



PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY

ANNUAL REPORT ON WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS

August 2021 – July 2022



PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY

ANNUAL REPORT ON WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS

August 2021 – July 2022

BANGOR UNIVERSITY WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS ANNUAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report on the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards at Bangor University refers to the period between 1 August 2021 and 31 July 2022.

The report outlines the steps the University has put in place to bring it into line with the Language Standards and highlights some specific successes and development objectives for the year ahead. A copy of [the Bangor University Notice of Compliance](#) is on our website.

MAINTAINING AND DEVELOPING THE WELSH LANGUAGE THROUGH A PERIOD OF FURTHER CHANGE

The period in question was one in which the University, like other institutions, was coming out of the pandemic era and trying to familiarise itself with learning and working in the 'new normal'. In terms of University staff, dynamic working was established and therefore working life was a combination of pre-covid practices (in the office) and those adopted during lockdown (remote working). As far as students were concerned, covid continued to prevent some from attending learning sessions 'in the flesh' from time to time and Welsh was part of the processes put in place to address that. Furthermore, resources in Welsh to support the health and wellbeing of students were developed. The University, therefore, supported the Welsh language and identified ways to promote its use within a context that was once again fraught with change.

Last year, it was reported that the University had been through a restructuring process and had developed a new corporate strategy. New teams and new responsibilities were created as a result of this restructuring and new training courses on the Welsh language were developed to support staff. In 2021-22, a sub-strategy for Welsh was developed detailing how Welsh is applied within specific areas of work.

In 20/21 44% of staff identified as speaking Welsh. In 21/22, 43% of staff identify as speaking Welsh and the University is aware that Welsh capacity in the workforce needs to continue to be monitored as new structures stabilise.

SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDS

Bangor University is confident that it has performed well in complying with the Service Delivery Standards. Since the days of our Language Scheme we have, for example, ensured that:

- Welsh-speaking staff working in reception areas;
- the whole range of our services are available to students in Welsh;
- signs are bilingual;
- students and partners have an opportunity to use Welsh when submitting applications for funding or when tendering to offer a service.

As working and learning practices evolved, the University was keen to ensure that we had as complete a knowledge of our Welsh-speaking students as possible and that we supported them as effectively as possible, emphasising to them that the University is a place where they have every opportunity to use Welsh.

The developments below are highlighted:

- The University developed a dashboard system within *Power BI* to monitor the numbers of Welsh speakers among students and also their involvement in Welsh-medium provision. This development is unique to Bangor University and allows staff to gain 'live' information about Welsh-speaking numbers studying through Welsh at University, College, School and degree programme level. Detailed data such as this is a means of (1) facilitating the work of ensuring that everyone who wishes to use Welsh has the opportunity to do so and (2) identify any changes in the pattern of data.
- Under the auspices of HEFCW, Bangor University led a project to develop resources in Welsh to support students' mental health. By July 2022, all aspects of the [Myf.cymru](https://www.myf.cymru) plan were completed and the following resources developed:
 - new image and website
 - podcast series called Sgwrs?
 - translating health and wellbeing app 'Moving On' into Welsh'
 - producing a series of videos with students across Wales sharing their experiences of university life and mental health
 - continue to develop and support the Welsh Therapists Network
 - launch of Facebook, Instagram and TikTok social accounts

This is an incredibly important resource for young people across Wales who wish to access health and wellbeing support in Welsh and addresses a glaring gap in provision.

- The University recognises Welcome Week each year as a key time in promoting the rights of Welsh students and encouraging them to study through Welsh. In September 2021, the Welcome week was once again online and the University added to the digital resources available to support staff to support Welsh-speaking students: Welsh During Welcome Week: 5 Things to Remember

- In terms of training and supporting staff to deliver services effectively bilingually and taking responsibility for promoting the Welsh language (regardless of their own language skills), two new courses have been developed on (1) Language Awareness and (2) Welsh Language Policy, with a strong focus on service delivery.
- For the first time this year, in collaboration with the National Centre for Learning Welsh, students were provided with a beginner-level online learning course. There was a very positive response to this provision from students with 70 enrollments. This course addresses a gap in the provision of Welsh language learning to students that the University is proud to be able to fill and we will look closely at how to continue to develop this support.
- Blackboard's digital learning platform is bilingual and so when a distance learning session needed to be accessed during the reporting period it was possible for students to use a Welsh language interface. The University's learning technology team is proactive in promoting and supporting the use of Welsh on Blackboard. Further use was made of the *Trawsgrifiwr* developed by the University under the auspices of the Welsh Government, as the journey towards ensuring digital accessibility in Welsh progressed.
- Once again this year, academic staff prepared Welsh-medium learning materials and proactively responded to the tremendous growth in demand for digital learning resources. By summer 2022, over 50 learning packs had been prepared as part of [the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's Digital Resources Project](#), with Bangor staff playing a key role in content creation and technical support. In the year under review, the Am Blant podcast was developed by the Childhood Studies team at Bangor.
- To support and promote awareness of the Welsh tradition in Bangor, [a video](#) has been created, as part of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's ten-year celebrations, highlighting the development of academic provision through Welsh at the University.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

The University continues to develop new training in the field of Welsh language (including guidance on implementing the Standards), looking at different approaches to delivery. We will also be looking at introducing (and re-introducing) more in-person events to support the Welsh language as the wider context changes.

The University is pleased to note that it will invest in an additional staffing resource to support these objectives.

POLICY MAKING STANDARDS

Bangor University is confident that it has performed well in complying with the Policy Making Standards. Robust structures are in place to ensure that issues about the Welsh language are considered as new policies and initiatives are developed. Individuals with responsibility for the Welsh language sit on key University committees where relevant policy decisions are discussed (e.g. University Executive, Teaching and Learning Strategy Group, Compliance Task Group).

During 2021-22, the University developed a new strategy for the Welsh language as one of the sub-strategies of *Strategy 2030 – A Sustainable World for Future Generations*. The Welsh Language Strategy details how the Welsh language will be supported and promoted across the University's work under the themes:

- Ethos: a truly bilingual university that places the Welsh language at the centre of every aspect of its work
- Marketing and Recruitment
- Teaching and Learning
- Research
- Student Experience
- Pontio, and the Community

Crucially, this sub-strategy cross-references with other sub-strategies and therefore strengthens the mainstreaming of Welsh into the work of the University as a whole.

An example of how mainstreaming happens at an operational level is the *Worktribe* system put in place by the University in the period under review. This is a system that manages the University curriculum by bringing the information about modules and courses into one place and feeding the University's other systems (e.g. our website for recruitment information). With the support of the University, the system skin was made available bilingually and the core of the system was expanded by the supplier to capture details of courses in Welsh. The system also guides staff to consider and plan for Welsh-medium provision by asking what proportion of module will be through the medium of Welsh. The University will look forward to implementing other modules within *Worktribe* in relation to research and the same path will be followed.

This year, the University established a new team in the field of Civic Mission. Engaging with Welsh stakeholders is a key part of the team's work. This was reflected in the recruitment process and a team capable of operating confidently in Welsh and English was established.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

The University will continue to ensure that our new policies and developments protect the core principles of the Standards – ensuring opportunities to use Welsh and not treating Welsh less favourably than English. We will look at developing specific training (particularly for managers) in the area of Policy Standards and Impact Assessment.

OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

Bangor University is confident that it has performed well in complying with the Operational Standards. Promoting the use of Welsh at work has been a priority for Bangor University for several years. This is reinforced this year by the emphasis on promoting a truly bilingual ethos in the new Welsh language strategy. The core principles of eternity are:

- Increase the number of individuals who take advantage of the opportunity to learn Welsh at University;
- increase the confidence of staff and students to use their Welsh orally and in writing, and;
- create favorable conditions to support this increase.

In the period under review, the University continued to ensure that staff could continue to use Welsh at work and received clear messages that the University encouraged this. Some relevant developments are highlighted below:

- In 2021/22, there was a significant 63% increase in the number of staff learning Welsh at the University. In 2020/21 there were 86 staff who were learning. In 2021/22 140 were doing so. The increase in the number of those who are learning suggests that there is a strong desire among staff to contribute towards making Bangor a truly bilingual University and that we are taking practical, successful and inclusive steps towards shaping that bilingual workplace.
- In terms of Welsh language learning provision for staff, our data shows that staff are successfully progressing and moving onto provision at a higher level. The Welsh at Work Certificate scheme developed by our Staff Tutor offers an opportunity to assess staff achievement. Crucially, the emphasis of this scheme is on skills development in the context of using Welsh at work. This progression through the levels is encouraging as staff at Level 4 / Intermediate onwards are in a strong position to be using Welsh at work.

	2020/21	2021/22
Level 4 / Intermediate	12	25
Level 5 & 6 / Above	21	24
Level 7 / Proficiency	7	12

- The University's translation team continued to innovate in their use of simultaneous translation. The Commissioner highlights effective practice by the team in the context of using technology to facilitate simultaneous translation in hybrid meetings: [Adapting to the new world: Simultaneous translation in hybrid meetings \(adapter for the Zoom video platform\)](#)
- Under Welsh Government auspices, the ARFer programme was further developed and work began on the creation of an online platform for the programme that supports a hybrid working context.

The tables below outline the Welsh language skills of University staff as at 31 July 2022 based on job categories:

ALL UNIVERSITY STAFF: WELSH SPEAKING SKILLS

	Speak Welsh	Don't speak Welsh	Speak a little Welsh	Total
Academic	218	260	183	661
	33%	39%	28%	100%
Academic Related	135	39	102	276
	49%	14%	37%	100%
Clerical	244	44	82	370
	66%	12%	22%	100%
Manual	118	65	52	235
	50%	28%	22%	100%
Technical	49	17	35	101
	49%	17%	35%	100%
Research	46	132	60	238
	19%	55%	25%	100%
Total	810	557	514	1881
	43%	30%	27%	100%

ALL UNIVERSITY STAFF: WELSH READING SKILLS

	Read Welsh	Don't Read Welsh	Read a Little Welsh	Total
Academic	219	280	163	662
	33%	42%	25%	100%
Academic Related	135	42	98	275
	49%	15%	35%	100%
Clerical	245	56	75	376
	67%	15%	18%	100%
Manual	110	67	53	230
	48%	29%	23%	100%
Technical	46	20	37	103

	44%	19%	37%	100%
Research	44	134	65	243
	18%	56%	26%	100%
Total	799	599	491	1889
	43%	31%	26%	100%

ALL UNIVERSITY STAFF: WELSH WRITING SKILLS

	Write Welsh	Don't write Welsh	Write a little Welsh	Total
Academic	206	307	140	653
	32%	47%	21%	100%
Academic Related	121	71	84	276
	44%	26%	30%	100%
Clerical	229	61	84	374
	61%	16%	22%	100%
Manual	95	82	50	227
	42%	36%	22%	100%
Technical	45	31	26	102
	44%	30%	25%	100%
Research	42	147	51	240
	18%	61%	21%	100%
Total	738	699	435	1872
	39%	37%	23%	100%

WELSH MEDIUM TRAINING COURSES

The University's staff development team is a bilingual team and can therefore offer all courses developed in-house through the medium of Welsh. The same is true for the Health and Safety team and the information technology team. It is difficult to record the exact numbers / percentages of staff who received professional training through Welsh as much of that training is offered bilingually. During the period 2021/22 University staff have been working in accordance with a Dynamic Working Policy which means courses have continued online but some 'in the flesh' sessions have been reintroduced as required.

As reported last year, the *Bangor Manager's Programme* was launched in September 2021, which requires managers to complete 12 workshops and join in an active learning group. Staff can choose to attend Welsh-medium workshops and a dedicated Welsh-medium active learning group has been set up. 13 managers completed the *Bangor Manager's Programme* during the period under review and an awards ceremony was held in December 2022 to mark their success. Four of those awarded were bilingual staff, who took the opportunity to attend Welsh-medium workshops and receive Myers Briggs' feedback in Welsh. In addition, a further 40 members of staff are in the midst of completing the programme, 21 of whom are Welsh-speaking and who join in Welsh-medium workshops.

In the period under review, new training for managers – *Managing in a Bilingual Context* - was developed and piloted. The course introduces the historical and contemporary context for Welsh, the statutory context and the steps that managers should take in order to support their staff to use the Welsh language. It is presented in both Welsh and English. This course is a core part of the *Bangor Management Programme*. As part of this pilot, 15 managers attended the course with 5 attending the Welsh-medium course. Higher numbers are expected next year following the piloting period.

The Staff Development Team received a request from three frontline departments to facilitate team development sessions. These were conducted bilingually as there were a number of learners in the teams, with the opportunity to split into smaller Welsh-medium groups to complete some activities. In team A there were 6 Managers, Team B 15 staff/ 12 able to speak Welsh and Team C 10 staff/ 6 able to speak Welsh. In addition, an academic school requested an *Understanding Yourself and Others* course all staff and detailed work was carried out with another department following a period of restructuring with training provided for the whole team (19 members of staff) as well as an opportunity for everyone to complete their Myers Briggs profile. 12 of the 19 members of staff were fluent in Welsh and their feedback session was conducted through the medium of Welsh.

The University offers a Coaching service to staff and two member of staff requested a Welsh speaking coach during the period in question.

VACANCIES AND LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

	Welsh Essential	Welsh Essential or Willingness to Learn	Welsh Desirable	No language requirement
Academic	11		50	9
Acadmeic Related	10		11	

Clerical	29		33	
Manual	1		8	
Technical	4		20	
Research	6		29	34
TOTAL	61		151	43

DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

The University is adopting the ITrent system for HR processes. One of the first elements that will be incorporated into the new system is recruitment processes. The relevant teams will ensure that the requirements of our Code of Practice on Staff Appointment are fully incorporated within the new system.

New Induction training will be developed as a result of new working patterns and it will be ensured that matters related to the Welsh languages are incorporated into this training.

COMPLAINTS

Three complaints were received this year under the Service Delivery Standards.

A monitoring meeting was held between the University and the Welsh Language Commissioner. We were able to address any issue identified at that meeting which related mainly to correcting / adding information to online systems.

CONCLUSIONS

The publication of the Welsh Language Strategy was an important step in the period under review and is a clear statement of intent in terms of maintaining, developing and promoting the Welsh language. As can be seen above, the University has been doing so proactively in times of change. The University will continue to look for methods of developing our services, processes and support to work in Welsh in the coming year.

If you would like further information about this report please contact:

Dr Lowri Angharad Hughes

Head of Policy and Development

Canolfan Bedwyr

Prifysgol Bangor

l.a.hughes@bangor.ac.uk

(01248) 383293

If you would like further information about this report please contact:

Dr Lowri Angharad Hughes

Head of Policy and Development

Canolfan Bedwyr

Prifysgol Bangor

l.a.hughes@bangor.ac.uk

(01248) 383293