



Welsh Language Standards Annual Report

2023-24

This document reports on the period from **1 August 2023 - 31 July 2024**

Introduction

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 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 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 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, and **appendix 2** includes a description of the Learn Welsh levels (Entry - Proficiency).

Developments in 2023-24

Extending the Welsh Language and Culture Sub-Strategy 2019-2023

The university extended the period of its Strategic plan (**Towards the Next 150 Years**) for an additional year and therefore the Welsh Language and Culture Sub-Strategy 2019-2023 was also extended. The main intention of this sub-strategy is to highlight the main activities that make Aberystwyth University an ambitious bilingual institution, and to enable and promote the use of Welsh.

Welsh-medium Academic Sub-Strategy 2022-27

The Welsh Medium Academic Sub-Strategy 2022-27 targets include increasing the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (CCC) funding levels, increasing the number of Welsh medium credits in growth areas, promoting Welsh and Wales-based research, and developing Welsh medium research. Notable developments in 2023-24 include extending the subject grant period for Business and Veterinary Science following a review, and agreeing plans to increase the support available to Nursing students to learn and improve their Welsh skills, as well as increasing Welsh medium provision at level 4 in Psychology. In Theatre, Film & Television Studies, we plan to offer Welsh medium modules on some schemes that are currently offered in English only to encourage students to undertake some of their studies in Welsh. The university was awarded funding from CCC to host two conferences, Research Methodologies & Regional or Minority Languages Research and Testunau'r Enfys (Rainbow Works). Furthermore, developments are underway at the Graduate School to increase the range of Welsh medium research training modules and the number of Welsh medium credits available to students.

University Secretary & Director of Welsh Language

In March 2024, Dr Gwawr Taylor was appointed University Secretary and Director of Welsh Language. The role sits within the University's Executive Group and the duties include the university's strategic lead on Welsh language matters. The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education & Student Experience (Prof Anwen Jones) continues to lead on Welsh medium academic matters.

Aberystwyth University Welsh Language Awards 2023

The winners of the **Aberystwyth University Welsh Language Awards** were announced in October 2023. The awards were held at Medrus Mawr celebrating four winners in the following categories:

- Exceptional Learner (Staff) - Kate Barber and Dr Martine Garland
- Promoting the Welsh language in the Workplace - Abigail Crook
- Welsh Medium Study Award - Ffion King
- Welsh Language Champion (Student) - Cai Phillips

Professor Elizabeth Treasure was also awarded a Special Award by the panel for her key support to the Welsh language during her term as Vice-Chancellor at the university.

The winners received a personal englyn by Professor Mererid Hopwood, Dr Eurig Salisbury, from the Department of Welsh and Celtic Studies or Dr Hywel Griffiths, from the Department of Geography and Earth Sciences.

In addition to the award winners above, the adjudicating panel presented a Certificate of Special Recognition to students Gareth Tuen Griffiths, Department of Physics and Lowri Bebb, Department of Welsh and Celtic Studies, and to staff members Chris Stewart, Department of Theatre, Film & Television Studies, Colin Nosworthy, Communications and Public Affairs and Julie Roberts, Estates, Facilities and Residences, for their commitment to the Welsh language.

Outlook MailTip to Identify Welsh Speaking Staff

In 2024 the University introduced a new 'MailTip' message to enable staff to include one of the following messages that will appear on their Outlook profiles.

Rwy'n siarad Cymraeg / I speak Welsh (or)
Rwy'n siarad rhywfaint o Gymraeg / I speak some Welsh

The purpose of the MailTip is to allow the recipient to inform staff (the sender) that they can speak Welsh. The Centre for Welsh Language Services (CWLS) has been promoting the feature during 2023-24 and will continue to do so in 2024-25.

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

CWLS continued with a series of training sessions focusing on implementing and understanding the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. 8 sessions (4 in Welsh, 4 in English) were delivered 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.

Research Methodologies & Regional or Minority Languages Research Conference

In July 2024, the Centre for Welsh Politics and Society at Aberystwyth University hosted a **regional / minority language conference** examining and sharing best practice regarding research methodologies in the field of language planning and policy. The event gave an opportunity to showcase our research and to engage with and learn from experts and practitioners involved in promoting these languages across Europe.

'Sesiynau Sgwrsio' (Welsh Chat Sessions)

During the year there were regular informal Welsh chat sessions to give staff the opportunity to use their Welsh skills. There are sessions at various levels each week, with details available to staff on our [website](#).

Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards

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 2023-24, Professional Services departments provided an update on their compliance with the Welsh language standards as part of their departmental Welsh language plans.

The plans are reviewed annually, which provides an opportunity for the Centre for Welsh Language Services (CWLS) to engage with Professional Services departments and to identify opportunities to promote the use of Welsh internally within upcoming work department work programmes, and to assess compliance with the Welsh language standards. In 2024-25, the CWLS will review the arrangements regarding departmental Welsh language plans to ensure that they continue to provide an effective measure of compliance across departments.

Centre for Welsh Language Services

CWLS is responsible for assisting 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. 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 www.aber.ac.uk/en/cgg

Welsh Language Operational Group

Three meetings of the Welsh Language Operational Group were held during the academic year (October 2023, March 2024, and June 2024).

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.

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 the workforce (Professional Services) with Welsh language skills at level B1 or higher.
- Data on the number of staff attending Welsh courses.

Policy Standards

The arrangements in terms of considering the effect of policy decisions on the Welsh language have been long established. During 2023-24 the Centre for Welsh Language Services commenced a review of the University's processes regarding assessing policy decisions. The review, in light of the Welsh Tribunal ruling (TYG/WLT/22/01) and a Welsh Language Commissioner's training seminar, we are currently updating our guidance, our Welsh language Impact Assessment form and looking to provide training to staff in 2024-25.

This matter was discussed at a Welsh Language Operational Group meeting (June 2024), and further updates will be provided in 2024-25.

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 consider the effect on opportunities to use the Welsh language as well as not treating the Welsh language less favourably.

Policy on the Internal Use of Welsh

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.

Staff language use surveys are held every two years, and the November 2023 survey results are on page 5.

- 50% of the University's Professional Services workforce having Welsh-language skills (at B1-C2 level) by 2029.

As of 31 July 2024, the Welsh language skills of 39.5% (442/1118) 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 (93.9% of Professional Services staff).

Posts

A total of 288 posts were advertised by Aberystwyth University between 1 August 2023 and 31 July 2024 (not including post 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. | 134 | 46.5% |
| 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. | 134 | 53.5% |
| | 288 | 100% |

| Category | Number | % |
|---|--------|-------|
| Welsh language skills desirable (not essential). Of the 154 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. | 146 | 94.8% |

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 advert at level B1 or below allow applicants "to demonstrate an on-going 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

No formal complaints regarding the Welsh Language Standards were received during the reporting period.

| Category of Standards | Direct complaints received |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Service Delivery Standards | 0 |
| Policy Making Standards | 0 |
| Operational Standards | 0 |

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.

Welsh Language Skills of the Workforce

On **31 July 2024** 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 2024) | | | | |
|---|-------------|--------|----------------|-----------|
| Levels | Number Oral | % Oral | Number Written | % Written |
| A0 | 639 | 33.65% | 776 | 40.86% |
| A1 | 353 | 18.59% | 298 | 15.69% |
| A2 | 170 | 8.95% | 109 | 5.74% |
| B1 | 125 | 6.58% | 147 | 7.74% |
| B2 | 141 | 7.42% | 152 | 8.00% |
| C1 | 107 | 5.63% | 75 | 3.95% |
| C2 | 272 | 14.32% | 213 | 11.22% |
| No Data | 92 | 4.84% | 129 | 6.79% |
| Total | 1899 | | 1899 | |

The following table compares the data from the previous annual report (31 July 2023) with this year's data (31 July 2024).

| Comparison between 31 July 2023 & 31 July 2024 | | | | |
|--|-------------|--------|----------------|-----------|
| Levels | Number Oral | % Oral | Number Written | % Written |
| A0 | -21 | -0.18% | -60 | -1.99% |
| A1 | -12 | -0.12% | -6 | +0.11% |
| A2 | -3 | +0.08% | 0 | +0.15% |
| B1 | -13 | -0.49% | -7 | -0.15% |
| B2 | -13 | -0.47% | -18 | -0.71% |
| C1 | -5 | -0.11% | -5 | -0.15% |
| C2 | +1 | +0.43% | -2 | +0.20% |
| No Data | +14 | +0.84% | +46 | +2.54% |
| Total | -52 | | -52 | |

Training (Standard 135)

Health and Safety Training

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

| Courses | Courses Held | Dates | Attendance | % staff attending Welsh version |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| Emergency First Aid at Work | 1 | 21/09/2024 | 7 | 14% |
| Risk Assessment | 1 | 09/07/2024 | 4 | 9% |
| Fire Wardens | 1 | 14/02/2024 | 7 | 8% |

Other Training Courses

The following Welsh medium courses were offered to staff during the year.

| Course | Total Attendance | Date | Number and % attending the Welsh version | Number and % attending the English version |
|------------------------------------|------------------|------------|--|--|
| Recruitment Skills* | 2 | 06/09/2023 | (2) 100% | (0) 0% |
| Managing your Team | 18 | 13/09/2023 | (2) 11% | (16) 89% |
| Personal Impact & Effectiveness ** | 16 | 11/10/2023 | (0) 0% | (16) 100% |

*Recruitment Skills was only offered in Welsh during 2023-24.

** There were no registrations of the Personal Impact & Effectiveness (Welsh medium) training session.

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) | 3 |
| Information Security | 4 |
| Unconscious Bias | 13 |
| Diversity in the Workplace | 10 |
| Awareness of the Prevent Duty | 61 |
| Let's Talk about Race in the Workplace | 10 |
| Data handling | 69 |
| Phishing | 72 |
| Cyber threats | 63 |

Learn Welsh Training

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

'Cymraeg Gwaith' (Work Welsh) Courses 2022-23

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 are required to complete 120-hours of learning annually to complete a level, through a combination of weekly courses (usually 2hours per week), 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 on Work Welsh courses | Continuation (Number of Staff on WW courses 2022-23) |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Entry 1 | 8 | |
| Intensive Entry Course (over 2 weeks) | 6 | |
| Entry 2 | 7 | 6 |
| Entry Self-Study | 19 | |
| Foundation Self-Study | 5 | 5 |
| Foundation 2 / Intermediate 1 | 10 | 10 |
| Intermediate 2 | 5 | 4 |
| Advance 1 (Part 2) | 6 | 5 |
| Cymraeg Gwaith+ | 2 | |
| Total | 68 | |

Welsh Courses for AU Departments

2 bespoke courses were held for 30 weeks (1 hour per week) arranged by departments. See table below:

| Course Level | Number of Staff registered on Work Welsh courses | Continuation (Number of Staff on WW courses 2022-23) |
|--------------|--|---|
| Entry 2 | 4 | Information Services |
| Foundation 2 | 3 | Information Services, The Department of Law & Criminology |
| Total | 7 | |

Learn Welsh Courses in the Community 2023-24

Several staff attended mainstream community Welsh courses during the year:

| Community Course Level | Numbers (August 2023 - July 2024) |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Entry | 39 |
| Foundation | 9 |
| Intermediate | 3 |
| Advanced | 9 |
| Refresher | 5 |
| Intensive Summer Course 2024 | 9 |
| Supplementary Courses | 8 |
| Total | 82 |

Some learners have registered on more than one course e.g. Community course, supplementary course, Cymraeg Gwaith course or Intensive Summer course.

Short Welsh Courses for Staff

A series of short 6-week (1 hour lunchtime) Welsh courses for staff were arranged in the Spring term 2024 as follows:

| Short Course Level | Number of registrations |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Welsh Taster * | 11 |
| Codi Hyder (Confidence Building) | 4 |
| Welsh Refresher | 2 |
| Total | 17 |

*Attendees of the Welsh taster course were eager to continue to enrol on an Entry level 1 course therefore a continuation course in the third term was arranged for 13 learners.

A 1hour Welsh Taster course for Hospitality staff was arranged in October 2023 concentrating on vocabulary and phrases relating to catering.

| Short Course Level | Number of registrations |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Taster Group 1 | 7 |
| Taster Group 2 | 7 |
| Taster Group 3 | 4 |
| Total | 18 |

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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 | <p>I can:</p> <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?’. | <p>I can:</p> <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 | <p>I can:</p> <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 telephone messages. | <p>I can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 | <p>I can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 current events. ▪ 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. | <p>I can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 |
| 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. |

| Language Level | Speaking (interaction and production) | Writing |
|----------------|--|--|
| 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. ▪ present clear detailed descriptions of complex. | <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. |
| 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 (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 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)