



The College Merthyr Tydfil

Annual Report on Welsh Language Standards

August 2023 – July 2024

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

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

This document is available in Welsh



1. Introduction

This Annual Report is created under the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011 and Welsh Language Standards. From 1st April 2018, The College Merthyr Tydfil has a statutory duty to comply with the Welsh Language Standards as stated in the Compliance Notice, which was issued on 29 September 2017.

In accordance with the requirements of the Standards, the college must produce an annual report in relation to each financial year, which deals with the way in which the college has complied with the standards. The report must be published no later than 6 months following the end of the financial year to which the report relates. This annual report deals with the period between 1 August 2023 and 31 July 2024. The report will be available on the College and University of South Wales Websites from 31 January 2025.

The Regulatory Framework requires the College to report on the following statutory areas:

- How the college has complied with the standards with which we were under a duty to comply with during that year
- The Welsh language skills of employees
- The number and percentage of staff members who attended training courses offered in Welsh (namely training on recruitment and interviewing, performance management, complaints and disciplinary procedures, induction, dealing with the public, and health and safety)
- The number of new and vacant posts categorised as ones where Welsh language skills are essential, desirable, not necessary, or need to be learnt;
- The number of complaints received about each class of standards.

Table 1 overleaf shows the specific standards each of the above relate to:

Requirements	Standard
Compliance	154, 155, 156, 164, 170, 176
Welsh Language Skills	134, 158, 161
The number of staff members who attended specific training that must be provided in Welsh if it is available in English.	135, 136, 138, 139, 140, 141, 159,
Posts categorised as Welsh is essential or desirable	145, 145A, 162
Complaints	154, 155, 156, 164, 170, 176

2. Successes and Achievements

Work Welsh Further Education

Funding was again secured in 2023-2024 to enable the Work Welsh Further Education scheme to continue to support the college in improving the Welsh skills of the college workforce. The Welsh Government funding for this programme is delivered via Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol who are also responsible for administering and coordinating its delivery in colleges throughout Wales. The Work Welsh Further Education scheme is developing each year and has grown to become a very popular addition to the excellent and comprehensive training and support programme that the college offers to all staff. Work Welsh Further Education training is available to academic and support staff alike and works towards improving Welsh skills with a specific emphasis on workplace-based vocabulary, patterns and scenarios. Learners on the scheme are encouraged and supported throughout, not only in their language acquisition, but also in introducing Welsh into their classes and other aspects of their college experience. Work Welsh Further Education undoubtedly helps the college rise to the challenge of meeting the Welsh Language Standards and of normalising Welsh in the college by doing so from within. From a small pilot scheme launched in 2018, the scheme has grown to become an established and critical strand of the college's 'DNA Cymraeg'.

Total staff engagement for the period was 19 learning via face-to-face sessions and 4 via the online Self Study option. Of the 19, 16 were new to the scheme and an incredible 13 were from the same department (Health & Care) following the highly successful and inspiring PDF Conference they attended at The Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod in 2023.

These figures bode well for the continued stability of the scheme, echoing the growth of last year (2022-2023).

The provision of the 'Shwmaeronment' ethos and culture at the college

In November 2022, the college launched the Welsh language brand 'Shwmaeronment' in partnership with Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council. Since the launch, the 'Shwmaeronment' concept has created a positive Welsh language environment ethos. The Red Dragon mascot (Dwynwen) that the college invested in in 2022 is successfully being used in the college creche, local pre-schools and primary schools. Dwynwen attends assemblies giving out awards for Welsh speakers of the week.

Dwynwen also attends all events within the college and events working in partnerships for example Shwmae Day as part of the Merthyr Tydfil Welsh Education Forum partnership.

Siarter Iaith – Gold Award

In the Summer of 2024, the college successfully achieved the 'Siarter Iaith' Gold Award, a year after receiving the initial Bronze and then the Silver award. The award recognises the commitment to the development of the Welsh language across the college. The award aims to showcase the way in which educational establishments have successfully embedded a Welsh language ethos and culture into all aspects of the curriculum and learning and working environment and the college is the first FE College in Wales to receive this award. This award is a demonstration of dedication from the college to further develop the Welsh language ethos within the college.

Welsh in CPD sessions in the college

During 2023-2024, the Welsh language team continued to play an integral role in the college's Continuous Professional Development (CPD) days with Welsh language sessions and activities embedded into the programme of training for all academic staff. Sgiliaith also worked alongside the Welsh language team to upskill academic staff in using bilingualism in the classroom. 90% of academic staff attended these sessions and the feedback provided was very positive with staff reporting that

the sessions had enabled them to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language and the importance of bilingualism in the classroom. This has been further developed for the 2024-2025 CPD programme.

Patagonia Trip

The college secured 'Taith' grant funding from Welsh government for two members of staff to visit Patagonia in May 2023 to make initial contact with the Welsh language community and assess the opportunities for working in partnership and organising future visits for college learners to visit this community. As the trip was very successful and excellent partnership links were made with the local bilingual Welsh/Spanish school in Trevelin, the college successfully secured funding to take 10 Welsh speaking learners over to Patagonia to gain work experience during the October half term 2023. The learners had the opportunity to complete work experience in the bilingual primary school in Trevelin as well as getting involved in various activities within the Welsh language community.

Bilingual Assistants

The college successfully secured a grant funding of £140,900 from Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol for another year to continue the provision of Bilingual Assistants within the Welsh Governments key priority areas such as, Health and Social Care, Childcare, Public Services, Sports, Creative Industries and Business. The Bilingual Support Assistants offer learners and staff opportunities to develop Welsh language skills within the classroom through bilingual recourses, Welsh language events, teaching and learning in a Welsh language environment, completing online courses and celebrating Welsh culture throughout the year. Through these innovative opportunities and having the learners improve on their Welsh language skills, this enables them to achieve at least a B3 LLLWR standard in support of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Welsh and Bilingual provision guide and the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy. Extra funding has been secured to appoint a Bilingual assistant in the Construction department for the 2024/25 academic year. A total of 197 learners studying Health and Social Care, Childcare, Public Services and Sport completed the Prentis Iaith online course. These learners also signed up to the Workplace Welsh courses online as part of their tutorials.

3. Governance and Monitoring

3.1 Welsh Language Steering Group

The College Merthyr Tydfil is a member of The University of South Wales Welsh Language Steering Group, chaired by the University Secretary. The group meets three times a year to discuss all aspects of the Welsh language. This includes the implementation, monitoring and the progression of the Welsh language standards.

3.2 Welsh Education Forum Partnership

The college is part of the Welsh Education Forum Partnership across Merthyr Tydfil and has had a key input into the development of the Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The group comprises representatives from across a range of educational organisations, including local Primary and Secondary schools, Welsh Government, Mudiad Meithrin, Menter Iaith Merthyr Tudful, Adult Community Learning, Cymraeg i Oedolion, Central South Consortium, RHAG Merthyr Tudful and the Urdd. The group focus is to:

- facilitate the wider use of Welsh language both within schools and the wider community and championing the identity of Wales;
- work with partners to promote and increase the use of the Welsh Language in schools and across the County Borough;
- further develop provision for Welsh medium education;
- celebrate progress and commitment to developing the Welsh Language in all settings; and
- develop support for learners with additional learning through the medium of Welsh thus ensuring they receive equal linguistic opportunity.

This is an ongoing partnership strategy that allows the college to work closely with all schools in the borough of Merthyr Tydfil.

As part of our partnership working with the Welsh Education Forum Partnership, the college has been working closely with the Education Department of the local council with events, attending local schools' assemblies and working to organise a range of Welsh language activities, taster sessions and events for local school pupils to attend at the college.

The college was delighted to work in partnership with the Merthyr Tydfil Education Department to host a careers event in March 2024, working alongside local businesses to raise awareness to primary school, secondary school and college learners of the importance of having Welsh language skills in the

workplace. This comprised a range of employer stands in the college's sports hall alongside specific workshops and activities run by employers and local organisations to showcase and demonstrate how the Welsh language is important in their sector and career pathways.

3.3 Welsh Language Co-ordinators

The college is a part of a departmental group held at the University of South Wales along with a representative from each academic faculty and central department. The meetings are held once a term. This group is to support and maintain the Welsh language standards and deal with any queries or questions that is related to the service expectations, dealing with learners and the public, seeking advice from other co-ordinators, and sharing good practice.

3.4 Bilingualism Development Group

The college is part of a Welsh Coordinators in FE colleges group. The group comprises representatives from College Bilingual Officers, Welsh government, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and Sgiliaith. The meetings are held once a term to share good practice and discuss ideas to develop Welsh language and bilingualism throughout the FE colleges.

3.5 Monitoring

The monitoring process is undertaken internally by the College's Welsh language team as agreed by the Welsh Language Steering Group and College Executive. The aim of the monitoring process is to identify good practice and compliance throughout the college by a range of methods used. This includes meetings with heads of divisions to ensure updates and progression is discussed, mystery shoppers such as visits, emails, and phone calls. This enables the team to identify good practice and put support into place for any additional development. This is conducted on an annual basis and the outcomes are reported back to the College Executive Team and Heads of Division. In addition, the use of Welsh language and implementation of the college's Welsh language policy are monitored through the college's quality assurance process, with Welsh language a part of Quality Week Learning walks and Learner Focus Groups and also a part of Divisional Quality Review Boards.

Welsh Language Monitoring Exercise

The Welsh language team and external volunteers conducted a secret monitoring audit during the week of 4th - 8th March 2024. The table below details the outcomes of this monitoring exercise.

Although the results are very good, there is still work to do around certain areas and support has been put in place to ensure compliance in those areas. The Welsh Language Commissioners Compliance Officers continue all year around to monitor all FE colleges in Wales.

	Welsh/ Cymraeg	Bilingual/ Ddwyieithog	English/ Saesneg	Total /Cyfanswm
E- mails/ E-Bost	8	2	1	11
Phone/ Ffôn	8	2	1	11
Visits/ ymweliadau	7	3	2	12
Welsh in The Classroom Cymraeg yn yr dosbarth				6
Tweets		11	2	13
Facebook		7		7
Instagram		5		5
Full Total/ Cyfanswm Llawn	25	30	6	61

Table 1: Results of Monitoring Exercise, March 2024

4. Compliance

4.1 Compliance with the Service Delivery Standards

To ensure compliance across the college, all current staff in each department have received full training on raising awareness and expectations regarding the Welsh language standards. All new staff will receive this training through induction. All individual staff are provided with detailed Welsh standards guidance packs to enable them to refer to the standards and compliance requirements. All managers and heads of division are provided with a manager's guide to share good practice within their team and ensure compliance. These guides are also available on the staff intranet and each staff desktop under Welsh Language Standards. An online course has been developed for all staff to complete on Welsh language standards which will be shared in the 2024/25 academic year.

Monday Memo – Each week the college Principal sends all staff important information and updates for the week ahead via a college 'Monday Memo' bilingually. A Welsh language information and update section is included in this document. The Monday Memo celebrates members of staff each week for their success in developing and using the Welsh language.

4.2 How the college complies with the Policy Making Standards

The college ensures that every policy follows our policy making guidance and Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures. The form includes a section for the Welsh language to be considered in terms of the effect that any new policy, or revision could have on the language. All policies are available through the medium of Welsh and this is clearly stated on the front of every policy.

4.3 How the college complies with the Operational Standards

The college has a detailed policy on the use of the Welsh language. In addition, all college policies are available through the medium of Welsh on the Staff and Student Portals and College Website. Staff and learners are able to identify their preferred language on the staff HR system, iTrent and through the college's EBS learner admissions and enrolment system.

4.4 Recruitment

During 2023-2024, 28 posts were advertised, internally and externally, with 28 posts being advertised with Welsh as an essential or desirable skill. The percentage of posts filled with Welsh speakers was 10.71%.

4.5 Welsh language skills of employees

Table 2 below details the number and percentage of academic staff that are able to teach through the medium of Welsh by Division. The percentage of staff being able to teach through the medium of Welsh has increased from 4.3% in 2021-22 to 8.1% in 2022-2023 and has declined slightly to 8% in 2023-24.

Department/Faculty	Number	Teach through the medium of Welsh in %
Business	10	10%
Care	16	18.75%
Creative Industries	23	0%
Sport and Public Services	10	20%
AMBE	23	0%
Maths and Science	9	11.11%
Hair and Beauty	8	0%
Humanities / Welsh	19	10.52%
ILS	5	20%
Total	125	8%

Table 3 below details the number and percentage of administrative staff that are able to speak Welsh by support department.

Department	Total number of staff in the department	Welsh speaker and excellent Welsh language skills	Percentage of Welsh speakers (of total number of staff)
Senior Management Team	8	0	0%
Marketing/Admission/Enquiries	5	1	20%
Learning Zone/wellbeing	18	4	22.22%
Estates and Infrastructure	16	0	0%
Student Record	9	1	11.11%
Student Finance	7	1	14.29%
PLA/Employability	5	0	0%
Welsh Language Team	8	8	100%
Total	70	10	14.29%

4.6 The number and percentage of staff who attended training courses offered in Welsh

The total of **90** academic staff attended a training course during the 2023/24 academic year to improve their Welsh language skills. This represents 90% of total academic staff. This is an increase of 24% compared to the last academic year.

4.7 The number of staff who wear a Welsh speaking or learner identity badge at the end of the financial year

Work Welsh lanyards are distributed by the Welsh Language Officer to all staff who have indicated that they are fluent Welsh speakers or Welsh language learners. Staff have shown confidence in wearing these lanyards and has found it a useful tool to identify the Welsh speakers around the college. The total of staff wearing a fluent Welsh lanyard is **15**. The total of staff wearing the 'Learner Welsh' lanyards during 2023/2024 was **14** members of staff.

4.8 The number of Complaints received

Complaints about the Welsh language and/or complaints received in English or Welsh about any aspect relating to the standards are dealt with in accordance with the College's Complaints and Concerns policy. In relation to the Welsh language and Welsh Standards, no formal complaints were received during 2023/2024. The complaints policy and procedure are available on the College website.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any queries regarding the annual report or any aspect of the College Merthyr Tydfil's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, please contact:

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