

Welsh Language Report 2022-23



Legislative Context

This annual report has been prepared in accordance with Welsh Language Standards 152, 158 and 164, and will highlight how the Auditor General for Wales and Audit Wales have complied with the Welsh Language Standards which were imposed on them by the Welsh Language Commissioner, set out in the appropriate Compliance Notices.

[Auditor General for Wales Compliance Notice](#)

[Audit Wales Compliance Notice](#).

This document has been prepared as part of work performed in accordance with statutory functions. As well as outlining general compliance, this report also contains the specific information required by the Standards to be published annually. This includes data on the number of complaints we have received, the Welsh language levels of our staff, the training we offer through the medium of Welsh, and the level of Welsh we require on all vacant and new posts we have advertised during the financial year.

In the event of receiving a request for information to which this document may be relevant, attention is drawn to the Code of Practice issued under section 45 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The section 45 code sets out the practice in the handling of requests that is expected of public authorities, including consultation with relevant third parties. In relation to this document, the Auditor General for Wales and Audit Wales are relevant third parties.

Any enquiries regarding disclosure or re-use of this document should be sent to Audit Wales at infoofficer@audit.wales.

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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

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Introduction

- 1 This annual report on the Welsh language outlines the work done to promote the language within Audit Wales during 2022-23 and gives a snapshot of our current situation. Even though the primary function of this report is to assess compliance, it provides an opportunity for reflection and forward planning.
- 2 The appointment of a Welsh Language Officer part way through the year meant there were limited opportunities to progress the agenda, although the organisation continued to promote the language and opportunities. This resulted in limited opportunities to engage with staff, delivery of training and engaging with clients and stakeholders.
- 3 A new Welsh Language Strategy was developed and agreed through the appropriate governance and management channels and is now in the process of being implemented through the introduction of an Action Plan, progressed, and monitored via a Welsh Language Strategy Group.
- 4 We have been updating our Welsh Language Awareness training with the intention of rolling out across the organisation to all staff, both new and established looking at the history and culture of the language as well as highlighting our statutory obligations.
- 5 The lifting of restrictions on office working and attending conferences/seminars, allowed Audit Wales to expand on its programme of events, including in-person seminars, workshops, and conferences in partnerships with other stakeholders, partners, and relevant organisations.
- 6 As with every organisation, Audit Wales continues to adapt to new ways of working whilst continuing to deliver audit services to our clients and stakeholders, ensuring everyone stayed as safe as possible. With the lifting of restrictions, but still cognisant of the last effects of the pandemic, we continue to engage with our partners in new ways, reflect on our internal processes, and adapt to new ways of working which look set to continue as we adapt to hybrid working. As we developed new ways of working, a hybrid working environment and opportunities

to work with staff and develop new methods of supporting learning and creating safe spaces for those learning the language to give it a go.

- 7 The Welsh Language Standards continue to provide Audit Wales with a framework within which to work and work towards Welsh Government's aspiration of delivering bilingual public services and reaching a million Welsh speakers by 2050 as per the Cymraeg 2050 Strategy.
- 8 Compliance arrangements relating to the Standards are published on the website, and a Welsh Language Officer works within Audit Wales and is responsible for the day-to-day management of the standards and promoting the Welsh language internally. The Director of Corporate Services is responsible for the strategic overview and corporate governance matters relating to the Welsh language.
- 9 Audit Wales continues to invest in the Welsh language, both to support internal compliance with standards, workforce development and to facilitate partnership and client relationships. This annual report provides updates on positive progress made this year, as well as identifying areas for continued development.

Review of financial year – 2022/23

- 10 As we develop new ways of working and adapt to hybrid methods of delivering audit services and appropriate corporate support, we also look at different ways we comply with Welsh language legislation and how we can go beyond to increase the visibility and use of the language across Audit Wales.
- 11 A limited range of activities were undertaken during the first half of 2022/23 due to the on-going situation with COVID and the vacant Welsh Language Officer post; however, as restrictions lifter and a Welsh Language Officer was appointed, Audit Wales undertook business as usual activities in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards and started the process of updating the Welsh Language Strategy,
- 12 The updated Welsh Language Strategy sets out our current position, our ambitions, and proposed actions to realise those ambitions to be a bilingual organisation and go and beyond the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. Delivery of the Strategy, as previously noted, will be through an Implementation Group consisting of key staff member responsible for delivering the Outcomes and Measures in the updated Welsh Language Strategy.

Welsh Language Awareness training

- 13 The continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and introduction of hybrid working arrangements have continued to bring changes in the ways we work, delivery of training and staff-networking, but we have maintained our

commitment to provide a bilingual service throughout and continue to look at new ways of working.

- 14 Welsh language awareness training was delivered via virtual sessions to new starters, and the process of updating the content and method of delivery has been agreed. The Communications Team is in the process of creating two short videos that will be delivered across a variety of platforms, meetings, and seminars to all staff. One video will look at the history and culture of the Welsh language whilst the second will look at the history of Welsh language legislation and what this means for staff.
- 15 New starters will be captured via the on-boarding process and the existing establishment will be covered by a variety of meetings

Communicating standards with staff

- 16 Communicating the requirements of the standards to staff is important, it ensures an understanding of their responsibilities under the standards, for example when answering external phone calls or correspondence.
- 17 It is also important to the success of the Welsh language strategy and workforce development that they understand the Welsh-language provision available to them – including learning opportunities, technology, and HR material.
 - a. New starters receive a dedicated induction session where they are introduced to the standards in relation to their work and employment with us. Non-Welsh speaking new starters are also required to complete the National Centre for Learning Welsh's Welcome online course where they are taught some basic Welsh for the workplace and Welsh-language awareness.
 - b. Staff are provided with numerous tools and guidance on the standards that impact on the way they work. This includes templates for email signatures, "out of office" message and a comprehensive list of job titles.
 - c. A suite of Welsh-language technologies is also available for staff upon request that includes 'Cysill' and 'Cysgeir', Welsh Language Microsoft Office spell check and 'To Bach.' We have recently changed how we provide 'Cysill' and 'Cysgeir' to staff by actively including it in the build of new or updated laptops for all staff regardless of language requirements.

Internal Policy

- 18 Our policy on using the Welsh language internally outlines the relevant standards that have an impact on our staff's day-to-day responsibilities.
- 19 These include answering telephone calls and replying to correspondence, respecting the language preferences of our audited bodies and members of the public, and the considerations for displaying posters and signage around our offices. We have also added that any all-staff emails must be bilingual with the Welsh positioned so that it is likely to be read first.
- 20 The policy also outlines the rights staff have under the standards such as the availability of Welsh-language technologies, their access to Welsh language training, and training through the medium of Welsh. It also highlights their rights to have HR documents, as well as disciplinary and grievance meetings, in Welsh.

Welsh Language Strategy

- 21 The updated Welsh Language Strategy 2023 – 2027 has been approved and supported through a variety of internal governance process and management structures within Audit Wales.
- 22 Whilst there is no requirement on Audit Wales to develop a Welsh Language Strategy under the standards, it is felt this is an effective way to demonstrate our commitment, and ensure we go further than just complying.
- 23 A Welsh Language Strategy Implementation Group has been established to help drive the Welsh language forward and to ensure delivery of an implementation plan. The group is representative of the organisation and inclusive of key decision makers who can inform decisions; meeting on a regular basis the group will review the delivery of outcomes and measures from the Strategy.
- 24 The Standards provide a baseline and framework and the Strategy drives performance and commitment beyond that to strengthen compliance. It provides a focus and drive for the organisation to discharge its duties and responsibilities, with several drivers and priorities inform the Strategy and delivery of Welsh language priorities to clients, stakeholders, and staff; covering four key areas of development – recruitment; training; opportunities; and knowledge.
- 25 A significant factor in the delivery of the Strategy will be the number of, and levels of Welsh speakers across the organisation; the lack of increase of Welsh speakers over the past few years, and where in the organisation our Welsh speakers are working to deliver and meet our client requirements.
- 26 Audit Wales continued to look at alternative methods of training and opportunities to up-skill staff, however, this was impacted and restricted by the ongoing COVID restrictions and working from home directive.

Recruitment

- 27 Within our apprentice and graduate recruitment campaigns, we have a commitment that at least 20% of our posts will be Welsh essential. With all other recruitment, any campaigns that are recruiting for 3 or more positions will have at least 20% of vacancies being Welsh essential.
- 28 These are the minimum requirements for these recruitments and are still subject to Welsh language skills assessments which can increase the requirements.

Welsh Language Skills and training

- 29 The Welsh-language skills of our staff are self-evaluated and recorded on the Employee Self-Service portal. Towards the end of each financial year, we encourage all staff to update and record their Welsh language skills and to match themselves against the Welsh Language Skills Matrix, which is aligned to the ALTE Framework.
- 30 Welsh-language skills of staff at Audit Wales as at end of 2022-23 financial year are as follows:

Table 2: Welsh-language skills of all Audit Wales staff

	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
0 – Awareness	114	122	119	122
1 – Entry	14	8	8	10
2 – Foundation	7	3	4	3
3 – Intermediate	6	7	8	8
4 – Advanced	8	12	2	6
5 – Proficiency	20	16	23	20
Total	169	168	164	169

- 31 We also show the number of Welsh language skills broken down in the organisation by audit services and corporate services in **Tables 3 and 4 respectively**.

Table 3: Welsh-language skills of Audit Wales staff within our audit services

	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
0 – Awareness	95	100	97	101
1 – Entry	11	7	6	7
2 – Foundation	4	1	3	3

3 – Intermediate	5	6	7	7
4 – Advanced	8	12	2	6
5 – Proficiency	18	14	21	18
Total	141	140	136	142

Table 4: Welsh-language skills of Audit Wales staff within our corporate services

	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
0 – Awareness	19	22	22	21
1 – Entry	3	1	2	3
2 – Foundation	3	2	1	0
3 – Intermediate	1	1	1	1
4 – Advanced	0	0	0	0
5 – Proficiency	2	2	2	2
Total	28	28	28	27

Training

Welsh language skills training

32 During 2022-23, staff took part in the courses as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Welsh-language training

Course	Delegates	Completed	In progress
Work Welsh Online 'Croeso' courses Part 1	16	8	8
Work Welsh Online 'Croeso' courses Rhan 2	9	4	5

Course	Delegates	Completed	In progress
Work Welsh Online 'Gwella' course Rhan 1	5	3	2
Work Welsh Online 'Gwella' course Rhan 2	3	1	2

Training through the medium of Welsh

- 33 Two courses were offered bilingually during 2022 –23, an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) webinar and Health and Safety at Work e-learning. ED&I training involved staff being able to choose between a series of English or Welsh medium sessions. The H&S training was provided automatically in either Welsh or English according to language preference.
- 34 The new Welsh Language Officer has helped identify and facilitate training providers to update the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training inclusive of a Welsh medium option.

Policy Making

- 35 We have completed Welsh-language impact assessments in relation to 7 policies and policy decisions from 1st April 2022- 31st March 2023. These impact assessments are required for all new and reviewed policies to ensure a positive effect on opportunities to use Welsh and to ensure the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.

Table 6: Policies and policy decisions

Policy
Business Services restructure
Management of Industrial Action Policy

Inflo – Collaborate policy/practice

Our Future Workplaces Project – Design Phase

Recruitment and Selection Policy

Health and Safety Training – online training

Disability Leave Policy

Complaints

36 We did not receive any complaints during 2022-23.

Looking forward

37 The appointment of a Welsh Language Officer during 2022/2023 will provide the opportunity to develop and build on the existing foundation and progress the Welsh language agenda within Audit Wales.

38 It is important to look forward and consider what might be achieved and will look to set challenging next steps and targets that will drive the short-term, medium term and long-term agenda at Audit Wales.

39 This will include but not be limited to:

- Develop and implement a Welsh Language Strategy Development plan to
 - Instigate a Welsh Language Strategy Group
 - Review training provision and consult with staff on low uptake/interest
 - Develop and embed a Welsh Language Skill Policy across HR functions to encourage the use of the language
 - Develop a range of safe space for learners to use & develop their skills
- Work with colleagues in the Good Practice Team to discuss collaborative opportunities with the Welsh Language Commissioner's office
- Training delivery to support staff audit through the medium of Welsh
- Develop and deliver Equality and Diversity training through the medium of Welsh as and when required.
- Work with colleagues in the Good Practice Team to develop and deliver events cognisant of the Welsh language.



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