



The Open University
Y Brifysgol Agored

The Open University

Welsh Language Scheme

Prepared under the Welsh Language Act 1993

The Open University Welsh Language Scheme received the approval of the Welsh Language Board under section 14(1) of the Act on 10 April 2003. The Scheme has been audited and revised, and this is its successor. The present scheme received full approval of the Welsh Language Board on 31 March 2010.

The Open University has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business in Wales, it will treat the English and Welsh languages on a basis of equality. This scheme sets out how The Open University will give effect to that principle when providing services to the public in Wales. Unless noted otherwise, all commitments noted in this Scheme will be implemented from date of approval.

This publication is also available online at

www.open.ac.uk/welsh-language-scheme

and

www.open.ac.uk/cynllun-iaith-gymraeg

or can be obtained on request from The Open University in Wales, 18 Custom House St, Cardiff CF10 1AP.

The Open University is incorporated by Royal Charter (RC 000391), an exempt charity in England & Wales and a charity registered in Scotland (SC 038302).

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Introduction

- 1.1 The Open University was granted its Charter in 1969 and admitted its first students in 1971. It is the largest university in the UK, with over 200,000 currently active students. The Open University represents 26 per cent of all part-time HE students in HE institutions in the UK.
- 1.2 The Open University offers more than 500 undergraduate and postgraduate courses in arts, business and management, education, health and social care, law, mathematics and computing, modern languages, science, social sciences and technology. Open University courses are designed for students studying in their homes or workplaces, in their own time, anywhere in the UK, Ireland, throughout Europe and often further afield. Courses are presented in the English language and use a range of teaching media – specially produced textbooks, audio and video material, websites, computer software and home experiment kits. Personal contact and support comes through locally-based tutors, a network of over 500 tutorial venues in the UK and overseas, and residential schools.
- 1.3 Undergraduate courses are open to all, regardless of educational qualifications. The Open University is committed to offering disabled students, and anyone who has a specific learning difficulty, full access to all its courses and the support and facilities they need in order to participate, as far as possible, in every aspect of University life. Currently more than 9000 of its students have a disability or some form of additional requirement.
- 1.4 The University is funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales in respect of students resident in Wales.
- 1.5 The Open University has thirteen Centres throughout the UK. The Open University in Wales is located at 18 Custom House St, Cardiff CF10 1AP. This University Centre in Cardiff is responsible for all matters connected with the University's students in Wales, about 6000 currently. In addition, the University also employs approximately 350 part-time associate lecturers in Wales who provide local tuition and study support for students. Course development and production is based at the University's headquarters in Milton Keynes.
- 1.6 The Director Wales is responsible for the delivery of core services to students and prospective students throughout Wales. These services include the educational enquiry and advisory services for students and the general public, the registration of students, the appointment and monitoring of the associate lecturers, the organisation of the tutorial programme, and the promotion of the image and interests of The Open University in Wales.
- 1.7 The various measures contained within the Welsh Language Scheme relate to the University's Centre in Cardiff and to our offices throughout the UK when providing a service to the public in Wales.
- 1.8 This Scheme sets out the standard of service to be provided and the measures by which the University delivers those services to the public in Wales.

Service planning and delivery

New policies and initiatives

- 2.1 Any new policies and initiatives will take into consideration the measures of The Open University's Welsh Language Scheme when they are being formulated so that they are complementary (Target date: end of 2012). All those officers and committees involved with formulating University policy and practice have been issued with full details of the provisions contained in the Scheme. They are aware of the need to ensure that any new policies or initiatives are in accordance with the Scheme and support its principles.
- 2.2 A clause emphasising the need to follow the Welsh Language Scheme will be included in the terms of reference for new projects and programmes being undertaken by the University which impact upon the general public in Wales, to ensure compliance with the Scheme.

Bilingual services

- 2.3 The University provides a bilingual service at the University's Centre in Cardiff. Details of the provision are set out under the appropriate sections below.
- 2.4 The delivery of the service to the public is enhanced by the promotion of a bilingual culture within the University's Centre in Cardiff. Staff will continue to be encouraged to use Welsh within the workplace.
- 2.5 Welsh-speaking customer advisers who can advise on all aspects of study with the University are available at the University's Centre in Cardiff.

Educational provision

- 2.6 The University's multiple media course material is produced and delivered in English. Consequently, and consistent with UK Quality Assurance frameworks in Higher Education, most teaching, assessment and examination is conducted through the medium of English. This is made clear in all our prospectuses and publicity material.
- 2.7 The University is a full and active member of the Welsh Medium Higher Education Sector Group (and various sub-groups of the WMHESG). As such, it supports positively and constructively activities on a sectoral basis which widen and enhance the overall opportunities to study at higher education level through the medium of Welsh basis, recognising that each HEI will contribute to this in different ways and at different levels based upon their respective strengths and capabilities.
- 2.8 In appointing associate lecturers (the part-time tutors who provide the local academic and study support to students), the Director Wales and her/his staff need to seek to recruit subject specialists who have an understanding of the needs of distance learners and are fluent English speakers.
- 2.9 The University is, however, committed to increase the proportion of Welsh-speaking associate lecturers in its workforce and will review its recruitment policy in the light of the demand for Welsh language provision obtained through the collection and analysis of data on student linguistic preference. This will be reviewed on an annual basis and included in the Annual Report to the Welsh Language Board. The demand for Welsh language materials and Welsh medium course provision will also be reviewed and monitored.

- 2.10 A database of Welsh-speaking members of staff in Wales, including associate lecturers, is maintained and regularly updated. The University is also in the process of developing a database of Welsh speaking staff in all offices. This data is available to all staff in the University's Centre in Cardiff and provides an overview of the linguistic skills of associate lecturers. The University will develop a Linguistic Skills Strategy (Target date: end of 2012) to enable the University to provide appropriate support for the students who indicate they have a preference for receiving academic and other support in the Welsh language.
- 2.11 Tutorials, provided by associate lecturers, are normally conducted in English. However, the use of Welsh is encouraged where this is both the preference of the entire student group and where the associate lecturer has appropriate skills. Associate lecturers also provide learning support via the telephone and other channels of communication and again, where this is the student preference and within the capability of the associate lecturer, the use of Welsh is encouraged. Where a student's own tutor is unable to provide academic support in Welsh, supplementary telephone support from an alternative associate lecturer with Welsh language skills will be considered.
- 2.12 The Open University offers Welsh medium assessment, (including written assignments, examinations, projects and theses in all subject areas) to its students and provides assessment in accordance with the student's linguistic preference. Every registered student is sent a letter asking if they are a Welsh speaker and prefer to be assessed in Welsh or if they are a Welsh speaker but prefer to submit work through the medium of English. The University establishes the need for Welsh medium assessment as part of its registration processes. The University will publish guidelines for all staff and students regarding Welsh language assessment (Target date: April 2010).
- 2.13 Where a qualified tutor is available, students will then be allocated to a tutor who is able to assess the work in Welsh. At present, the Open University does not have enough bilingual tutors and/or members of full-time academic staff who are able to assess through the medium of Welsh. Where a need for Welsh medium assessment has been identified and no appropriate Welsh speaking tutor/assessor is available, the written assessment will be translated into English. This translation will be conducted by 'subject sensitive' qualified translators. A database of these specialist translators will be held and regularly updated (Target date: end of 2012).
- 2.14 The University collects data on the linguistic preferences of students during the registration process. This data is used to offer students academic and other support in the Welsh language and enable the University to assess the demand to develop bilingual educational provision further.
- 2.15 With the agreement of the employer, work-based activities can be conducted in Welsh.
- 2.16 Appropriate periods of study undertaken in the Welsh language under the auspices of other educational institutions may be counted towards the University's qualifications under its well established credit-transfer arrangements. The credits or 'CATS' points awarded from such courses and modules may be counted towards Open University qualifications.

- 2.17 In order to support the promotion of a bilingual culture in Wales, the University will develop supplementary material on Welsh language awareness, in the form of a resource pack, which will be issued to our students in Wales who are undertaking appropriate vocational studies. The University will develop a Welsh Language awareness pack for associate lecturers teaching on social work degree courses (Target date: end of 2009). Also the University will draft further supplementary materials for vocational students and associate lecturers (Target date: end of 2011) and will publish and distribute these materials (Target date: end of 2012).

Advisory services

- 2.18 A range of advisory and study support services provided for students and prospective students at the University's Centre in Cardiff is available in both English and Welsh. This support may be provided by letter, email, telephone or through a personal visit.

Marketing the service

- 2.19 The University uses its normal channels of communication with students and prospective students to publicise and market its services, including Welsh-medium options, as appropriate. These channels include publicity mailings, invitations to publicity events such as Open Events, newspaper advertising, information in its prospectuses and information on its website. All publicity and promotional material issued by the University's Centre in Cardiff are bilingual in format, both languages being equal in terms of size, quality, legibility and prominence.
- 2.20 All students in Wales receive a letter at registration about their language preference. This letter includes information about the services the University offers in Welsh and asks students if they wish to be assessed through the medium of Welsh.

Standards of quality

- 2.21 Heads of Units and line managers are responsible for implementing aspects of the Scheme relevant to their work and, ensuring that the standard of delivery of services is equal in both languages.

Dealing with the Welsh-speaking public

Written communication

- 3.1 Written and email communication to any offices of the University are welcome both in English and in Welsh. All letters and emails received in Welsh receive a reply in Welsh within the same timescale for correspondence in English.
- 3.2 An electronic course reservation form is available in Welsh which will enable prospective students, who prefer to communicate with the University in the Welsh language, the opportunity to register their intention of studying with the University.

Telephone communication

- 3.3 Telephone calls to the University's Centre in Cardiff are welcomed in both English and Welsh. The necessary training will be provided to non-Welsh speaking front-line staff to enable them to deal professionally with callers preferring to use the Welsh language, including referral to more able Welsh-speaking members of staff if appropriate (Target date: end of 2009).
- 3.4 Telephone calls received in Milton Keynes or other locations are responded to in English. If a caller then wishes to conduct his or her business through the medium of Welsh, they are directed to a Welsh-speaking member of staff in the appropriate department if that is possible, or to a Welsh-speaking member of staff at the University's Centre in Cardiff. Should no Welsh-speaking member of staff be available, the caller will be asked for appropriate details, and a Welsh-speaking member of staff will call them back as soon as possible.
- 3.5 All externally advertised telephone numbers from the University's Centre in Cardiff have bilingual answer phone messages, e.g. for out-of-hours callers.

Face-to-face communication

- 3.6 Visitors to the University's Centre in Cardiff are greeted by a bilingual receptionist.
- 3.7 Customer advisers in the University's Centre in Cardiff welcome enquiries in both English and Welsh.
- 3.8 Welsh-speaking members of staff are available at publicity events, such as annual Open Events and will seek to conduct these meetings in Welsh, according to the preferences of students and prospective students. The Welsh speaking service is noted in advertisements for events.

The organisation's public face

Corporate identity

- 4.1 The corporate identity of The Open University in Wales is fully bilingual. Wherever the University's name and all other standard information is used in Wales, including letterheads, compliment slips, business cards, fax papers, identification badges and buildings, this information is displayed in a bilingual format, both languages being equal in terms of size, quality, legibility and prominence. References to email, telephone numbers and addresses are in English and Welsh.

Signs

- 4.2 All external and internal signs put up by The Open University in Wales, or its agents, are bilingual, both languages being equal in terms of size, quality, legibility and prominence.
- 4.3 Within the University's Centre in Cardiff notices to give the public directions, warn of hazards, to instruct, to request a code of behaviour, and to prohibit, are bilingual, both languages being equal in terms of size, quality, legibility and prominence.

Publishing and printed material directed at the public in Wales

- 4.4 All of the University's prospectuses contain appropriate information in Welsh including the services the University is able to provide for those preferring to use the Welsh language.
- 4.5 All other publications that list University Centre addresses indicate that telephone calls to the University's Centre in Cardiff can be handled in either English or Welsh.
- 4.6 Invitations to the annual programme of Open Events and other promotion and marketing events in Wales are bilingual with both languages being equal in terms of size, quality, legibility and prominence.

Websites

- 4.7 An increasing proportion of enquiries to the University originate from the internet. There is a substantial University website carrying detail of all the University's courses, programmes and qualifications along with information to enable prospective students to make appropriate decisions on their study choices.
- 4.8 The Open University in Wales website, at www.open.ac.uk/wales, is bilingual and a 'Cymraeg' link from the main page of The Open University's website links directly to the home page of the OU in Wales Welsh website. The website is managed and updated within the University's Centre in Wales. The Open University in Wales website and its content is monitored by the Student Services Manager (Welsh Language) to ensure both languages are presented equally.
- 4.9 The University will look at translating further web content on its main website, at www.open.ac.uk, It will track hits on the website to prioritise pages for translation (Target date: end of 2010) and will investigate the costs associated with having dual language versions of these web pages (Target date: end of 2011). The amount of Welsh language content on our main website will be increased (Target date: end of 2012).
- 4.10 The University has an online resource called *OpenLearn* at www.openlearn.open.ac.uk. The University will aim to put the Study Skills toolkits in Welsh onto this resource (Target date: end of 2010). The University will also investigate further selected elements of *OpenLearn* content to translate (Target date: end of 2010).

Press notices

- 4.11 All press releases published by The Open University in Wales are bilingual.

Advertising and publicity activities

- 4.12 Advertisements placed in Welsh media are bilingual, both languages being equal in terms of size, quality, legibility and prominence.
- 4.13 All publicity and marketing material intended for use in Wales is bilingual, both languages being equal in terms of size, quality, legibility and prominence.

Official notices, public notices and staff recruitment advertising

- 4.14 All job descriptions and advertisements are wholly bilingual on our website. All recruitment advertisements in the Welsh press will also be bilingual, both languages being equal in terms of size, quality, legibility and prominence. Where a post specifies a Welsh speaker as an essential requirement, recruitment advertisements in all press publications will be bilingual, both languages being equal in terms of size, quality, legibility and prominence.
- 4.15 The University's annual degree ceremony in Cardiff includes announcements in Welsh.

Implementing and monitoring the Scheme

Learning Welsh

- 5.1 There are only a small number of Welsh-speaking staff in the Open University. Most of these are located in the University's Centre in Cardiff, with a few Welsh speakers at the University headquarters in Milton Keynes. The identity of Welsh speakers will be made known within the organisation, in order to facilitate some interdepartmental liaison. A list of Welsh speaking staff will be published on the staff intranet (Target date: end of 2009). Given the specialist nature of academic faculties, the availability of Welsh speakers here is even more restricted. However, academic unit staff communicate less often with the general public. Any members of staff who wish to learn Welsh will be encouraged.
- 5.2 Since autumn 2008, The Open University has run a Welsh language beginners' course. Members of staff across the University will be encouraged to enrol on this course. The University aims to encourage 5 members of staff in Wales to enrol on this course (Target date: end of 2012).
- 5.3 Language training continues to play an important part in increasing the numbers of staff who are able to work confidently in Welsh, and staff at the University's Centre in Cardiff are offered opportunities to take appropriate courses. Within the University's Centre in Cardiff all new staff, as part of their induction, and existing staff, through their annual appraisal, are encouraged to develop Welsh language skills – from basic skills to advanced level.
- 5.4 Appropriate resources will be made available by the University to meet any identified training needs. Initially training and resources will be prioritised for staff based in the University's Centre in Cardiff who deal directly with members of the public on a front-line basis.
- 5.5 Welsh language learning resources are available to University staff.
- 5.6 The University is committed to the professional development of part-time associate lecturers, and would encourage the use of Welsh language skills in their work for the University. Associate lecturers can use their study fee waiver provided by the University to study our Welsh Language course, *Croeso* and will be encouraged to do so.
- 5.7 Following an audit of Welsh language skills among members of staff, the University holds and regularly updates a database containing information about the Welsh language skills of staff. This is held in accordance with Data Protection legislation.

- 5.8 Members of staff in the University's Centre in Cardiff may use English or Welsh in their work. There is particular encouragement to use Welsh orally, and written Welsh where this is practical, especially for those who are learning the language.

Vocational training

- 5.9 Consideration is given to the provision of vocational training for staff through the medium of Welsh where the need is identified.

Recruitment

- 5.10 Before a vacant post is advertised in the University's Centre in Cardiff, the Director Wales, the relevant line manager and the Assistant Director (Planning & Resources) assess the merits of appointing a Welsh speaker to the post. The Linguistic Skills Strategy being developed by the University will inform these recruitment decisions (See 2.10).
- 5.11 An up-to-date list of posts for which the ability to speak Welsh is essential or desirable is maintained and reviewed.
- 5.12 A statement is included in all invitations to attend interviews for posts where Welsh is essential to say that the interview can be conducted using Welsh and English. Where Welsh is an essential qualification for the post, the interview panel tests the candidates' proficiency in both oral and written Welsh.

Administrative arrangements

- 5.13 This Scheme was initially developed by a small group with representation from relevant units within the University and chaired by the University Secretary. It has subsequently been subject to wide internal consultation and the comments received have been taken into account in this final version.
- 5.14 The Scheme has the full endorsement of The Open University's Council, as have the measures put in place to monitor its success and progress as set out in this section.
- 5.15 A copy of the Scheme has been issued to each member of staff in Wales, to all Heads of Units across the University and to the secretaries of all the University's formal committees. The Scheme is also available to all staff via our intranet.
- 5.16 Institutions hosting Open University tutorial venues or residential schools within Wales receive a copy of the Scheme.

Monitoring

- 5.17 The Vice-Chancellor is responsible for the contents of the Scheme, its implementation and development as well as monitoring its progress. Heads of Units are responsible for its successful day-to-day operation within their Units. The Welsh Director is responsible for providing an internal institutional focus for communication, queries and comments regarding the Scheme, through appropriate staff at the University's Centre in Cardiff.
- 5.18 The Vice-Chancellor will provide an annual report monitoring the Scheme's progress to the Welsh Language Board for their observations and recommendations.

- 5.19 The Welsh Language Board will be consulted in advance of any proposed amendments or changes to the Scheme, and the Scheme will not be altered without the Welsh Language Board's consent. The Scheme will be fully reviewed three years after its implementation and any proposed amendments discussed with the Welsh Language Board.
- 5.20 A full audit of the Scheme will be undertaken by the University's Centre in Cardiff. The outcomes of the audit will influence any amendments to the Scheme as happened in 2009 (Target date: end of 2012).

Complaints procedure

- 5.21 The University hopes that it will not give grounds for complaint, and will be continuously monitoring how well it is meeting the commitments in this Scheme. Any complaint about the University's services in relation to this Scheme should be addressed to the Director Wales at The Open University in Wales, 18 Custom House St, Cardiff CF10 1AP.
- 5.22 A Welsh language version of the University's complaints procedure is available on the University website alongside the English version. If the outcome is not satisfactory to the complainant, then the matter can be taken to the Welsh Language Board or the Welsh Administration Ombudsman.
- 5.23 The Open University also welcomes suggestions for improvements to the services that it provides through the medium of Welsh. Any such suggestions should be made to the Director Wales where they will be considered as part of the continuing review of the way in which University delivers its services through the medium of Welsh.

Appendix – Targets

Point number	Target	Target date	To be completed by
2.1	All new policies and initiatives will take into consideration The Open University's Welsh Language Scheme	End of 2012	University Secretary
2.9	The University will review its recruitment policy in the light of the demand for Welsh language provision obtained through the collection and analysis of data on student linguistic preference	Annually until end of 2012	Assistant Director, Planning and Resources Student Services Manager (Welsh Language)
2.10	To develop a Linguistic Skills Strategy	End of 2012	Student Services Manager (Welsh Language) Director, Wales Human Resources
2.12	Publication and circulation of Welsh assessment guidelines	April 2010	Student Services Manager (Welsh Language) Head of Assessment
2.13	Completion of subject specialist translator database	End of 2012	Student Services Manager (Welsh Language)
2.17	Welsh Language awareness pack for social work degree tutors	End of 2009	Staff Tutor (Social Work)
2.17	Draft supplementary materials for vocational students and associate lecturers	End of 2011	Staff Tutors Student Services Manager (Welsh Language) Widening Access Officer
3.3	Training provided to non-Welsh speaking front-line staff	End 2009	Student Services Manager (Welsh Language)

4.9	Track hits on the website to prioritise pages for translation	End of 2010	Communications
4.9	Investigate translation costs	End of 2011	Student Services Manager (Welsh Language)
4.9	Increase Welsh Language content on University's main website	End of 2012	Student Services Manager (Welsh Language) Communications
4.10	Translate study skills toolkits and selected elements of <i>OpenLearn</i> website	End of 2010	Student Services Manager (Welsh Language) Communications
5.1	List of Welsh speaking staff to be published on staff intranet	End of 2009	Student Services Manager (Welsh Language)
5.2	The University aims to encourage five members of staff in Wales to enrol on Welsh language course for beginners	End of 2012	Student Services Manager (Welsh Language) Assistant Director Line managers in Wales
5.20	A full audit of the Scheme will take place in 2012	End of 2012	Student Services Manager (Welsh Language) Assistant Director, Wales

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