



CYNGOR LLYFRAU CYMRU
BOOKS COUNCIL of WALES

Annual Report

Compliance with Welsh Language Standards 2024/25

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1 Introduction

The Books Council of Wales was established in 1961. It is a national body that has charity status and is financed directly from the Welsh Government in order to provide a service for publishers, authors and readers in Wales.

As a key body in the field of books, it offers services and information to everyone involved in the field. This entails providing individual services to publishing (in the fields of editing, design, marketing and distribution) with the aim of improving production standards and publishing books in Welsh and English. The Council also distributes grants to support the publication of books and magazines in Welsh and English.

The Books Council is located in Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, on two sites: Castell Brychan and the Glanyrafon Business Park on the outskirts of the town. The Council had 45 members of staff in March 2024. Many of the staff, especially management and administrative staff, choose a hybrid pattern of sharing their working week between home and office. 11 of the 45 are contracted to work from home. The staff at the Distribution Centre are more tied to manual work at the Centre.

Due to organisation's nature and purpose, the great majority of the staff must be able to communicate confidently – orally and in writing – through the medium of both Welsh and English. Currently, all members of staff speak Welsh. The Welsh language plays a prominent part in the administration, governance and activities of the Council. Four members of staff are new speakers who have learnt Welsh in the past and who continue to receive support if and when it is needed.

A survey of staff was conducted in March 2025 and produced the following results:

March 2025 Results	Total
Reading Welsh	
Reading simple Welsh	4
Read with a Dictionary	2
Confident to read all types of Welsh	37
Total	43
Speaking Welsh	
Not confident enough to speak Welsh	0
A little nervous when speaking Welsh	1
Happy in most situations	5
Confident to speak at any time	37
Total	43

Understand Welsh	
Understand simple Welsh	1
Understanding Welsh when chatting socially	40
Understand Welsh to conduct conversations at work	42
Writing Welsh	
Writing simple Welsh	4
Writing in Welsh to answer a simple email	2
Writing in Welsh but someone to ensure correct	6
Writing correct Welsh for all purposes	31
Total	43*
* 1 person would like help to improve the 4 elements	

Support is offered as needed to those members who need to improve or develop their Welsh-language skills.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 sets out a legal framework that places a duty on the Books Council to comply with standards in relation to the Welsh language. A standard explains how organisations are expected to use Welsh in different situations. The Council adopted its Welsh Language Scheme in 2011.

The duties that derive from the standards mean that the Books Council should not treat the Welsh language less favourably than English. The aims of the standards are:

- to make it clear to organisations what their duties are in the context of the Welsh language;
- to make it clearer to Welsh speakers' which services they can expect to receive in Welsh;
- to ensure more consistency as regards services in Welsh, and to improve their quality.

The Books Council received a compliance notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner under Part 4 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 on 25 July 2016. This notice sets out the specific standards with which the Books Council is required to comply, and on 25 January 2017 a total of 150 standards became operational.

The Books Council is fully committed to the Welsh language and already complies with a significant number of the standards set by the implementation of its Language Scheme; indeed, this Scheme goes further than the Welsh Language Standards in several fields.

The Books Council is required to publish an annual report by 30 September, as stated in the Welsh Language Standards (152, 158, 164). This report focuses on the year between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024.

No complaints were received regarding the Books Council's compliance with the Standards during the year in question.

2 Section 2: Compliance with Service Delivery Standards (Standards 1–83)

2.1 Correspondence (Standards 1–7)

Staff respond to correspondence from members of the public in the language of the original letter or e-mail.

When opening correspondence with members of the public, it is done through the individual's preferred language if that is known. Otherwise, the correspondence is sent in both languages, and the individual is asked for their preferred language when corresponding with us. When this information comes to hand staff contact the person/persons in their preferred language from thereon. If correspondence is received in a particular language from the person with whom the staff are communicating, but the person has not noted their preferred language, staff will correspond with the individual in that particular language from thereon. Both Welsh and English copies of all correspondence are signed. Any work that needs to be translated is sent to the Chief Executive's Secretary.

2.2 Telephone calls (Standards 8–10, 18, 20–21)

There is no reception anymore and external phone calls are cascaded to a number of staff who always answer with a bilingual greeting:

"Cyngor Llyfrau Cymru / Books Council of Wales".

All members of staff are encouraged to set a bilingual recorded message on their phone's answering machine, with Welsh before English. If no message is set, the call is directed to the Book Council's voicemail system, which has Welsh before English. We do not have an automated phone system.

2.3 Telephone services (Standards 12–17, 22)

The Books Council operates in accordance with these Standards:

A Welsh service is always available on the Books Council's main telephone number. We do not have an automated telephone system.

2.4 Meetings (Standards 23, 25, 25A, 25D)

The Books Council operates in accordance with these Standards. Everyone attending a meeting held by the Books Council can use their preferred language in the meeting. A simultaneous translation service is used for meetings where not all the attendees are able to speak Welsh.

2.5 Public events (Standards 26–32)

Everyone attending a meeting held by the Books Council can use their preferred language in the meeting. Invitations to every meeting are sent bilingually. A simultaneous translation service is available at every meeting for all who wish to avail themselves of it. Most sub-committee and Board meetings are hybrid (Zoom or Teams) and the translation software is used regularly. All written material for meetings that are open to the public, together with publicity materials for the event, are available bilingually.

2.6 Advertising (Standards 33–34)

All advertising materials produced by the Books Council are bilingual. Some publicity materials to promote Welsh books are produced in Welsh only, and publicity materials targeted towards specific audiences are produced in accordance with the language of the books in question.

2.7 Producing documents for the public (Standards 36, 44–47)

Documents for use by the public are available either as separate Welsh and English versions, or bilingually. English versions state clearly that the documents are also available in Welsh.

2.8 The Books Council's Website (Standards 48, 51–52)

The website design was updated during 2024/25 and the work will be completed by Summer 2025. The website continues to be fully bilingual, with the text on every page being available in Welsh, and every Welsh page on the website is fully operational. The English pages include a direct link on the top of the page to the corresponding Welsh page. Every document produced by the Books Council, and published on the website, is available in Welsh. The interface of every page, and the menus on every page, are available in Welsh.

The Books Council operated in accordance with these Standards before the date in which they came into force.

2.9 Apps and Social Media (Standards 53–55)

The Books Council's social media accounts are bilingual. The main account on Facebook is <https://www.facebook.com/llyfrau.books> – and while our content is always available in both languages, we cannot always ensure that every piece of content shared is bilingual, as it sometimes refers to either an English-language or Welsh-language book (and therefore the content relates to the language of the book). The Council decided to reduce its presence on X during this year, and very little is published there now. In the case of Instagram, the Welsh and English accounts are separate, but with Facebook, there is one bilingual account. The content is targeted at different audiences and is not necessarily a direct translation from one language to the other, as the main intention is to publish relevant content in the language related to the book or medium being promoted.

2.10 Signage (Standards 57–59, 137–139)

The Books Council operates in accordance with these standards.

Signs that are in Welsh only are placed to the left of the corresponding English sign. Where both Welsh and English text appears on the same sign, the Welsh text is placed above the English version.

2.11 Reception (Standards 60, 63–64)

As the Books Council does not provide services directly to the general public, very few visitors visit the building. There is no permanent presence in the reception area but rather a

team of staff answer their phones from their desks and to communicate with visitors using a camera and intercom. The service is fully bilingual. All visitors are greeted in their own language, if it is known. Otherwise, they are greeted bilingually.

Every member of staff who undertake these duties are fluent Welsh speakers, and they provide a service in Welsh. The Books Council operated in accordance with these Standards before the date in which they came into force.

2.12 Notices (Standards 65–66)

Any notices published or displayed by the Books Council are bilingual, with the Welsh version placed either above the English version or to the left of it. If any notices are published on the website, the Welsh and English versions are separate. Where the versions are separate, the content is the same in both languages.

2.13 Tenders (Standards 72–74, 76)

Three tenders were advertised during 2024/25, and everyone noted that it was possible to respond to the tender in Welsh. One was for an English-language magazine, one application was received, in English. Another tender was advertised to publish three wellbeing books in Welsh, four replies were received, 2 in Welsh and 2 in English. One other tender was advertised in March for some translation work, but the closing date was in April.

2.14 Services in Welsh (Standards 77–78)

The Books Council already operates in accordance with these standards.

All the Books Council's services are available through the medium of Welsh and English. Information about the services can be seen on the Books Council's website, with every page available in both languages. All the material giving publicity to the Books Council's services is bilingual. Neither this material, nor the website, refer to the services that are available in one language or the other, as they are all available in both languages.

2.15 The Books Council's Corporate Identity (Standard 79)

The Council's official name is 'Cyngor Llyfrau Cymru/Books Council of Wales'. This has been clearly shown on every item of the Books Council's standard office material, whether for internal or public use. Every item of information on these items is bilingual, with the Welsh above the English each time.

The Book Council logo is used bilingually. Whenever and wherever it is used, in Wales and beyond, the bilingual logo must be used.



2.16 Education (Standard 80)

The Books Council does not provide education courses, in the sense that a course means a series of teaching sessions. Some workshops are provided for staff of the publishing houses supported by the Books Council, but these are not education courses that are open to the public.

2.17 Announcements over the public address system (Standards 83, 140)

The Books Council does not have a public address system.

3 Compliance with Policy-making Standards (Standards 84–89, 91–93, 144)

3.1 Drawing Up Policies (Standards 84–89, 91–93, 144)

The Books Council already operates in accordance with these standards.

The Welsh language is a responsibility for every member of the Books Council staff, and the enthusiasm for considering the language when drawing up policies occurs perfectly naturally.

No complaints were received regarding the Books Council's compliance with the policy-making standards with which it had a duty to comply.

4 Compliance with Operational Standards

4.1 Policy on using Welsh in-house (Standard 94)

The Books Council operates in accordance with these standards.

4.2 Adnoddau Dynol

The Council receives their Human Resources support from Ceredigion County Council who can provide the necessary support in Welsh.

4.3 Employees' Rights (Standards 95–100)

The Books Council operates in accordance with these standards.

4.4 Publication of Policies (Standards 101–107)

The Books Council operates in accordance with these standards.

4.5 Complaints (Standards 108–109, 111)

The Books Council operates in accordance with these standards.

4.6 Discipline (Standards 112–113, 115)

The Books Council operates in accordance with these standards.

4.7 Developing Skills in Welsh / Training (Standards 123–129, 145–146)

The Books Council operates in accordance with these standards.

16 training sessions were held with 6 attending each session on average. All sessions were held in Welsh if that was possible, some general welfare and some more specialized on the use of social media and computer systems. However, 8 technical sessions were held on policy areas and detailed practice, from using a forklift to developments in AI, through the medium of English because the expertise was not available in Welsh.

The Council provides all members of staff with peer support or training as needed to continue to learn, develop or improve their Welsh-language skills.

4.8 New Posts / Vacant posts (Standards 132–134, 136, 147, 148)

The Book Council operates in accordance with these Standards, with the exception of Standard 134. Five vacancies were filled during this period and Welsh speakers were appointed to all of them.

The interview is usually conducted in Welsh and one question is asked in English (depending on the position).

No complaint was received regarding the Book Council's compliance with the operating standards it was under a duty to comply with.

4.9 Computer software (Standard 116)

So that staff can check their Welsh, spelling and grammar checking software has been installed in the Office package of every computer in the Book Council.

4.10 The Books Council intranet (Standards 117, 120–122)

The Books Council operates in accordance with most of these Standards.

There is no intranet as such but we use a system of sharing information through Sharepoint. The elements that can be controlled through Microsoft settings are in Welsh and the information shared is available in Welsh and English. We use Bright HR to record leave.

4.11 E-mail (Standards 130–131)

The Book Council provides a standard signature template that enables staff to include a Welsh version of their contact details in e-mail messages and states that reporters are welcome to contact in Welsh or English.

4.12 Keeping a record of complying with the Welsh Language Standards (Standards 141–143)

No complaints had been received. The Books Council acts in accordance with these Standards.

5 Monitoring

It is the responsibility of the Management Team to ensure compliance with the standards within their own departments, and this procedure is regularly reviewed. Other services within the Books Council provide resources in order to ensure that the Books Council fully delivers the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards, namely the Sales and Information Team (which is mainly responsible for the content on the Gwales website), and the Communication, Marketing and Design Department which is responsible for the website in general.

6 Supplementary Standards (Standards 149–168)

The Books Council operates in accordance with these Standards. The Books Council's Compliance Notice was published on our website. The Complaints Policy was published on the Books Council's website, and complaints regarding the Books Council's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards are dealt with in the same way as other complaints.

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