

The Welsh Government's Annual Report on compliance with the Welsh Language Standards 2017-18

Introduction

This is the Welsh Ministers' second annual report on our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards since the standards came into force on 30 March 2016. The Welsh Government is continuing to make good progress in complying with the requirements and ensuring that people can engage with the organisation in their language of choice. Welsh Ministers' compliance with the standards is one piece of a strategic language planning jigsaw which will assist the government to meet its goal of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050.

During the preparatory period for implementing the standards, for clarity and propriety reasons a revised structure was put in place within the Government, separating Welsh language policy functions from the work of ensuring compliance with the standards. The Welsh language policy team is based within the Education and Public Services Group, while the Standards Compliance team is located within the Office of the First Minister. A very small team of staff works centrally on compliance, but they are supported by a network of co-ordinators from across the organisation.

Dealing with the Welsh Language Commissioner's enforcement policy has continued to account for a significant part of the compliance team's work during the last year. This is because each valid complaint that has been made to the Commissioner has resulted in a full statutory investigation. Dealing with such investigations is resource intensive for all parties.

1. Compliance with the Service Delivery Standards

1.1 General

This report covers the second year of complying with the Welsh Language Standards, and we have seen new work practices embed in the day to day work of officials.

We continue to operate a network of Welsh Language Co-ordinators, with representatives from across the organisation, to provide assurance that the standards are being adhered to within the various groups within the government.

We have focused during the reporting period on developing our capacity to provide excellent customer service by front line staff, with training and various workshops provided. Additionally, we promoted the Welsh language service available in Welsh Government reception areas across the estate to encourage the public and stakeholders to use their Welsh in dealing with us. Iaith Gwaith resources are displayed across the offices, and specifically, the Welsh language service available in the main Welsh Government reception desk in Cathays Park was promoted with larger scale Iaith Gwaith resources displayed and the word "Croeso" placed prominently across the front desk.

1.2 Complaints

We received 27 complaints relating to the Service Delivery Standards during 2016-17. Fourteen of the complaints were received directly from members of the public. Of the complaints received from the Welsh Language Commissioner's office (13 in total), 7 of the complaints became statutory investigations, with 4 of the investigations concluded by 31 March 2018.

2. Compliance with the Policy Making Standards

2.1 General

An impact assessment framework is used for considering what affect Welsh Ministers' policy decisions have on opportunities to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language less favourably than English. The purpose of the framework is to offer comprehensive advice to staff on giving appropriate consideration to the Welsh language when making policy decisions. The Welsh language impact assessment is one of the mandatory assessments officials must complete when developing, revising or amending policies. A 5 stage process is used within the framework, namely planning; assessment; reporting; consultation; and publication. The aim is to develop policies of the highest possible quality that, in turn, make a difference to the citizens of Wales.

Standard consultation templates were amended to ensure that we seek the views of respondents regarding the impacts of our policy decisions on the Welsh language, and standard procurement templates ensure that the Standards are an important consideration when contracting services from third parties. Guidance for staff has been developed on complying with the requirements during consultations exercises, contracting services, distributing grant funding and commissioning research.

2.2 Complaints

No complaints relating to the Policy Making Standards were received in 2017-18.

3. Compliance with the Operational Standards

3.1 General

During 2017-18 we saw developments in the use of the Welsh language internally. There has been an increase in the services available to staff through the medium of Welsh. There has also been a small increase in the number of officials registering their Welsh language skills compared to the previous year's statistics. There has also been an increased use of Welsh in corporate communications with staff. This has resulted in the Welsh language being more visible and audible across the Welsh Government estate.

3.2 Complaints

One complaint relating to the Operational Standards was received during the reporting period.

3.3 Staff Skills

March 2018

	Reading	Speaking	Understanding	Writing
0	2090	2501	2271	2844
1	1289	1154	1050	947
2	433	258	522	282
3	305	179	189	302
4	308	274	283	310
5	680	742	792	412
No data	192	189	190	200
	5395	5395	5395	5395
	Reading	Speaking	Understanding	Writing
0	39.5%	47.2%	42.9%	53.7%
1	24.3%	21.8%	19.8%	17.9%
2	8.2%	4.9%	9.9%	5.3%
3	5.8%	3.4%	3.6%	5.7%
4	5.8%	5.2%	5.3%	5.9%
5	12.8%	14%	15%	7.8%
No data	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.8%

March 2017

	Reading	Speaking	Understanding	Writing
0	2210	2597	2381	2964
1	1283	1175	1060	951
2	450	265	533	295
3	308	189	192	299
4	303	269	278	317
5	684	742	797	405
No data	157	158	154	164
	5395	5395	5395	5395
	Reading	Speaking	Understanding	Writing

0	41.0%	48.1%	44.1%	54.9%
1	23.8%	21.8%	19.6%	17.6%
2	8.3%	4.9%	9.9%	5.5%
3	5.7%	3.5%	3.6%	5.5%
4	5.6%	5.0%	5.2%	5.9%
5	12.7%	13.8%	14.8%	7.5%
No data	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	3.0%

The data includes both permanent and temporary staff.

3.4 The number and percentage of staff who attended Welsh Language Training in 2017-18

Courses for learning Welsh in the workplace

Level	Registered	Sitting the exam
Entry	84	28
Foundation	55	22
Intermediate	51	13
Advanced 1+2	52	8
Total	242	71

In addition to the formal weekly lessons, 52 members of staff attended a Welsh language taster session during the reporting period. Ninety one Welsh speaking staff have also registered as part of the formal mentoring programme for Welsh learners, to provide opportunities to allow Welsh learners to improve their skills outside of the classroom environment.

Performance Management Courses

47 members of staff attended Welsh language courses on the Welsh Government's new performance management system during the reporting period. This accounts for 18% of the total number of staff attending the course.

Bilingual Customer Service Courses

Eighty four members of staff attended bilingual customer training courses during the reporting period, including reception staff, call centre staff and security staff. These courses were held bilingually.

3.5 Number of new and vacant posts advertised and categorised as

- i) Welsh language skills essential
- ii) Welsh language skills need to be learnt when appointed
- iii) Welsh language skills desirable
- iv) Welsh language skills not necessary

Category	Advertised internally	Advertised externally
Essential	34	13
Learnt when appointed	2	2
Desirable	80	39
Not necessary	480	50
Total	597	104