. A new Entry level course is planned for 2022-23.

Learn Welsh Courses in the Community

A number of staff also attended Welsh courses in the community, data below:

Level	Number Completed
Mynediad / Entry	20
Sylfaen / Foundation	10
Canolradd / Intermediate	7
Uwch / Advanced	4
Hyfedredd / Proficiency	6
Total	47

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Appendix 1 – Welsh Language Levels

Language Level	Speaking (interaction and production)	Writing
A0	I can not speak Welsh at all.	I can not write Welsh at all.
A1	I can : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. introduce myself or another person, • ask and answer questions on familiar topics e.g. 'Where do you live?' 	I can : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, address and telephone number.
A2	I can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 answer questions on my family and other people, the weather. • convey instructions or very simple telephonemessages. 	I can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write short simple notes and messages, connectingtogether 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take advantage of a range of simple language to deal with most situations which are likely to arise inmy 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 thatare familiar, e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and 	I can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take fairly accurate notes in meetings or seminarswhere the subject is familiar and foreseeable. • write letters or emails to describe events,experiences and impressions • write memoranda or informal emails to conveyinformation.

Language Level	Speaking (interaction and production)	Writing
	<p>current events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offer advice on simple matters to clients within the context of my work. • describe experiences and events, hopes and ambitions. • give reasons and explanations for my opinions and plans concisely 	
B2	<p>I can :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listen to, understand and contribute to discussions in meetings and seminars. • take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts. • clearly express an opinion. • present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to work • expand and support ideas with supplementary points 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. 	<p>I can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 standard Welsh without using a template (but using a spellchecker, dictionary, technical resources etc. when necessary). • take notes or write reports, passing on information or giving reasons in support or against a particular point of view.
C1	<p>I can :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • express myself fluently and unprompted. • use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes, and contribute confidently to meetings and oral presentations. • formulate ideas and opinions, and ensure that my contributions are relevant to others. • respond appropriately to different cultural and social situations. 	<p>I can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write clear well-structured texts, expressing points of view 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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present clear detailed descriptions of complex subjects, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points, and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion. 	
C2	<p>I can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand reports and articles I come across in my work, including complex ideas expressed in complex language. • 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. 	<p>I can :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take full and accurate notes and continue to take part in meetings and seminars. • write well-structured and smoothly flowing texts in the 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

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 are 120hours)