



## **Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards:**

### **Recruitment**

### **Guidance**

### **Equalities Department**

**June 2025**

#### **Introduction**

The Vale of Glamorgan Council is subject to the Welsh Language Standards and must provide Welsh language services under the compliance notice issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner, as a result of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. This sets out the standards by which the Council operates and delivers services including correspondence, staff matters, and the website, amongst other things including policy making, consultation, and recruitment.

You can see the compliance notice on our website [here](#).

The Welsh Language Commissioner recently held a seminar on the recruitment standards. This was aimed at anyone working for an organisation that implements language duties as well as specifically for those who work in human resources or recruitment. The seminar aimed to share the findings of a recent review into recruitment practices, raise awareness of the requirements of the recruitment standards, and to learn more about the practices of specific organisations.

The recording of the presentations is available on the Welsh Language Commissioner's website, here:

[Advice documents \(welshlanguagecommissioner.wales\)](https://welshlanguagecommissioner.wales)

## **Welsh Language Standards relating to recruitment:**

### **Standard 136:**

When you assess the requirements for a new or vacant post, you must assess the need for Welsh language skills, and categorise it as a post where one or more of the following apply –

- (a) Welsh language skills are essential;
- (b) Welsh language skills need to be learnt when appointed to the post;
- (c) Welsh language skills are desirable; or
- (ch) Welsh language skills are not necessary.

### **Standard 136A:**

If you have categorised a post as one where Welsh language skills are essential, desirable or need to be learnt you must –

- (a) specify that when advertising the post, and
- (b) advertise the post in Welsh.

## **Welsh Language Standards relating to the application process:**

### **Standard 137:**

When you advertise a post, you must state that applications may be submitted in Welsh, and that an application submitted in Welsh will not be treated less favourably than an application submitted in English.

### **Standard 137A:**

If you publish –

- (a) application forms for posts;
- (b) material that explains your procedure for applying for posts;
- (c) information about your interview process, or about other assessment methods when applying for posts;
- (ch) job descriptions;

you must publish them in Welsh; and you must ensure that the Welsh language versions of the documents are treated no less favourably than any English language versions of those documents.

### **Standard 137B:**

You must not treat an application for a post made in Welsh less favourably than you treat an application made in English (including, amongst other matters, in relation to the closing date you set for receiving applications and in relation to any timescale for informing individuals of decisions).

**Standard 139:**

You must ensure that your application forms for posts –

- (a) provide a space for individuals to indicate that they wish to use the Welsh language at an interview or at any other method of assessment, and
- (b) explain that you will provide a translation service from Welsh to English for that purpose if it is required; and, if the individual wishes to use the Welsh language at the interview or assessment, you must provide a simultaneous translation service at the interview or assessment (unless you conduct the interview or assessment in Welsh without that translation service).

**Standard 140:**

When you inform an individual of your decision in relation to an application for a post, you must do so in Welsh if the application was made in Welsh.

**Why is recruitment important in terms of Welsh promotion?**

A key way to increase ability to operate in Welsh is by recruiting Welsh speakers and thus increasing the bilingual capacity of the organisation. This leads to increased Welsh services, increased use of services by Welsh speakers, and increased use of Welsh in the workplace.

The Welsh Language Commissioner has recommended practices that lead to success in terms of recruiting Welsh speaking staff, as well as highlighting less-successful areas.

**Practices that lead to success:**

- Robust system to assess and categorise Welsh language needs.
- Clear communication of language requirement.
- Collaboration with higher education facilities and schools.
- Advertise on Welsh language social media.
- Target adverts to Welsh speakers or Welsh school leavers – how adverts are worded such as ‘renew Welsh language skills’, ‘we can help improve Welsh language skills’.
- Make it a deliberate attempt to comply with Welsh Language standards.
- Intentional effort to promote Welsh language internally.
- Language requirement is clear in job description and person specification with standard templates.
- Standardisation and consistency are crucial.

Less success where:

- Informal arrangements.
- Managers had no training or guidance.
- Lack of objective balance/consistency/transparency.
- Put more at risk of challenge from Welsh Language Commissioner.

Advertising on Welsh websites can mean accessing Welsh speakers. Relevant websites include Swyddle, lleol.cymru, and Golwg.

- ➔ Jobs should be advertised there even if they're not Welsh essential. Welsh speakers might only job search on Welsh-language sites, so organisations are excluding an entire group of people by not advertising there.

### Welsh Language Requirements:

There are four categories for language requirements:

- Welsh essential.
- Welsh desirable.
- Welsh to be learnt on appointment.
- Not necessary.

We must report on the number of new and vacant posts which were categorised as Welsh essential and desirable. These can be seen in the Annual Welsh Monitoring Report which are available on our website [here](#). These are the totals for 2024-25:

Total number of adverts logged	670
Welsh language skills essential	14
Welsh language skills desirable	656
Welsh language skills to be learnt when appointed to post	0

The Welsh Language Commissioner advised that a recent study (2023) found that most organisations don't use the 'to be learnt' option. This means they could be missing out on an opportunity to increase the number of Welsh learners/eventual speakers.

It is important to ensure the language requirement of a job is considered seriously and not as a simple tick-box with 'Welsh desirable' as the automatic failsafe option.

In addition, the Welsh skills of applicants need to be checked to ensure they meet the requirements of the post. There are a number of ways this could be done, but consistency across the organisation is important.

Findings from the Welsh Language Commissioner's study around assessing Welsh language skills of applicants:

- Some just asked at the interview.
- Some had tests/assessments during or following.
- Lots of different ways of assessing Welsh language skills across organisations.

We need to decide and formulate a Vale of Glamorgan procedure for:

- Assessing the Welsh language skills of posts
- Assessing the Welsh language skills of applicants

### **Assessing the Welsh language skills of a vacant or for recruitment purposes**

In line with the Welsh Language Standards, we must assess whether Welsh language skills are essential, desirable, not required, or can be learned on appointment. We must then include this in job adverts.

- We have to assess the Welsh language requirements of each post. There are a number of considerations to take: the function of the role, the location of the role, current Welsh language provision, and internal policies.
- When assessing the language requirements, it is helpful to work out the skill level for the four categories Understanding, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. As well as working out exactly what is required for the role, it also helps better advertise the role and makes assessing the Welsh language skills of applicants easier.
- The applicant does not have to be able to do all the things in the framework. Be cautious that many applicants may downplay their skills. It is not unusual to be a different level in different categories e.g. Good in Understanding but Basic in Reading.
- Think about the level of Welsh required for the role and list this in the job advert accordingly, maybe even with an example e.g. 'the ability to converse with customers is essential'.
- We offer free of charge Welsh lessons for all staff, including new recruits. Posts can be advertised as 'Welsh to be learnt on appointment' and new recruits can be signposted to a Work Welsh course to improve their Welsh language skills.

The [Welsh Language Skills framework](#) (see appendix 1) includes a breakdown of the expected skills at each level (Basic, Good, Competent and Fluent) for the four categories Understanding, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

- Basic = Learn Welsh level Entry / Mynediad and CEFR level A1.
- Good = Learn Welsh level Foundation / Sylfaen and CEFR level A2.
- Competent = Learn Welsh level Intermediate / Canolradd and CEFR level B1.
- Fluent = Learn Welsh levels Advanced / Uwch and CEFR level C1.
- Fluent+ = Learn Welsh level Proficiency / Gloywi and CEFR level C1

The Welsh Language Commissioner highlighted the following points when assessing the language requirement of a job:

- Objective and standardised assessment of language needs e.g. flowchart.
- Computer recording system for scrutiny purposes.
- Provide training for managers and those involved in recruitment process.
- Managers should consult with language officers.
- Ensure there are scrutiny arrangements around language assessments and that it is not the responsibility of a single officer.

### **Vale of Glamorgan findings**

From a quick assessment in June 2023, the following points have been noted:

- VOG11-Person-Specification-Template has 'ability to speak / learn Welsh' in the desirable column seemingly as standard.
- On the Jobs page on Vale website, the only Welsh related point is 'did you know we have joined the Work Welsh scheme?' box.
- Most job advertisements do not say anything about Welsh, the Welsh essential / desirable is in the person specification.
- C1V enquired about other ways to promote vacancies to encourage applications from Welsh speakers. A number of Welsh language sites were suggested by our Welsh language network, who also agreed to share Vale vacancy posts on their own social media accounts.

### **Welsh Language Commissioner conclusions:**

- All organisations need a refresh and to consider findings and the Welsh Language Commissioner report.

- All organisations need to ask themselves if we doing everything we can to recruit Welsh speakers.
- Small changes can make a big difference if everyone is doing everything possible.
- Challenges and barriers may be due to the process itself so it's important to make the process as robust as possible.
- More Welsh speakers in the organisation is important – this is required to meet the needs of the Welsh speakers as well as meeting the standards.
- This is a particular area of concern for the Welsh Language Commissioner.
- The Commissioner will be looking at each organisation's arrangements eventually but want to give us time to read the report and put changes in place before their input.

## **Recommendations**

We recommend that all staff involved in recruitment including managers watch the Welsh Language Commissioner's presentation and familiarise themselves with the advice documents and guidance.

We recommend that the Vale of Glamorgan Council develops guidance or a procedure for staff involved in recruitment to clarify and ease the Welsh classification process.

We need to be better at assessing the Welsh language requirements of positions and better at communicating these requirements in job advertisements.

We need to promote learning Welsh as a benefit of working for the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

## Appendix 1: Vale of Glamorgan Council - Welsh Language Skills Assessment Framework for vacant posts and recruitment purposes

### Understanding/Listening

<b>Basic</b>  Learn Welsh level: Entry / Mynediad  CEFR A1	I can: Understand greetings, basic information such as name, phone number and email and note these down. Understand requests, e.g. May I speak to...? I would like to speak in Welsh. Understand conversations about basic personal information, e.g. where someone lives, works, what they like doing, what they did. Guess what is being said when someone is giving details about events, such as time and place.
<b>Competent</b>  Learn Welsh level: Foundation/ Sylfaen  CEFR A2	I can: Understand simple questions and enquiries and when people ask me to do something, such as who the person wishes to speak to and the gist of the enquiry, seeking clarification if necessary. Understand the gist of simple conversations at work e.g. how a colleague is feeling or a simple request, and where someone/something is. Understand when people talk slowly and clearly about everyday situations, e.g. personal information, work, what they have done or would do.
<b>Good</b>  Learn Welsh level: Intermediate / Canolradd  CEFR B1	I can: Take and pass on most messages in standard spoken form. Understand much of what is said at work or in a meeting. Understand information being given about common or everyday topics, or when things to do with work are being discussed, e.g. in conversation, or in small group meetings. Usually understand the main message and details, provided people speak clearly, e.g. announcements or when listening to news bulletins.
<b>Fluent</b>  Learn Welsh level: Advanced / Uwch  CEFR B2	I can: Understand informal and fairly formal spoken language used at work e.g. meetings, presentations, interviews and discussions. not familiar with. Understand most TV and radio programmes for first language speakers, unless they're speaking with a strong unfamiliar accent.
<b>Fluent +</b>  Learn Welsh level: Proficiency / Gloywi / Hyfadredd  CEFR C1	I can: Fully understand all work – related conversations. Understand complex and specialist language used in meetings, presentations, negotiations, discussions and interviews. Easily follow all conversations and discussions on a variety of topics.



## Speaking

<b>Basic</b>  Learn Welsh level: Entry / Mynediad  CEFR: A1	I can: Pronounce Welsh words, place names, department names. Introduce myself and state my job title/ department/place of work. Use greetings, e.g. good morning, good afternoon, goodbye, How are you? Fine, thank you. Use simple requests and statements, e.g. May I help you? Introduce myself. (My name) speaking. I can't speak Welsh. One minute, please. Talk about basic topics e.g. the weather, time, directions.
<b>Competent</b>  Learn Welsh level: Foundation / Sylfaen  CEFR A2	I can: Ask if someone would like to speak in Welsh, say I am learning Welsh/ I speak a little Welsh, ask someone to repeat or speak slowly, say whether someone is available, apologise, say when someone will contact the caller/client, ask how I can help someone, ask someone to hold the line while I transfer the person, ask someone to sign in and give simple directions to the person/ place required. Hold a basic conversation with someone else on a common everyday topic, ask and answer questions on familiar topics e.g. work, hobbies, preferences.
<b>Good</b>  Learn Welsh level: Intermediate / Canolradd  CEFR B1	I can: Keep up a simple conversation on a routine work related topic, but may need to revert to English to discuss/report on complex or technical information. Hold an extended conversation with a fluent speaker on a familiar topic. Answer predictable or factual questions. Offer advice on simple job-related matters. Express simple opinions relating to my area of work. Express a view and exchange information on a range of topics to do with everyday life e.g. hobbies, travel, family.
<b>Fluent</b>  Learn Welsh level: Advanced / Uwch  CEFR B2	I can: Take part in an extended informal work-related conversation with a good degree of fluency and range of expression, but may revert to or ask for clarification in English when complex or technical language is used. Contribute effectively to meetings. Give an opinion relating to my job area. Talk confidently with fluent speakers on familiar topics related to everyday life or work. Express views, engage in discussion, and speak at length about general topics.
<b>Fluent +</b>  Learn Welsh level: Proficiency / Gloywi / Hyfadredd  CEFR C1	I can: Talk about and advise others on routine and complex work - related issues. Give a presentation / demonstration. Deal confidently with unpredictable or challenging questions. Carry out negotiations using complex / technical terms. Conduct / take part in a job interview. Give media interviews. Express myself fully and precisely, even when discussing complex issues. Adapt my language style according to the audience e.g. when speaking in a formal context or to colleagues.

## Reading

<b>Basic</b>  Learn Welsh level: Entry / Mynediad  CEFR: A1	I can: Understand simple key words relating to my job, such as: First Name, Surname, Phone Number, E mail Address, Job Title, Staff Number, Department, Line Manager, Location, Reception, Office, Fire Exit, Entrance, Dear ..., Regards. Understand short phrases and can guess what some notices mean. Understand short texts with basic information and can usually find details like times and costs in notices.
<b>Competent</b>  Learn Welsh level: Foundation / Sylfaen  CEFR A2	I can: Understand simple factual information in a message, letter or leaflet eg: a simple request seeking information or requesting an appointment. Understand messages about everyday things and some basic letters or emails e.g. asking for something or asking to pass a message on. Understand short texts e.g. social media posts or simple books.
<b>Good</b>  Learn Welsh level: Intermediate / Canolradd  CEFR B1	I can: Scan and understand a fair range of job-related texts when standard language is used, e.g. emails, letters, notes, with support of a dictionary. Understand straightforward short articles on everyday topics of interest, or to do with work. Guess what words mean from the context, when the topic is familiar. Understand most e-mails and work-related documents.
<b>Fluent</b>  Learn Welsh level: Advanced / Uwch  CEFR B2	I can: Read and understand most work – related material which does not contain complex or technical information e.g. e mails, letters, notes, reports, minutes of a meeting, application forms, possibly with the help of a dictionary or checking with a Welsh speaker. Understand most correspondence, and scan through long texts to find details. Understand most newspaper articles and reports aimed at first language speakers, with the aid of a dictionary. Understand novels and other texts, provided they are not written in a very formal or very colloquial style.
<b>Fluent +</b>  Learn Welsh level: Proficiency / Gloywi / Hyfadredd  CEFR C1	I can: Understand information and ideas expressed in complex or specialist language in documents, reports, correspondence, minutes of a meeting, applications and articles etc. Read and understand nearly all formal and informal written texts with ease, with only occasional reference to a dictionary. Proofread Welsh texts including Welsh translations received from the translation service.

## Writing

<b>Basic</b>  Learn Welsh level: Entry / Mynediad  CEFR: A1	I can: Fill in information on a simple form, e.g. First Name, Surname, Address, Phone Number, E mail Address, Job Title, Staff Number, Department, Line Manager, Location. Write very simple phrases or sentences about myself or others. Note down spoken information e.g. name, phone number and email address.
<b>Competent</b>  Learn Welsh level: Foundation / Sylfaen  CEFR A2	I can: Write short simple notes / message including expressions for starting and ending an email, apologising, stating when I or someone else will be available / can deal with the query, asking for something, thanking them or explaining something e.g. absence from work. Write a short text about a familiar topic.
<b>Good</b>  Learn Welsh level: Intermediate / Canolradd  CEFR B1	I can: Write emails and a formal letter relating to my job area, checked by a Welsh speaker. Make notes for my own use, from a spoken source. Write a letter on most topics, asking for things, giving explanations, or organising an event. Write accurately on most familiar topics.
<b>Fluent</b>  Learn Welsh level: Advanced / Uwch  CEFR B2	I can: Prepare and respond to familiar formal letters such as an enquiry, complaint, request and application. Take reasonably accurate notes in meetings or straightforward dictation. Write a straightforward report / document relating to my job area, which may need to be checked by a Welsh speaker. Write a short article, review or report on a variety of subjects of a general nature or work-related. Write detailed and well-structured texts, appropriate for the reader. Respond accurately to most types of correspondence from colleagues or external contacts.
<b>Fluent +</b>  Learn Welsh level: Proficiency / Gloywi / Hyfadredd  CEFR C1	I can: Write informal and formal letters on any subject. Write full, accurate notes of meetings whilst continuing to follow discussions and participate in them. Write reports and documents confidently with the help of spell/ grammar check for minor errors. Write extended texts, reports, articles, minutes or other types of writing in a style appropriate to the reader. Write with a high degree of accuracy on a wide range of topics.