



Welsh Language Standards Compliance Annual Report 2022-23

(1 August 2022 – 31 July 2023)

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

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1. Introduction

NPTC Group of Colleges received its Final Compliance Notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner in September 2017 (in advance of implementation from 1 April 2018 onwards). This outlined the College's duty to meet the statutory Welsh Language Standards established by the Welsh Government under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, (No.6) Regulation 2017.

The concept of Welsh Language 'Standards' was introduced by Welsh Government as a set of legally binding requirements to be independently regulated by the Welsh Language Commissioner. The Standards establish equal rights for Welsh speakers and English speakers, based on two principles:

- **'In Wales, the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language'**
- **'Persons in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of the Welsh language if they choose to do so'**

In line with the College's Vision and Strategic Plan, statutory compliance has provided a baseline for the College to ensure that the Welsh language service provided will be of the same quality and accessibility as the English language service provided.

2.1 Compliance with Service Delivery, Policy Making, Record Keeping and Operational Standards

The Welsh Language Commissioner publishes an Annual Assurance Report that details the public's experience in using Welsh when accessing public services (based on 'mystery shopper' surveys to evaluate the provision) including the quality of service provided by FE colleges.

The 'mystery shopper' survey results - along with the College's own annual self-assessment questionnaire responses - are the subject of an annual compliance review meeting held between the College and the Commissioner's Office in December of each year.

As a result of the December 2021 meeting, follow-up actions agreed with the Commissioner focussed on amendments to the College's **Welsh Language Policy** (including annexes relating to the **complaints policy** and **grant awarding policy**)

During 2022-23 further work was undertaken on strengthening internal monitoring and testing of compliance to ensure improved positive feedback in the Welsh Language Commissioner's next Assurance Report:

Staff Self-evaluation – This approach involves requiring all heads or managers of a department or team to report regularly to the quarterly meetings of the Bilingual working Group on compliance with those standards relevant to their area of work. This will be done by using self-monitoring forms where each department is required to report on how they ensure compliance against each Standard or group of Standards as well as identifying any gaps or failures.

Spot checks – direct verification surveys to be undertaken by the Director of Bilingualism once a term on a sample of Standards.

2.2 Curriculum Provision

Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Post-16 developments grant to increase Welsh provision:

NPTC Group of Colleges has successfully recruited lecturers in the following areas with the support of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's post-16 grant:

1. Health and Social Care
2. Childcare
3. Public Services
4. Sport

3. Monitoring Compliance

The Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Welsh Language Policy, including the Welsh Language Standards. The CEO will ensure that a senior manager is accountable for the policy’s implementation and monitoring.

Line managers are accountable for implementing those aspects of the Policy relevant to their areas of responsibility and for providing feedback on compliance in those areas with respect to the Policy’s requirements. The Corporation Board will identify a Member who will have the designated responsibility for championing bilingualism.

The Bilingual Working Group (BWG), chaired by the Assistant Principal: Curriculum, has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the Policy in collaboration with, and with the assistance of, the core group of the Bilingual Working Group, namely the Director of Bilingualism, Bilingual Development Coordinator, the College translators and the Business Support Officer to Assistant Principals.

The Director of Bilingualism is responsible for the operational implementation with progress being monitored and evaluated through the preparation of:

- Quarterly reports on progress to the Bilingual Working Group/Senior Management Team;
- Annual reports that comply with the Welsh Language Standards (Record Keeping and Supplementary Matters);
- Regular audits and mystery shopper checks to monitor effectiveness of responses to Estyn recommendations.

Staff are made aware of the Policy’s obligations during staff induction and a continuous rolling programme of awareness sessions. This is reinforced by placing the Policy on the staff intranet, on the College’s website and on the student intranet.

4. Complaints

No complaints regarding any aspect of Welsh language services were received between 1 August 2022– 31 July 2023. The College has updated its Complaints Policy by adding a clause which deals specifically with complaints relating to the Welsh Language Standards and the Welsh language. Complaints relating to the Welsh Language Standards will be dealt with in the same way as any other complaint by using the College’s complaints procedure.

All College managers receive annual update training on dealing with and managing complaints. This training includes dealing with complaints relating to the Welsh Language Standards with which the College must comply. Particular reference is made to the Welsh Language Standards (No.6) Regulation 2017, the Compliance Notice – Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Explanatory Memorandum to the Welsh Language Standards (No.6) Regulation 2017.

5. Staff Welsh Language Skills (as at 31 July 2023)

Standard 178:

- (a) *the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with Standard 158: ‘You must keep a record of the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of each financial year and, where you have that information, you must keep a record of the skill level of those employees.’)*

Staff are required to update and maintain their Welsh language skills via the HR Dashboard (HR and payroll system). According to the records held on 31 July 2023, employees of the College were recorded as having the following level of Welsh language skills.

	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Understanding
Fluent	57	50	37	64
Good	26	36	38	31
Basic	295	260	228	306
Learning	83	68	73	76
None	150	183	211	139

6. Staff Training and Development (1 August 2022 – 31 July 2023)

Standard 178:

- (b) *the number of members of staff who attended training courses you offered in Welsh during the year (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 159);*
- (c) *if a Welsh version of a course was offered by you during that year, the percentage of the total number of staff attending the course who attended the Welsh version - includes the number (and percentage, if relevant) of staff members who attended specific training that must be provided in Welsh if it is available in English (namely training on recruitment and interviewing, performance management, complaints and disciplinary procedures, induction, dealing with the public, and health and safety).*

Welsh Language Standards Awareness/Guidance (bilingual delivery):

Full roll-out of the on-line training course: *Welsh Language Standards: a practical interactive online e-learning training course designed to enable staff to understand their key rights and responsibilities under the law (Welsh Language Measure, 2011)* began in July 2022 and, at 30 September 2022, 666 staff (78%) had successfully completed the course.

Work Welsh / CollegesWales:

Formal Learning: Face to face courses (via Teams)

During 2022-23, there were four Welsh language classes that were taught via Teams (Entry 1, Basic 1, Intermediate 1 Part 1 and Higher 1 Part i). 17 members of staff registered on the Welsh course in September 2022. Out of those, 15 (88%) completed the course successfully. Of the 15 who completed, 14 of them continued with their learning in September 2023 (progression = 93%).

Formal Learning: Self-study Courses

Of the 20 members of staff who registered and started the self-study course during 2022-23, 7 of them (35%) completed the course successfully. Of the 20 learners who started the self-study course during 2022-23, 14 of them are learning Welsh during 2023-24 (Progression = 70%).

HR Policies and procedures

Between 1 August 2022 – 31 July 2023, no training was delivered (or requested) through the medium of Welsh in the following areas:

- recruitment and interviewing.
- performance management.
- complaints and disciplinary procedures.
- dealing with the public.
- health and safety.
- induction.

However, we do ensure that we include bilingual slides within staff training presentations and strongly promote Welsh language and learning the Welsh language as part of this training. We also have Welsh speakers within the Development team who are able to deliver through the medium of Welsh.

During this period, we delivered a range of courses to our staff team, including Leadership training offered to the Whole Leadership Team which was bilingual. This meant that during break-out rooms, participants were able to join a room through the medium of Welsh.

7. Staff Recruitment (1 August 2022 – 31 July 2023)

Standard 178:

- (d) the number of new and vacant posts that you advertised during the year which were categorised as posts where:*
- (i) Welsh language skills were essential.*
 - (ii) Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post.*
 - (iii) Welsh language skills were desirable; or*
 - (iv) Welsh language skills were not necessary, (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 162);*

During the period 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023, a total 260 posts were advertised for vacancies within the College. They can be categorised as follows;

- A total of 9 posts were advertised where Welsh language skills were considered essential.
- A total of 0 post was designated as requiring Welsh language skills needing to be learnt when appointed to the post.
- A total 251 posts were advertised where Welsh language skills were considered desirable.

8. Further Information

If you have any queries regarding this report or any aspect of Grŵp Colegau NPTC Group of Colleges' compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, please contact:

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