



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

Strategic Welsh Language Plan

2021 – 2024



This document is also available in Welsh.

Estyn's mission is to continue to achieve excellence for all learners in Wales by providing a high-quality independent inspection and advice service. Our vision is to be recognised through our staff's expertise as an authoritative voice on education and training in Wales. We view the Welsh language as an integral part of this vision.

- We are proud to be a bilingual organisation.
- We embrace the Welsh language as a language of choice for many and as part of our everyday culture.
- We welcome feedback on our objectives and will be pleased to discuss suggestions on how we might enhance our objectives and develop supporting actions.

Cymraeg 2050 A Million Welsh speakers

As a public body we strive to align our work with Welsh Government's policy of achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050 as outlined in Cymraeg 2050 A million Welsh speakers. (2017).

We concur with the statements by the then First Minister that '*The Welsh language is one of the treasures of Wales*' and note the relevance of his statement that '*Education is central to our vision, but we must ensure our young people come out of the education system ready and proud to use the language in all contexts.*'

We do this by incorporating the goals into our strategic objectives and therefore into decision making throughout our organisation including the development of this Strategic Welsh Language Plan.

Estyn is under a statutory duty to comply with the Welsh Language Standards as an organisation that comes within the Welsh Language Standards (N^o. 2) Regulations 2016. The relevant legislation is listed below. This document sets out our Welsh Language Objectives for the period 2021-2024.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

- The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 ('the Measure') gives the Welsh language official status in Wales. It also says that the Welsh Language Commissioner's ('the Commissioner') principal aim in exercising his or her functions is to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language. When exercising functions in accordance with this principal aim, the Commissioner must have regard to:
 - the official status which the Welsh language has in Wales
 - the duties to use Welsh which are imposed by law, and the rights which arise from the enforceability of those duties
 - the principle that, in Wales, the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language, and
 - the principle that persons in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of the Welsh language if they choose to do so.

Welsh Language Standards

- The Measure gives legal effect to the official status of the Welsh language by enabling the imposition of Welsh language standards ('standards') on a body.¹
- There are five classes of standards:
 - service delivery standards
 - policy making standards
 - operational standards
 - promotion standards²
 - record keeping standards.³
- Standards explain how a body should treat and use the Welsh language in different scenarios, for example, when sending correspondence, dealing with telephone calls, providing services on-line or face-to-face, formulating policies or when providing services internally to staff

Our [Annual Report on the Welsh Language in Estyn](#) details more about our work in relation to the Welsh language.

Estyn has adopted the principle of treating Welsh and English equally when undertaking public business in Wales. Our [Welsh language policy](#) outlines the way in which Estyn operates in accordance with that principle when providing services for the public in Wales. This policy outlines our approach to how we deliver our Welsh language services both internally and externally. The policy takes full account of the requirements of the Welsh language standards and indicates our present and emerging practice across the areas covered by those standards.

We promote the Welsh language through the delivery of our strategic objectives, by drawing the attention of education providers to their own duty to promote the Welsh language. Our Welsh language objectives cover how we consider Welsh language and Welsh cultural issues when we inspect and regulate and how we will ensure that our own staff and those we contract with have a full understanding of our legal obligations and compliance, as well as our vision regarding the Welsh language.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

Further information on the Welsh Language Measure and how the legislation applies to listed bodies, including Estyn, can be found following the links below:

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/1/contents/enacted>

Welsh Language Standards (No. 2) Regulations 2016

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2016/182/schedule/1/made>

¹ In the context of the standards a 'body' is an organisation which has a duty to comply with one or more standards.

² This class of standards is not included within the Welsh Language Standards (No. 2) Regulations 2016.

³ Welsh Ministers, by means of regulations, may make other provision about such standards (i.e. supplementary standards).

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets out a shared purpose to achieve a better and lasting quality of life for us all. The shared purpose is represented by an integrated set of seven well-being goals. The Act also puts in place a sustainable development principle.

Although the duty does not apply to Estyn (we are not a listed public body for the purposes of the Act), we nonetheless support the spirit of the Act and seek to build the necessary wellbeing components and sustainable development principle into our planning, governance and operational delivery. In addition, we aim to align our approach to the Welsh language appropriately with the Act regarding the Welsh language, and its inclusion within the concept of civil engagement as ‘action for the purpose of promoting or improving the economic, social, environmental or cultural well-being of Wales’. The Act also states clearly that a thriving Welsh language is an essential part of one of the seven well-being goals.

See the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015 The Essentials](#) for more information.

Summary of Welsh Language Objectives

We have identified 5 key Welsh language objectives for 2021-2024.

Objective 1:	We will promote increasing the use of Welsh internally across our entire workforce through initiatives such as ARFer through Canolfan Bedwyr, Bangor University
Objective 2:	To promote the concept of the ‘proactive offer’ rather than a reactive approach to Welsh language services. We will continue with our internal self and peer assessment processes to measure the efficacy of our present compliance arrangements. However, we will constantly seek to improve our standards of service delivery and approach legislative compliance as the minimum baseline from which we can improve.
Objective 3	To promote the use of the Welsh language, culture and its historical context through inspection activity, including inspection and thematic reports, in line with our vision for education in Wales.
Objective 4	To promote the Welsh language through participating consistently in relevant public and legislative consultations.
Objective 5	Through engaging positively and committing to the objectives above we will aim to lead by example, as an organisation that promotes and utilises honest and open self-evaluation and embraces the importance of the Welsh language to our cultural and educational vision.

How we developed our Welsh language objectives

Our Welsh language objectives have been developed in consultation internally with staff, for example through our Welsh Language Working Group and Welsh Language Lead Officers' Group, and externally, through the following activities:

- Engagement with officers representing the Welsh Language Commissioner including compliance procedures.
- Consideration of the issues and recommendations in the following publications:
 - [The Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#)
 - [Welsh Language Standards \(No.2\) Regulations 2016](#)
 - [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)
 - [Cymraeg 2050 A million Welsh speakers](#)
 - Compliance Report WLC
 - Bilingual Recruitment document from WLC
 - Holding bilingual video meetings guidance document WLC
 - No.2 Regulations Code of Practice WLC
 - Promoting the use of Welsh Language Services WLC
 - Overseeing compliance WLC
 - Recording and sharing language choice WLC
 - Standards relating to promoting the Welsh language WLC
 - More than Words
 - ARFer toolkit
 - National Centre for Learning Welsh level finder and Work Welsh taster courses <https://dysgucymraeg.cymru/> <https://learnwelsh.cymru/>
<https://learnwelsh.cymru/work-welsh/learn-welsh-level-checker-1/>

Welsh Language Objectives 2021-2024

We have identified 5 objectives that we will specifically focus on. For each objective, we have also set out key actions we will take to deliver them and our success criteria.

Objective 1:

We will promote increasing the use of Welsh internally across our entire workforce with initiatives such as ARFer through Canolfan Bedwyr, Bangor University

- 1.1 We will work with Canolfan Bedwyr to develop a bespoke toolkit to increase the use of Welsh between staff members. Research from the ARFer project has shown that the use of Welsh within workplaces has diminished following the transfer to online working during the pandemic.
- 1.2 The initiative will be aimed mainly at fluent speakers and proficient learners. However, all staff members, whatever their language level will be encouraged to use the language according to their level with the aim of increasing the engagement of all staff members with Welsh speaking colleagues and external stakeholders and members of the public.
- 1.3 We will, as a first step, undertake a detailed analysis of staff members' language skills to ascertain where they are at present on the language continuum. We will through

using appropriate tools such as the National Centre for Learning Welsh’s Learn Welsh level checker be able to map their position on the Welsh for Adults National Curriculum which is consistent with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) framework. (see below)

NCLW level *WJEC WfA examinations available	CEFR level	ALTE level
Entry *	A1	Entry
Foundation *	A2	1
Intermediate *	B1	2
Advanced *	B2	3
Proficiency	C1	4
-	C2	5

National Curriculum for Welsh for Adults—an overview of ability level statements are provided in this document <https://learnwelsh.cymru/media/1646/saesneg-final.pdf>

1.4 We will be able to target courses for internal training strategically according to individual and corporate needs following collation of the above information.

Actions

- Work with Canolfan Bedwyr to develop the toolkit/guidelines
- Discuss the range of initiatives in the Welsh Language Working Group.
- Work with the HR Dept. to implement language level testing.
- Analyse results and provide courses as relevant.
- Continue to offer development opportunities, such as shadowing Welsh-medium inspections, to suitably proficient learners and staff who need to build their confidence in using the language in a professional context. Such opportunities should involve activities that will be beneficial to that individual’s linguistic and professional development and agreed beforehand.
- Continue to increase Welsh language awareness through communications in staff newsletter and intranet and training, including all induction programmes for new employees.
- Ensure that all new starters undertake the Welsh Language taster courses available through the Work Welsh scheme and continue to implement this with staff members who undergo internal transfers to departments who deal regularly with members of the public.
- Continue to work towards ensuring that the corporate tone of voice in Welsh is accessible to a wider audience and easier to understand.

Success criteria

- Greater numbers of staff members reporting that they make greater use of Welsh in their internal work. It will be possible for us to set measurable targets and assess progress against this objective once we have determined a baseline regarding the language ability in the four skills of all staff
- Greater integration of Welsh learners that facilitates their use of the language with colleagues.

Objective 2:

We will promote the concept of the ‘proactive offer’ rather than a reactive approach to Welsh language services. We will continue with our internal self- and peer-assessment processes to measure the efficacy of our present compliance arrangements. However, we will constantly seek to improve our standards of service delivery and approach legislative compliance as the minimum baseline from which we can improve.

- 2.1 We will consider how we can change the mindset of the organisation to becoming proactive in the way we actively promote engagement with the public through the medium of Welsh.
- 2.2 We will aim to nurture and normalise the importance of promoting high expectations regarding linguistic equality and inclusion. This will include providing training for colleagues who manage others on using the Welsh language in their role as managers.
- 2.3 We will continue to utilise processes that monitor compliance and nurture a culture of self and peer-assessment leading to beneficial self-reflection and continuous improvement. We will aim to increase the ownership of the Welsh language policy and compliance away from key individuals within specific departments by promoting a culture of corporate and collegiate responsibility and ownership.
- 2.4 We will continue to provide language awareness training to all new members of staff (permanent or temporary) and ensure there is a strong emphasis on the proactive offer from all within the organisation.

Actions

- Continue and extend our use of Work Welsh logos etc. in all written communications and on virtual platforms such as video-conferencing platforms as part of our corporate identity templates.
- Ensure compliance with Welsh Language Standards regarding holding meetings with stakeholders and the public through the proactive and normalised use of simultaneous translation both face-to-face and virtually.
- Investigate the use of data bases across Estyn in order to ensure that the language choice of individuals and organisations are recorded and shared consistently and effectively.
- To investigate the technology that is available to increase and improve the use of the Welsh language internally and externally.

- Measure the effectiveness of legislative compliance through the Welsh Language Working Group
- Ensure that staff training is where possible strategically targeted towards improving performance and compliance, including training for those investigating complaints regarding non-compliance.
- Continue to increase Welsh language awareness through communications in staff newsletter and intranet and training, including all induction programmes for new employees.
- Ensure that all new starters undertake the Welsh Language taster courses available through the Work Welsh scheme and continue to implement this with staff members who undergo internal transfers to departments who deal regularly with members of the public.
- Continue to work towards ensuring that the corporate tone of voice in Welsh is accessible to a wider audience and easier to understand.

Success criteria

- Greater numbers of stakeholders and members of the public engaging with us through the medium of Welsh (where this is measurable). E.g. stakeholder fora, social media engagement, downloads etc.
- Continuing to monitor complaints regarding lack of Welsh language services or the standard of service achieved.

Objective 3:

To promote the use of the Welsh language, culture and its historical context through inspection activity, including inspection and thematic reports, in line with our vision for education in Wales.

- 3.1 To be recognised through the expertise of our staff as an authoritative voice on Welsh language issues in education across education sectors.
- 3.2 To ensure consistency in messages and recommendations regarding the Welsh language in inspection and/or thematic reports which align with our strategic overview regarding the language and education.
- 3.3 To engage in public meetings, fora and meetings that discuss such issues in a strategically consistent manner.

Actions

- To ensure that inspectors, across the range of our inspection activity, investigate and evaluate the use of the Welsh language in accordance with sectoral inspection guidance, and that any recommendations reflect our educational and linguistic strategic aims.
- Record the outcomes of inspection activity across sectors regarding the point above through the Welsh Language Lead Officers Group.

Success criteria

- By measuring the range of recommendations in reports regarding the Welsh language and analysing their consistency, strategic validity and effect on outcomes across sectors through the Welsh Language Lead Officers' Group.

Objective 4

To promote the Welsh language through participating consistently in relevant public and legislative consultations

- 4.1 We will continue to offer our corporate view on a range of statutory consultations regarding education and compliance with Welsh language legislation etc.
- 4.2 Our corporate view will be driven by our vision to achieve excellence for all learners in Wales by providing a high-quality independent inspection and advice service. Our vision is to be recognised through our staff's expertise as an authoritative voice on education and training in Wales. We view the Welsh language as an integral part of this vision.
- 4.3 In coming to an agreed corporate view on Welsh language issues we will utilise the knowledge and skills base of the Welsh Language Lead Officers Group to inform this process in a consistent and strategic manner that reflects both institutional and governmental national priorities.

Actions

- To ensure full engagement with statutory consultations regarding education and compliance with Welsh language legislation and any implications for the language through utilising the specialist knowledge of Estyn staff.

Success criteria

- To continue to contribute to and monitor the impact of our contributions to consultation processes.

Objective 5

Through engaging positively and committing to the objectives above we will aim to lead by example, as an organisation that promotes and utilises honest and open self-evaluation and embraces the importance of the Welsh language to our cultural and educational vision.

- 5.1 We will aim to be regarded as an example of best practice regarding promotion, compliance and effective educational practice both internally and across the educational sectors.

Actions

- To promote the strategic vision of Estyn regarding the Welsh language through the Welsh Language Working Group and the Welsh Language Lead Officers Group

and to proactively develop our methodologies in inspection and compliance in order to achieve this objective.

Success criteria

- To ensure positive outcomes in our dealings with the Welsh Language Commissioner's compliance team and by measuring any references to our outcomes and initiatives in the Commissioner's annual compliance report on organisations across Wales that are under a statutory duty to operate the Welsh Language Standards.
- Through gathering intelligence on references in the public or political domains regarding our work in relevant areas.