

AWDURDOD GWEITHREDOL IECHYD A DIOGELWCH
HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE



Welsh Language Scheme

Health and Safety Executive

2024



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Foreword

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is dedicated to protecting people and places, helping everyone to lead safer and healthier lives across Great Britain. It is important that our services and information are delivered in a way that is inclusive to the Welsh-speaking population. In support of this, I am pleased to present HSE's new Welsh Language Scheme.

Our Scheme aims to fulfil the principles set out by the Welsh Language Act (1993). Wherever appropriate and reasonably practicable, we will treat the Welsh and English languages on an equal basis.

Our approach has been informed by insight received from colleagues across the organisation to create a new approach. We will continue to work on the feedback received and welcome any future feedback from others.

We fully recognise the importance and value of the Welsh language within HSE and I am delighted to reaffirm our commitment to it.



Sarah Albon

Chief Executive

Introduction

Our Scheme has been prepared under the Welsh Language Act (1993). We adhere to the principle that, in the execution of public functions in Wales, Welsh and English should be treated equally when it is appropriate and reasonably practicable to do so. Should this principle be upheld in line with our scoring system and Action Plan, we will implement relevant measures to increase our services and communications over the next four years.

We are committed to the meaningful application of our Scheme and welcome the opportunity to meet the needs of Welsh speakers effectively and consistently in line with our strategic objective of 'An Accessible HSE.'

The commitments below set out how HSE will apply the principles of the Act in line with our Action Plan. All commitments are set against a judgement of what constitutes reasonable and proportionate within the HSE context and were agreed with the Welsh Language Commissioner on 7 August 2024.

About HSE

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is dedicated to protecting people and places and helping everyone lead safer and healthier lives. We are an enforcing authority responsible for the regulation of health and safety at work in Great Britain and apply a range of approaches to achieve impact. We are a non-departmental public body with Crown status, sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and are accountable to its ministers.

We are committed to working with the public and other relevant stakeholders in Wales and across Great Britain.

We have three offices in Wales: Cardiff, Carmarthen and Wrexham. Our total Welsh-based workforce consists of around 109 staff, with approximately 5% having very basic Welsh language skills or higher capability (correct as of September 2023).

Further information about HSE can be found here:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/index.htm>

Welsh Language Scheme

1. Service Planning and Delivery

- 1.1. We are committed to ensuring that our policies, initiatives, and services support the use of the Welsh language, treating it no less favourably than English in line with this Scheme. 'Services,' 'policies' and 'initiatives' are defined at [Annex A](#).
- 1.2. We will include a requirement to consider the Welsh language as part of our policy development process.
- 1.3. We will actively ensure that our Welsh language services are advertised and easily accessible.
- 1.4. We will keep our services under review to ensure our capacity to deliver services offered in Welsh and English are of equal quality, effectiveness and timeliness.

2. Third Party Agreements

- 2.1. We will ensure that Welsh language considerations are integrated into our procurement process.
- 2.2. When entering into partnerships or collaborations with other organisations, we will ensure they are aware of our Welsh Language Scheme and its requirements.
- 2.3. Contracts or agreements with third parties will uphold the requirements of our Scheme in Wales. We will actively work with our service providers to agree upon the Welsh language requirements, ensuring they understand and comply with them.

3. Communicating with HSE

- 3.1. We will ensure that customers are able to communicate with HSE through the medium of Welsh in relation to our main services or as appropriate. Communication is defined as the exchange of information, either in written format, over the telephone, or face-to-face.

- 3.2. We will ensure that ways of communicating with HSE in Welsh are prominently displayed, e.g. through email signatures and headers/footers in standard templates.

Written Communication

- 3.3. We will welcome written correspondence in Welsh and commit to replying with the same timeliness and quality as our English offer.
- 3.4. We will keep a record of language preferences for individuals, groups and organisations to ensure all future correspondence with them aligns with their choice. This includes electronic communications.
- 3.5. When we send correspondence, the bilingual format will be standard where language preference is unknown.
- 3.6. We will use a scoring system to identify objectively any standard or circular correspondence which will be published in Welsh.

Telephone Communication

- 3.7. Our main telephony system, operated by Customer Services, will accommodate Welsh speakers. We will actively work towards enhancing the Welsh Language support we have available.
- 3.8. Calls to our main telephone number will provide options in both languages, ensuring the caller will be greeted in and can access the required service in Welsh.
- 3.9. Other staff handling telephone calls from customers in Wales will be encouraged to answer calls and have voicemail messages in both Welsh and English.
- 3.10. If a caller directly contacts a colleague who is unable to continue the conversation in Welsh, reasonable efforts will be made to transfer the call to a suitable Welsh speaker.
- 3.11. Should no suitable colleague be available, the caller will be offered the choice of receiving a call back in Welsh as soon as possible; continuing the call in English; or submitting their query in writing.
- 3.12. For calls to direct lines in offices outside Wales, it is not practicable to conduct telephone calls in Welsh due to geographic limitations.

Public Meetings

- 3.13. Invitations and advertisements for public meetings in Wales led by HSE will be issued in Welsh and English. We will invite attendees to inform us in advance of their language preference.
- 3.14. We will inform attendees when translation facilities are available in line with this Scheme and welcome contributions in Welsh. Additionally, we will ensure that related written communications are available in accordance with our scoring system.
- 3.15. In selecting staff to attend public meetings, it is our standard practice to provide suitably qualified Welsh speakers as necessary and according to availability.

Face-to-Face Communication

- 3.16. For scheduled face-to-face interactions, individuals may choose to converse with us in Welsh. Where appropriate and feasible, we will facilitate that choice to the best of our capability through e.g. the provision of Welsh-speaking staff or the use of interpretation services.
- 3.17. In the case of an unscheduled face-to-face interaction where an individual wishes to converse with us in Welsh, we will make all reasonable efforts to facilitate this, where appropriate.

4. Publications

- 4.1. We will publish and promote public-facing materials bilingually where appropriate and in accordance with our scoring system.
- 4.2. If it is necessary to publish Welsh and English versions separately, rather than in one document, both versions will be of equal size and quality.
- 4.3. Our standard practice is to release both versions with equal accessibility. When a publication is uploaded to our website, the Welsh version will be uploaded as close to simultaneously as possible following publication of the finalised English version.

5. Forms and Associated Explanatory Material

- 5.1. We will publish and promote forms and associated explanatory material bilingually where appropriate and in accordance with our scoring system. This includes relevant, interactive forms published online.
- 5.2. If it is necessary to publish Welsh and English forms/ explanatory material separately, both versions will be of equal size, quality and accessibility.

6. Digital and Website

- 6.1. We are dedicated to enhancing Welsh Language provision and the experience of Welsh language users on our website in the long-term in accordance with this Scheme and Action Plan.
- 6.2. Our website will feature both Welsh and English pages, with Welsh pages clearly signposted and easily accessed.
- 6.3. We will continue to develop our Welsh language content, ensuring language parity and user experience improvement where possible. We will assess the need for translating web pages through our internal scoring system¹.
- 6.4. Material relevant to Wales and/or that meet the requirements of HSE's internal scoring system will normally be uploaded as close to simultaneously as possible following publication of the finalised English version.
- 6.5. Development, changes, and additions to our digital services will take into account bilingual functionality and equal quality control in both languages from the beginning of the process.
- 6.6. As we transition to new IT systems or upgrade existing ones identified as relevant through assessment of user need, we will ensure they support the needs of the Welsh language.
- 6.7. When we are contacted in Welsh via social media, we will reply in Welsh if an answer is required or appropriate in line with existing English language protocols.

¹ The scoring system is an internal decision-making tool to support Welsh language content translation. It prioritises translation based on criteria such as public impact, audience reach and frequency of use. This has been approved by the Welsh Language Commissioner as part of this Scheme.

7. Recruitment and Staffing

- 7.1. We will follow the guidelines set by the Welsh Language Commissioner regarding bilingual recruitment, ensuring we address the linguistic requirements of each post and business need in line with Civil Service Commission stipulations . When Welsh language skills are relevant to a vacancy, whether desirable or essential, this will be stated in the job advert.
- 7.2. We will undertake audits as appropriate to establish organisational Welsh language capacity. We will also identify staff who wish to learn Welsh.
- 7.3. Existing staff members with Welsh language skills will be encouraged to use Welsh in the performance of their duties where they are comfortable doing so.
- 7.4. We will support the promotion of internal Welsh language capability through provision of resources to enhance visibility.
- 7.5. To support our commitment, we will promote training and guidance relevant to the Welsh language to relevant staff, with additional support for those engaging in frequent public contact.

8. Engaging with the Public

- 8.1. For public events and meetings in Wales run by HSE, simultaneous Welsh to English translation will be offered as needed, based on audience preferences and Welsh-speaking presenter availability. Before conducting seminars or public events, we will assess the need for Welsh language provision, considering both audience preference and the availability of Welsh-speaking presenters.
- 8.2. Invitations and advertisements will be bilingual and meeting documents will be accessible in Welsh upon request.
- 8.3. Public surveys and consultations conducted in Wales will be bilingual where there is clear need in line with the scoring system.
- 8.4. Where appropriate, media interactions including press releases specific to Wales, will be available bilingually in line with the scoring system.

9. Publicity & Identity

- 9.1. All new publicity, advertising campaigns, and exhibitions in Wales will be bilingual, following scoring system guidelines.
- 9.2. Our corporate identity in Wales will be bilingual. For example, warrant cards, contact details, slogans, letterheads, email signatures and other standard details will appear in both languages.
- 9.3. We will make promotion of the Welsh language a part of our publicity efforts, aiming to enhance the visibility and use of Welsh in our communications.
- 9.4. All our signage in public spaces in HSE-owned offices in Wales will be bilingual, with the Welsh and English texts receiving equal prominence.

10. Internal Arrangements

- 10.1. HSE fully authorises, supports, and approves the measures in this Scheme.
- 10.2. Senior leaders bear the responsibility for implementing the relevant aspects of this Scheme within their work areas. The Devolution Engagement & Policy team will coordinate, monitor, and review the implementation of this Scheme and its associated Action Plan.
- 10.3. We will actively promote this Scheme to our staff and the public in Wales, ensuring its visibility on our website.
- 10.4. We will create internal resources for staff to facilitate the implementation of this Scheme's measures.
- 10.5. We will ensure that we use only qualified translators or interpreters to help with the delivery of this Scheme where these services are required.
- 10.6. All public interactions in Wales not specifically addressed by this Scheme will be conducted in line with its overarching principles.

11. Monitoring, Feedback and Complaints

- 11.1. We will periodically monitor our progress in implementing the Scheme and report findings to our Senior Managers for review and implement any recommendations for improvement they make.
- 11.2. We're committed to annual reporting to the Welsh Language Commissioner, detailing our adherence to the Scheme's stipulations.
- 11.3. We're open to feedback, and any complaints concerning the Scheme can be directed to iaithgymraeg@hse.gov.uk. Issues that aren't resolved satisfactorily can be escalated to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

12. Reviewing and Amending the Scheme

- 12.1. Occasionally, due to changes in our roles, operational circumstances or other factors, we might find it necessary to reassess this scheme.
- 12.2. Any alterations to the scheme will not be implemented without the Welsh Language Commissioner's approval.
- 12.3. We will review this Scheme within four years of it coming into effect.

Annex A: Glossary

Term	Definition
Policies	Formal guidance and procedures that direct HSE's decisions, actions and objectives in accordance with our regulatory functions
Initiatives	Projects or programmes undertaken to achieve specific goals or address particular problems.
Services	Activities, resources and facilities provided to our dutyholders, stakeholders and customers to meet their various needs.

Further information

For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit [the HSE website](#).

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