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ANNUAL REPORT ON WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS

August 2022 – July 2023

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is available in Welsh.

BANGOR UNIVERSITY WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS ANNUAL REPORT

PREFACE

This Annual Report on the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards at Bangor University refers to the period 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023.

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 Bangor University's Notice of Compliance is on our website.

DEVELOPING WELSH THROUGH A PERIOD OF REVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE USE

2022 – 23 saw changes made to the University's leadership . Professor Edmund Burke was appointed Vice-Chancellor and there were other new senior appointments made during the year as well. It is pleasing to note that all of these individuals are receiving Welsh lessons.

The period in question was one in which the University was re-familiarising itself with having staff and students on campus on a regular basis and with convening events with partners and the public in the flesh once again. Through this came increased opportunities to use Welsh face-to-face and to hold further informal and ad-hoc conversations through Welsh.

There was some concern during the Covid era that the reduction in informal opportunities to use the language had caused some colleagues to lose the habit of hearing Welsh on a daily basis and therefore lose confidence in using it. For those colleagues who were appointed during the Covid era, and who were unfamiliar with a bilingual work context before they joined Bangor University, there had been less opportunity due to the pandemic for them to familiarise themselves with bilingualism beyond hearing Welsh through translation on Teams and Zoom. Therefore, the University has been proactive in 2022-23 in restoring day-to-day use of Welsh and securing a central place for it as the routine of meetings and events in the flesh reemerges. It was also ensured that we continue to develop the Welsh language within the virtual context that is now so central to the world of work and study.

An indication of the University's intention to ensure adequate staffing capacity to support the use of Welsh language across the institution was the appointment of a Welsh Language Development and Promotion Officer in May 2023. This role supports the University in implementing the Welsh Language Standards, assisting with elements such as language awareness training, developing new projects to mainstream Welsh and raising confidence in its use and contributing to efforts to develop the organisation's bilingual capacity and ethos as a result.

In 21/22 43% of staff identified as Welsh-speaking. In 22/23, the percentage of staff who identify as being Welsh-speaking has remained consistent (43%). There has been an increase in the percentage of staff who are learning Welsh and that is a positive development in ensuring that everyone across

the organisation contributes to creating a bilingual ethos and restoring and developing the practice of using Welsh.

SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDS

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

• there are Welsh-speaking staff working in reception areas;

• the whole range of our Services is available to students in Welsh;

• our signage is bilingual;

• there are opportunities for students and partners to use Welsh when submitting applications for funding or tendering to offer a service.

Amongst the developments and activities undertaken in the delivery of Welsh language services during 2022-23 for students and prospective students, the developments below are significant highlights:

- Serendipedd / Serendipity was re-introduced as an 'in the flesh' event in September 2022. Serendipedd is a Students' Union clubs and societies fair held for students (and new students in particular) as part of Welcome Week activities. External bodies also have a presence at the event, as well as some of the University's professional services departments. Canolfan Bedwyr had a stall there and it was a golden opportunity to introduce the whole range of Welsh medium provision to students and inform them of the University's bilingual services. It was also an useful opportunity to promote the Entry-level self-study Welsh language learning course in particular. Information about this new course was also added to the Welcome Packs of residential students as well. As a result, the course successfully registered 120 students on it during 2022-23.

- Similarly, the Astudio Drwy'r Gymraeg / Study Through Welsh stand was reintroduced at the Open Days in 2022-23. It is a highly effective means of sharing information about the range of Welsh medium and bilingual services, scholarships and study opportunities available to University students, as well as being an opportunity for prospective students to engage with professional services staff, the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Branch Officer and the University's Welsh-medium academic staff.

- The Careers and Employability Service ran a programme of one-to-one Careers Advice appointments during the year and there were 22 Welsh medium or bilingual events for larger groups during the year. There were 17 Welsh-medium events (both online and on campus) with specific academic schools, with a total of 129 students attending those events.

- Equally, 10 Welsh or bilingual sessions on various themes were provided by the Teaching and Learning Teaching Support Team in 2022-23, with 177 students attending those sessions.

- One of the developments for 2022-23 by the Digital Services team was to create a single bilingual template for the inclusion of all modules within Blackboard. This means that all modules have a consistent layout and all students across the University are introduced to bilingual headings to the folders within their courses. Using templates like this makes the courses more accessible. As part of the template, support resources for staff are available in both English and Welsh to assist them in the preparation and development of their Blackboard sites. There are also bilingual support resources for students to assist them in their studies. The template effectively adjusts in size for mobile devices, meaning that accessibility requirements are met during the development of these bilingual materials.

In relation to the University's involvement with the wider community, particular attention is drawn to the following:

- The University has established a Community Board. The meetings are conducted bilingually with simultaneous translation support, whether the meeting is held in or outside the University estate. Representation has been secured from organisations with a particular view of promoting the Welsh language and Menter Iaith Môn and Menter Iaith Bangor are both members of the Board.

- In 2022/23, the University Community Fund was administered for the first time. The fund is designed to facilitate collaboration between staff and external partners. 11 projects were supported in 2022/23, with the Welsh language being prominent among those projects:

    - Social Work: The production of four podcasts discussing social care and wellbeing in Wales, the importance of bilingual care, and how the University's MA Social Work course helps and supports local charities, councils and third sector agencies.
    - School of Educational Sciences and Employability Service: A scoping exercise and series of community consultations to develop a business case for a High Street presence in Bangor City Centre, working with local stakeholders, children and young people. An event was held with north Wales schoolchildren to discuss mental health and wellbeing in November 2023.
    - The University's Miles Dyslexia centre coordinated expert support for the Llais Dyslecsia / Voice of Dyslexia bilingual project to raise awareness about dyslexia with staff, students and the public. This effort involved collaboration between the centre, Literature Wales, Casi Wyn (Bardd Plant Cymru), and local artists.

The University remains proactive in ensuring progressive and timely discussions on Welsh and Welshness. In that context, two seminar series can be highlighted:

o For LGBTQ+ History Month, we hosted the Y Ddraig Amryliw (‘The Multicoloured Dragon’) conference which explored the relationship between Wales, the Welsh and the Welsh language and queer histories and identities. The conversations were varied, with attention paid to children's literature, terminology and inclusivity, queer interpretations of

contemporary creative works and the methods of searching archives to find these hidden histories. 57 people attended this virtual conference.

o Between October 2022 and August 2023, there were a series of monthly talks exploring how multi-faceted 'Welshness' really is. The series began with writer, teacher and presenter Natalie Jones discussing her DNA and Welshness. The series commenced with the editors of the volume *Welsh [Plural]* discussed the volume in November. Joseph Gnagbo delivered a talk in December and his exceptional story was one that attracted considerable press attention in the context of this series. In 2023, we discussed religion and Welshness with the likes of Kristoffer Hughes and Laura Jones, sport and Welshness with Laura McAllister and Lloyd Lewis, and the place of the National Eisteddfod in Wales today.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

• Monitor the use of the new mandatory training package on the Language Policy and ensure that it remains responsive in terms of developments in service delivery methods.
• Ensure Welsh-speaking students are actively involved in planning events that encourage them to see the value of their language skills.
• Continue to ensure that the Welsh language is centrally-placed as the University engages with its community beyond its own walls.

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 relating to the Welsh language are taken into account 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. the University Executive, Civic Mission Committee, Compliance Group).

During 2022-23, the Language Policy was updated and revised. These updates ensure that the Welsh language is considered in new developments related to:

- new systems (e.g. the new Worktribe curriculum management system)
- Digital learning platforms and systems
- creating bilingual videos as communication tools
- In-person, online and hybrid meetings

In line with the guidance being offered by the Welsh Language Commissioner, the section of the policy relating to the University's compliance with the Policy Making Standards has been expanded. The policy has been amended to ensure that specific clauses in it refer to the need to consider potential impacts on the Welsh language and opportunities to use the Welsh language in relation to the awarding of grants. Guidance has been produced to colleagues on the practical issues that need to be taken into consideration when assessing impact. Placing the impact assessment process in a real-world Welsh language context is an important step in supporting staff across the organisation to become more familiar and confident to do this in the context of their own work and duties. In our Language Policy we also added clauses to make it clear that 'policy' encompasses strategies and structure reorganisation. This was acted upon when the University undertook a reorganisation exercise with some academic schools and subjects in 2023. It was ensured that the consultation document sought the potential impact of these changes on the Welsh language and a language impact assessment was subsequently completed and presented to the Executive.

During 2022-23, the University revised its programme of mandatory training for staff. Training on the Welsh language and implementation of the Language Standards has been designated as one of the courses staff are expected to complete. A new online training pack on the Welsh language has been developed for this purpose.

In July 2023, the University received final approval for the establishment of a Medical School. This is a significant development in relation to increasing the numbers of doctors with Welsh language skills. The Welsh language Standard's core principles will be a consideration in the Medical School's development.

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. As a result of recent seminars by the Welsh Language Commissioner we will be looking at developing further training in the area of Policy Standards.

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. As set out in the introduction, the University is keen to restore the confidence of some staff to use Welsh when returning to a working situation where there are an increasing number of meetings and events held in-person.

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

- In 2022-23 there were 138 staff members learning Welsh. Maintaining learning numbers at this level shows that there continues to be a strong desire among staff to develop their skills and to contribute towards making Bangor a truly bilingual University. This is in line with our strategic objectives as we take practical, successful and inclusive steps towards shaping that bilingual workplace.
- In terms of Welsh language learning provision for our workforce, our data shows that staff are successfully progressing on their courses and are accessing provision at a higher level as a result. The Work Welsh Certificate scheme developed by our Staff Tutor offers an opportunity to assess staff attainment and help them gain confidence to use Welsh in their day-to-day work, both orally and in writing.
- During 2022-23, 4 lecturers took part in the Cymraeg Gwaith+ (Work Welsh+) scheme. After 10 months, all four had developed their skills to proficiency level, which enabled them to use Welsh with confidence with students who were following parts of their modules through the medium of Welsh.
- Number of staff who reached levels 1-7 in 2022-23:
    - o Level 1 / Beginners 34
    - o Level 2 Entry 26
    - o Level 3 Foundation 15
    - o Level 4 Intermediate 20
    - o Level 5 and 6 Advanced 29
    - o Level 7 Proficiency 14
- In the context of Levels and staff progress, it is striking to note that 46% of our learners are at Intermediate level and beyond. It is very rare to manage to maintain language development along the levels in this way and our ability to do so is testament to the effectiveness of our teaching here.
- The University celebrated this success at an event to present Welsh language learning certificates to staff in person. In addition, there was also a focus on those who have learnt Welsh at our St David's Day event also. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, who himself has learnt Welsh and has published a book, *Dwdls Cymraeg*, to help learners understand and remember Welsh vocabulary, gave an introduction at the event.

The tables below outline the Welsh skills of University staff as of 31 July 2023 based on job categories:

ALL UNIVERSITY STAFF: WELSH SPEAKING SKILLS

	Speak Welsh	Don't speak Welsh	Speak a little Welsh	Total
Academic	**224**	**272**	**189**	**685**
	33%	**40%**	**28%**	**100%**
Academic Related	**143**	**42**	**100**	**285**
	50%	**15%**	**35%**	**100%**
Clerical	**251**	**54**	**92**	**397**
	63%	**14%**	**23%**	**100%**
Manual	**111**	**68**	**53**	**232**
	48%	**29%**	**23%**	**100%**
Technical	**50**	**22**	**41**	**113**
	44%	**19%**	**36%**	**100%**
Research	**45**	**106**	**52**	**203**
	22%	**52%**	**26%**	**100%**
Total	**824**	**564**	**527**	**1915**
	43%	**29%**	**28%**	**100%**

ALL UNIVERSITY STAFF: WELSH READING SKILLS

	Read Welsh	Don't read Welsh	Read a little Welsh	Total
Academic	**225**	**291**	**172**	**688**
	33%	**42%**	**25%**	**100%**
Academic Related	**145**	**46**	**96**	**287**
	51%	**16%**	**33%**	**100%**
Clerical	**251**	**62**	**92**	**405**
	64%	**14%**	**22%**	**100%**

Manual	**104**	**70**	**53**	**227**
	46%	**31%**	**23%**	**100%**
Technical	**52**	**27**	**41**	**120**
	43%	**23%**	**34%**	**100%**
Research	**46**	**107**	**54**	**207**
	22%	**53%**	**26%**	**100%**
Total	**823**	**603**	**508**	**1934**
	43%	**31%**	**26%**	**100%**

ALL UNIVERSITY STAFF: WELSH WRITING SKILLS

	Write Welsh	**Don't write Welsh**	**Write a little Welsh**	**Total**
Academic	**211**	**319**	**148**	**678**
	31%	**47%**	**22%**	**100%**
Academic Related	**132**	**70**	**85**	**287**
	46%	**24%**	**30%**	**100%**
Clerical	**236**	**72**	**96**	**404**
	58%	**18%**	**24%**	**100%**
Manual	**91**	**85**	**46**	**222**
	41%	**38%**	**21%**	**100%**
Technical	**48**	**39**	**32**	**119**
	40%	**33%**	**27%**	**100%**
Research	**44**	**119**	**41**	**204**
	22%	**58%**	**20%**	**100%**
Total	**762**	**704**	**448**	**1914**
	40%	**37%**	**23%**	**100%**

WELSH-MEDIUM TRAINING COURSES

The University's Staff Development Team is a bilingual team and is able to offer all courses developed in-house through the medium of Welsh; as can 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.

The practice of holding new staff inductions on campus was resumed during the year. While new staff received presentations on the Language Policy as part of the virtual induction activities that have been in place as a result of the pandemic, the return to in-person induction was a means of emphasising the more practical elements of working in a bilingual organisation – such as simultaneous translation and the natural flow of bilingual meetings and presentations.

Dynamic Working has continued during the period 2022-23, and some courses have remained online but some sessions have also been reintroduced as in-person ones. 40 managers have now completed the Bangor Management Programme and a further 25 are in the process of completing it. Staff taking these courses can choose to attend Welsh-medium workshops and a dedicated Welsh-medium active learning group has been set up, which gives managers an informal and confidential space to discuss verbally amongst themselves. Managers also have the option of receiving the Myers Briggs psychometric test feedback in Welsh. The 'Managing in a Bilingual Environment' workshop provides the historical and contemporary context of the Welsh language, the current statutory context and the steps that managers should take in order to support their staff to use Welsh. The workshop is run in English and Welsh and forms a core part of the Bangor Management Programme.

During 2022-23 the following staff workshops were delivered through the medium of Welsh:

- Equality and Diversity for Managers
- Suicide awareness
- Performance Review Training for Reviewers
- Blackboard Planning Course
- Sorting and Selection
- Understanding Yourself and Others
- Taking Minutes
- Managing in a Bilingual Environment

97 members of staff enrolled on Welsh-medium workshops during the period in question, with opportunities to attend these courses shared in several internal forums and through the Staff Bulletin.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT OF POSTS AND WELSH SPEAKING SKILLS OF THOSE APPOINTED

CATEGORY	LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT	Speak Welsh	Speak a little	Don't speak Welsh	No information
Academic	Essential	17			
		100%	0%	0%	0%
Academic Related	Essential	7			
		100%	0%	0%	0%
Clerical	Essential	17	3	1	1
		77%	14%	5%	5%
Manual	Essential	1			
		100%	0%	0%	0%
Technical	Essential	2			1
		67%	0%	0%	33%
Research	Essential	2	2		
		50%	50%	0%	0%
Academic	Desirable	5	20	15	4
		11%	45%	34%	9%
Academic Related	Desirable	2	4	10	2
		11%	22%	56%	11%
Clerical	Desirable	9	8	8	1
		35%	31%	31%	4%
Manual	Desirable	4	3		
		57%	43%	0%	0%
Technical	Desirable	7	14	7	1
		24%	48%	24%	3%
Research	Desirable	12	3	15	
		40%	10%	50%	0%
Academic	No specific language requirement		2	2	
		0%	50%	50%	0%
Research	No specific language requirement	2	5	22	
		7%	17%	76%	0%
Total		87	64	80	10
		36%	27%	33%	4%

DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

In order to ensure that staff develop confidence to use Welsh at work, a series of interventions will be put in place in order to develop speaking and writing skills. We will also monitor the mandatory training on the Language Policy.

COMPLAINTS

One formal complaint was received under the Service Delivery Standards.

CONCLUSIONS

As teaching, learning and working patterns have stabilised, the year in question has been one where practices surrounding Welsh language use were reintroduced and coupled with the virtual innovations that have been introduced in recent years. In doing so, we were able to ensure that the University remained progressive in its engagement with the Welsh language. Looking ahead to 2023-24, there are several opportunities on the horizon to implement cross-organisational schemes and with dedicated departments and teams. This will ensure that we continue to raise confidence to use the Welsh language and further develop cutting-edge services with the Welsh language at their heart.

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