



Welsh Language Standards Compliance Annual Report 2024-25

(1 August 2024 – 31 July 2025)

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 the autumn/winter of each year.

As a result of the 18 September 2023 review/feedback meeting with the Welsh Language Commissioner, follow-up actions agreed focussed on:

- Establishing a **'Welsh Language Standards Internal Compliance Group'** of functional managers to meet every month to monitor compliance on a day-to-day operational basis. (This is in addition to the Bilingual Working Group which continues to meet quarterly to set strategic direction and oversee policy development).
- The College commissioning its own **independent spot-check compliance programme** to complement the WLC's Mystery Shopper Surveys and Annual Assurance Reports.

In 2019, an internal audit report reviewed compliance in 14 areas of the College's work, (including a series of mystery shopper type exercises undertaken by the College's internal auditors). A high level of compliance was reported overall, with a substantial assurance given.

There were, however, six actions for management, including a recommendation that direct verification spot-checks be undertaken once a term on a sample of Welsh Language Standards.

In order to complete the above requirement, RHD Consultancy Ltd has been commissioned to undertake a series of independent spot-check exercises over three years (2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26). A total of 12 Standards were checked in 2024-25 as part of the three-year programme to review 36 key Standards in total.

2.2 Curriculum Provision

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

During 2024-25, NPTC Group of Colleges received a Further Education and Apprenticeships Grant of circa £142,400 from the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to develop and promote Welsh medium and bilingual curriculum provision in the following areas:

- **Health and Care**
- **Childcare**
- **Public Services**
- **Sports**
- **Land-based Studies**
- **Business**
- **Creative Industries**
- **Construction**

In addition, the CCC provided a grant of £26,880 for the Cymraeg Gwaith scheme to provide Welsh lessons for staff.

In return, the College implemented a 'Further Education and Welsh-medium Apprenticeships Action Plan' including agreed targets/outputs on the most efficient impact of using the funding for its staff and learners.

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, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Branch Officer, 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 WLC and 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

One complaint regarding Welsh language services was received between 1 August 2024 and 31 July 2025.

During the Autumn term of 2024-25, a mystery shopper exercise was undertaken RHD Consultancy to assess the college's compliance with legal requirements (see section 2.1 above). The mystery shopper adopted the role of a prospective learner seeking to enrol on a college course (in their final year in a Welsh medium school and wishing to start in the college in September 2025).

The mystery shopper (or prospective learner) researched the college website on the Welsh language side for information about courses and the process for enrolment. Based on the mystery shopper/ prospective learner's experience, a complaint letter was sent to the college on 11 December 2024 regarding possible breaches of the Welsh language standards. The letter was sent to the Admissions mailbox outlining several complaints about the enrolment pages of the website.

A holding reply from the college was received by RHD Consultancy on 16 December - reassuring the complainant that their complaint had been escalated and was being dealt with and would be replied to in full shortly. However, due to the college closing for two weeks over the Christmas period, a further follow up holding reply was sent on 20 December explaining that further time would be required and that the relevant staff would respond when the college reopened on 6 January 2025. The final and full reply was received by RHD on 7 January 2025.

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 2025)

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 2025, employees of the College were recorded as having the following level of Welsh language skills.

	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Understanding
Fluent	52	47	34	58
Good	21	30	36	26
Basic	292	253	218	302
Learning	97	85	84	91
None	173	210	242	161

6. Staff Training and Development (1 August 2024 – 31 July 2025)

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)*. Since roll out in 2022, a total of 693 staff (84%) had successfully completed the course.

Cymraeg Gwaith/Work Welsh:

During 2024-25, the College received a 'Cymraeg Gwaith/Work Welsh' grant of £26,880 from the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to support teaching staff to learn Welsh.

Formal Learning: Face to face courses (via Teams)

In 2024-25, Welsh language classes were taught via Teams (Entry 1+2, 8; Foundation 1, 5; Intermediate 1, 4; Higher 1i, 6; Higher 2i, 3). A total of 26 members of staff were registered on a Welsh course in September 2024. A total of 22 (85%) completed the course successfully. Of the 22 learners who completed their course, 20 continued learning Welsh in September 2025 (progression = 91%).

Formal Learning: Self-study Courses

6 members of staff enrolled and started an online self-study course in 2024-25. 2 (33%) successfully completed their course and 3 (50%) have continued learning Welsh in 2025-26.

WJEC 'Defnyddio'r Gymraeg' exams

3 members of staff sat and passed (100%) a WJEC 'Defnyddio'r Gymraeg' exam in 2025.

HR Policies and procedures

Between 1 August 2024 – 31 July 2025, no training was delivered (or requested) through the medium of Welsh in the following areas:

- recruitment and interviewing.
- performance management.
- complaints and disciplinary procedures.
- health and safety.

7. Staff Recruitment (1 August 2024 – 31 July 2025)

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 2024 to 31 July 2025, a total 157 posts were advertised for vacancies within the College. They can be categorised as follows;

- A total of 2 posts were advertised where Welsh language skills were considered essential.
- A total of 6 post were designated as requiring Welsh language skills needing to be learnt when appointed to the post.
- A total 149 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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