

Welsh Language Standards Report

1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022



1. Introduction

The Welsh Language Commissioner issued a compliance notice to Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) on 25 July 2016.

This compliance notice outlined WCVA's duty to meet 147 of the statutory Welsh Language Standards established by the Welsh Government under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. This Measure gave equal status to Welsh and English so that Welsh cannot be treated less favourably than English.

The introduction of the Welsh Language Standards is designed to ensure that those in Wales who wish to live their lives in Welsh can do by obliging public bodies and some third sector organisations, to deliver their services in Welsh.

The Welsh Language Standards require WCVA to present an annual report, in relation to each financial year, that deals with the way that it has complied with the Service Delivery, Policy Making and Operational Standards. Provision is also included within the Standards concerning publishing and publicity of the Annual Report. This Report sets out WCVA's progress towards complying with the Standards from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

2. Background

The Standards are a set of legally binding requirements that aim to improve the bilingual service that the people of Wales can expect to receive from a number of public and statutory bodies. WCVA is also included. The Standards clearly set out what our responsibilities are in terms of providing bilingual services, ensuring the Welsh language is not treated any less favourably than the English language.

The Language Standards are divided into five different categories

- Service Delivery
- Policy Making
- Operational
- Record Keeping
- Promotion

WCVA is required to comply with Standards for Service Delivery, Policy Making, Operational, and Record Keeping.

The Standards aim to:

- Make it clear to organisations what their duties are in relation to the Welsh language.
- Make it clearer to Welsh speakers about the services they can expect to receive in Welsh.
- Make Welsh language services more consistent and improve their quality.

3. Welsh Language Officer role

During this period the Risk and Impact Officer also acted as the Welsh Language Officer, with the support of the Director of Strategy and Sector Development. She met with various members of staff to discuss the standards and supported new members of staff with any questions.

Desktop guidance notes are available to assist staff with compliance and are saved in the WCVA General folder on Teams. The main elements of the guidance notes deal with the practical day-to-day implications of working to meet the Standards, such as how to answer the telephone; how to arrange meetings, talking the participants language choice into consideration; and recording the language choice of our members and contacts.

4. Vision for Welsh Language

As well as supporting compliance with the standards, the Welsh Language Officer continued to work closely with the Commissioner's Hybu team to promote the use of Welsh across the sector. WCVA and the Welsh Language Commissioner have signed a Memorandum of Understanding. We jointly delivered against a work plan for 2021-22. This work includes co-hosting learning opportunities and looking for opportunities to promote WCVA's and the Commissioner's work at national events. A key work stream this year was supporting CVCs to achieve Cynnig Cymraeg.

5. Welsh language and our events and learning programme

WCVA continues to deliver its learning and events programme with both online and face to face content delivered through the medium of Welsh. Developing this programme further is important to the service WCVA delivers and we are continuing to look for qualified trainers with experience in the subject areas to help us deliver our programme. We are working with member organisations who work largely through the medium of Welsh to identify how we can strengthen our Welsh language training offer.

WCVA continues to deliver a much higher level of online content following the pandemic. Following initial challenges to running bilingual events, we worked with the Welsh Language Commissioner's office to identify solutions. We adapted formats to support bilingual meeting and invested in alternative software, including Zoom to provide the translation function. We continue to test different ways of supporting bilingual meetings online and feedback to the Commissioner's office where relevant.

6. Complaints – in accordance with Standard 141

Service Delivery - WCVA is subject to 75 Service Standards.
No complaints were received during this period.

Policy Making - WCVA is subject to 16 Policy Making Standards
No complaints were received during this period.

Operational - WCVA is subject to 46 Operational Standards
No complaints were received during this period.

7. Welsh language skills and learning – in accordance with Standard 145

WCVA believes that it is responding to the Standards in a positive manner. In 2021-22, 8 staff received Welsh Language Awareness induction training as part of their induction to WCVA. WCVA delivers Welsh Language Refresher training to staff every two years.

We offer the Work Welsh online course, where staff can achieve Welsh Language qualifications (Levels 1-3, depending on staff roles).

2 completed the qualifications started in Sept 2020 during summer of 2021

2 started qualifications in Sept 2021 completed in summer of 2022

1 started qualification in February 2022 completed in summer of 2022

WCVA is committed to encouraging all its staff to use the Welsh language skills that they have, and to creating a bilingual working environment where they feel they can use Welsh. Learners and less confident speakers are encouraged to use the language in a non-judgemental and supportive environment.

WCVA Staff language skills as of 31 March 2022

	No. of staff	97
Welsh as preferred language	3	3%
Welsh Speakers	17	17.5%
Welsh Learners	11	11%

8. Recruitment - in accordance with Standard 148

The number of new and vacant posts advertised during the year which were categorised as posts where:

	Welsh Language Essential	Welsh Language highly desirable	Welsh Language desirable
External	2	1	6

Internal	1		2
----------	---	--	---

All posts are advertised as either Welsh language skills essential or desirable. Where possible, we explain the level of skills required.

Contacts

Ruth Marks
Chief Executive
WCVA- Head Office
Dumballs Road Cardiff CF10
5BF
Tel: 0300 111 0124
Email: help@wcva.org.uk

Membership and Welsh Language Manager
Welsh Language Officer
WCVA- Head Office
Dumballs Road Cardiff CF10 5BF
Tel: 0300 111 0124
Email: help@wcva.org.uk

WCVA welcomes receiving correspondence in Welsh. We will respond to correspondence received in Welsh, in Welsh. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay.