



Coleg Gŵyr Abertawe  
Gower College Swansea

**Welsh Language Standards Compliance  
Report to the Welsh Language Commissioner**

**1 August 2020 – 31 July 2021**

**Prepared in accordance with the requirements of the  
Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**

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## 1. Introduction

Gower College Swansea received its Final Compliance Notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner in September 2017. The Notice outlined the College's duty to meet 178 of the statutory Welsh language Standards established by the Welsh Government under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, and imposed by the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office.

The purpose of the Standards is to:

- Ensure establishments are aware of what their responsibilities and expectations are in relation to the Welsh language
- Ensure Welsh speakers are aware of what their rights are in relation to the services and opportunities they can expect to receive in Welsh
- Ensure Welsh language services become more consistent and robust, and improved in quality, across establishments

The College has a responsibility to ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language. There is a requirement, as part of the Standards, to promote and facilitate the increased use of the Welsh language, making it easier for people to use and improve their Welsh language skills in work and during everyday life.

The College was required to produce its first annual report by January 31<sup>st</sup> 2019, as set out by the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office. The initial report covered the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018 while subsequent reports will cover a period of one year, August 1<sup>st</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup> annually.

This report includes details on:

- how Gower College Swansea have complied with the Standards with which we were under a duty to comply during the specified period (per class of Standards – Service Delivery, Policy Making, Operational);
- the number of Complaints received and how these were dealt with (per class of Standards – Service Delivery, Policy Making, Operational);
- the number of employees who have varying degrees of Welsh language skills at the end of the period in question (as collated for records under Standard 158);
- the number of members of staff who attended training courses offered in Welsh during the period in question (as collated for records under Standard 159);
- the percentage of the total number of staff attending the course who attended a Welsh-medium version of the course (as collated for records under Standard 159);

- the number of members of staff who wear a badge and/or lanyard indicating their Welsh language skills, at the end of the financial year (as collated for records under standard 160);
- the number of new and vacant posts advertised by the College during the specified period which were categorised according to various requirements in respect of Welsh language skills (as collated for records under Standard 162).

## **2. Welsh Language Responsibilities**

Day-to-day responsibility for monitoring and managing compliance with the Welsh Language Standards is within the remit of the Bilingual Champion, the title of the role changed to Welsh language Manager during this year. The Bilingual Champion is directly line-managed by the Director of Curriculum and Quality and they meet on a weekly basis. The overall responsibility for the Welsh Language Standards lies with the Director of Curriculum and Quality and, ultimately, the College Principal.

It is the Bilingual Champion's responsibility to:

- Promote the Welsh language and inform learners and all staff of its importance in the bilingual Wales of the future
- Encourage and support learners and staff to develop and improve their Welsh language skills
- Create opportunities for learners and all staff to practise, use and further develop their Welsh language skills
- Monitor the College's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards Regulations
- Facilitate mainstreaming and 'normalisation' of the Welsh language in all aspects of college life

In addition to these duties, the Bilingual Champion is responsible for developing and promoting Welsh-medium and bilingual curricular delivery. The Bilingual Champion line-manages the two (one full time and one 0.5) college translator posts as well as the full-time 'Welsh Engagement officer' post appointed in May 2021.

The responsibilities stretch across all of the College's six campuses.

Their work is overseen by the Director of Curriculum and Quality, Nikki Neale. The work is also supported by the Welsh Language Steering Group, consisting of managers from a range of functional and curricular areas across all college campuses. This group meets 3 times per academic year, 1 meeting per term, and is chaired by the College Principal, Mark Jones.

We are continuously revising our roles and renewing our strategy to advance the use of the Welsh language in the College, and reinforcing compliance with the Welsh Language Standards in particular.

### **3. Compliance with Standards**

All Further Education Colleges in Wales have been expected to comply with specified Welsh Language Standards from April 2018 with full compliance with individual Compliance Notices required by October 2018. The Welsh Language Officer was responsible for the Standards during the period of this Report, and the Bilingual Champion was on maternity leave from April 2019 to April 2020. Since July 2020 the Bilingual Champion has undertaken the duties on the Welsh Language Officer since her retirement. Since then, the Bilingual Champion has met individually with each Functional Area Manager and produced a series of Guides for all staff in relation to specific Standards, which are kept on the newly-created College staff portal under the dedicated section, named "Using Welsh at Work". Compliance with the Standards is a regular item on the agendas of all functional-area team meetings, as well as in learning-area managers' meetings. We use an evaluation and action-planning document for functional-areas, to be used in assessing the level and effectiveness of compliance as well as in discussions for further developments and any progress made from term to term.

#### **3.1 Service Delivery Standards**

The Welsh Language Officer developed guides that were distributed to staff and uploaded onto the Staff Portal under "Using Welsh at Work" to inform users of the requirements of the WLS for Service Delivery. They included guidance on:

- Answering the telephone and managing Welsh-medium telephone calls.
- Correspondence
- Displays of public materials at events/exhibitions
- Documents and Publications
- Meetings Signs and Notices
- Service promotion
- E-mail footers and automatic replies
- Translation services

Staff with Welsh speaking skills are encouraged to wear lanyards and/or "Cymraeg" badges, identifying themselves as Welsh speakers or learners. These staff members have been contacted individually, and permission has been received from each individual to identify them by name, role and campus-location as Welsh speakers, and for any requests in Welsh regarding subject or service information to be forwarded to them, in order to be responded to in Welsh. Their details are to be found on the Telephone Directory, so that they are easily identified and contacted.

In order to identify learners with Welsh language skills, the College application form requires learners to specify:

- a. their first language
- b. if they are fluent, non-fluent Welsh speakers or are not Welsh speaking.
- c. whether they would like to receive correspondence through the medium of Welsh
- d. whether they would like to study bilingually or in Welsh if/where possible
- e. what is their highest Welsh language qualification

This information is collated and kept centrally at Faculty Offices, in order to ensure Welsh-medium or bilingual correspondence as requested, and to assist in planning for Welsh-medium support and provision. (It does not include correspondence relating to the content of a course, unless it is a course that has an element of Welsh-medium or bilingual delivery, as this is not a requirement of the Welsh Language Standards).

All generic forms and documents relating to the College are provided for learners in bilingual format. The College was audited by the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office in relation to this on three separate occasions in 2018-19, and all forms audited were found to be available in Welsh and English.

All members of staff are aware of the requirement to answer the phone with a bilingual greeting, using Welsh first and of the protocol and processes in relation to transferring the call to a Welsh speaker if the caller requires a Welsh language service.

The previous Welsh Language Officer delivered training to front-of-house and other key functional-area staff, on bilingual telephone protocol, and will continue to reinforce this during college CPD sessions.

The College website is available in Welsh and in English. The College was audited by the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office in relation to this on three separate occasions in 2018-19 when it was found that some 'course-cards' were not available in Welsh on the website. The website is now completely bilingual.

The College has computer software for checking Welsh spelling and grammar, which was made available on all College computers during 2019, Cysgliad. This software is also on all of the college's laptops for staff working from home during lockdown.

The College has a long-established translation service, which is available to all staff via the "Using Welsh at Work" section of the Staff Portal or through the 'Virtual Office' if they are working remotely. Translation is available from English to Welsh and Welsh to English, while college translators can also provide a proof-reading service in both languages.

Learners are made aware of their specific rights in relation to the Welsh language Standards (e.g. the right to receive correspondence in Welsh, Welsh certificates, Welsh counselling sessions and a Welsh speaking personal tutor). This information is made available on the College website and in College prospectuses, at Open Evenings and during the Enrolment process, as well as at Induction. The College uses the Welsh language Commissioner's "Mae Gen i Hawl" posters to reinforce this and celebrates Rights day in December.

All corporate College social media posts are presented in Welsh and English simultaneously; the College was audited by the Welsh language Commissioner's Office in relation to this on three separate occasions in 2018-19, and all corporate social media posts were found to be available in Welsh and English.

Learners receive induction sessions which include information about Welsh medium support, as well as Welsh-medium activities and opportunities available to them during their time in College thus enabling them to practise, develop and enjoy their Welsh language skills. Some tutorial sessions are dedicated to raising students' awareness of the Welsh language and Welsh culture, as well as informing students of particular Welsh holidays and celebrations. A strong Welsh ethos is developed and reinforced by the numerous activities organised by the Bilingual Champion throughout the academic year. All full-time and Work-Based Learning learners complete the Prentis-iaith e-tutorial module developed by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. It develops basic Welsh skills so that they have opportunities to use Welsh.

All documentation relating to tenders reflects the College's obligations under the Welsh Language Standards (Standards 80-84).

### **3.2 Policy Making Standards**

Equality impact assessments are undertaken on all new, reviewed and revised policies to ensure, amongst other equality issues, that:

- a. the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language in any aspect of College life
- b. opportunities are provided for learners, staff members and the wider College community to use the Welsh language
- c. every effort is made to actively encourage more or better use of the Welsh language in the College's day-to-day activities

The results of all such Equality impact assessments and any other consultation documents will be considered in relation to the Welsh language. Following this, amendments will be made as appropriate to best meet the requirements of the Welsh language Standards.

The College's Complaints Policy reflects the College's obligations under the Welsh Language Standards. The Bilingual Champion delivers an interactive session at New Staff Inductions in order to disseminate information on the Standards and Welsh language opportunities, support across the College. These sessions are also aimed at challenging some possible stereotypical views and attitudes towards the Welsh language and culture in today's society. The Bilingual Champion is also available to deliver in-class tutorial sessions to learners, expanding on issues relating to Welsh language and culture, and the increasing emphasis on Welsh as an attractive employability skill.

### 3.3 Operational Standards

In May 2020 the College published a policy on using the Welsh language internally for the purpose of promoting and facilitating the use of the language. It can be viewed on our website.

All employees are asked whether they wish to receive communication through the medium of Welsh or English. Employees express their language-choice on the college's "All About Me" section of the Staff Portal. This information is collated by HR and correspondence is provided in accordance to individuals' choice.

The following table records the responses for 2020-21:

I wish to receive correspondence from the college in:

Welsh	6	0.6%
English	534	52%
No preference	15	1%
Not answered	480	46%
	1035	100

All policies issued by HR in relation to recruitment and employment at the College are made available in Welsh and English. All documentation relating to the recruitment process is provided bilingually, including job adverts, job descriptions, person specifications and application forms. The software system utilised by the college to advertise jobs and for the application process is Vacancy Filler. In July 2021 the Welsh Language Commissioner contacted the college in relation to the fact that the platform wasn't fully bilingual. The college responded at the end of July 2021.

Policies relating to staff complaints and disciplinary procedures have been considered in relation to the Welsh Language Standards, and provision has been made to allow staff to use the Welsh language throughout the processes if so required, albeit mostly via simultaneous translation.

The College has dedicated online information for Welsh language services and provision, which is available to all staff via the College intranet, and includes:

- The Welsh Language Standards
- The College's Compliance Notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner
- Resources and links to on-line courses to learn Welsh
- Subject specific terminology and resources
- Information and resources about work-based learning
- Bilingual teaching methodology

All College policies that come under the Standards have been translated and are available on the College Staff Intranet. Policies that are relevant to students or the general public are available on the College website.

The College's Complaints Procedure reflects the requirements of the Welsh language Standards relating to Complaints (Standards 119-122). Software for checking Spelling and Grammar in Welsh ("Cysgliad") is available on all College Computers. All members of staff have been provided with guidance material to ensure the use of bilingual e-mail signatures and out-of-office messages; these guides are available in the "Using Welsh at Work" section of the staff intranet.

A self-evaluation and action-planning document is presented across all College functional-areas, leading to further discussions between the Bilingual Champion (Welsh Manager) and individual Managers to initiate future development in relation to Welsh language services. This is reviewed annually.

30 members of staff commenced "Cymraeg Gwaith" classes during college hours in 2020-21 to further develop their language skills and confidence in using the Welsh language, and all of these participated for the duration of the academic year. These were delivered through online platforms on various levels of language ability.

#### **4. Complaints**

##### **4.1 Complaints in relation to Service Delivery Standards**

No complaints received

##### **4.2 Complaints in relation to Policy Making Standards**

No complaints received

##### **4.3 Complaints in relation to Operational Standards**

No complaints received

Any Complaints which the College will receive in relation to the Welsh Language Standards will be dealt with in the same way as any other complaint, using the College's Complaints Procedure. Any complaint should be directed to The Assistant Principal in the first instance, who will ensure that College procedures will be adhered to. Copies are kept of all written complaints to the College.

## **5. Staff Skills**

The number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question:

79 fluent Welsh speakers – proficiency Level 3 or 4 (8% of all College staff)

65 Welsh speakers – proficiency Level 1 or 2 (6% of all College staff)

246 Welsh speakers – Entry Level (24% of all College staff)

During this period we employed 1035, with 645 of those staff members noting 'No Welsh skills' or have not inputted their Welsh skills, which is 62%.

### **1 August 2020 -31 July 2021**

## **6. Training**

The number of staff who attended training courses offered in Welsh during the year, and the % of the total number of staff attending the course who attended the Welsh version re:

- a. Recruitment and Interviewing
- b. Performance Management
- c. Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures
- d. Induction
- e. Dealing with the Public
- f. Health and Safety

None. for: a, b, c, e, f.

For: d – Induction, all new staff attend a "Welsh Language and Culture" hour session delivered by the Welsh Language Officer and Bilingual Champion. This is delivered mainly in English, with some Welsh input, depending on the linguistic skills of attendees.

For: e – Dealing with the Public, the Welsh Language Officer has conducted bespoke 'bilingual' sessions for some functional teams in order to ensure best practice in relation to the Welsh Standards and Dealing with the Public.

### **1 August 2020 – 31 July 2021**

The number of members of staff who wear a badge at the end of the financial year:

All staff members are made aware of the badges and lanyards to denote Welsh-speakers, which are readily available from the Bilingual Champion, Human Resources, Library and at each reception. The College actively encourages use of these via the "Using Welsh at Work" section of the Staff Portal, 30 staff members have been issued a 'Cymraeg' badge. It is important to note that some staff already wore a badge and aren't included in this number. An order was placed in June 2021 for college lanyards that had the 'Cymraeg' logo engrained, for staff and learners. This was to ensure that the logo was clearly visible as all staff and students wear a lanyard when on college ground. These will be disseminated in the new academic year 2021/22.

### 1 August 2020 – 31 July 2021

#### 7. Recruiting to Vacant Posts

The number of new and vacant posts that you advertised 1 August 2020 – 31 July 2021 which were categorised according to various requirements in respect of Welsh Language skills:

The College advertised for a total of 134 positions between 1 August 2020 and 31 July 2021.

No appointment was made on 10 occasions, leaving a total of 124 new appointments. No posts were advertised with no Welsh language skills.

Posts advertised as Welsh Essential:

	Posts	Advertised as:	Welsh language skills of appointees:
Management	1	4	4
Teaching and Learning	5	4	1
Business Support	7	1 x L3 6 x L4	1xL3 3x L4 3x entry
	13		5 not appointed

Posts advertised as Welsh Desirable:

	Posts	Advertised as :	Welsh language skills of appointee:
Management	1	1 x Entry	1 x Entry

Teaching and Learning	29	1 x L3 28 x Entry	1 x None 28 x None
Business Support	91	78 x Entry 3 x L1 1 x L2 8 x L3 1 x L4	Entry x 43 L1 x 6 L2 x 2 L3 x 3 L4 x 3 None x 34
TOTAL	121	121	5 not appointed

**1 August 2020 – 31 July 2021**

## **8. Contact Details**

If you require any further information regarding this report, please contact:

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