

Bangor University

SCHOOL OF WELSH MEDIUM STUDIES

Date: : 20 April 2009

Present: Dr. Llion Jones (Chair), Mr. Geraint George, Mr. Ifor Gruffudd, Mr. Llion Iwan, Mrs. Bethan Wyn Jones, Dr. Dewi Wyn Jones, Mr. Dyfrig Jones, Dr. Eifiona Thomas Lane, Mrs. Delyth Murphy, Mr. Alan Wyn Parry, Dr. Robert Pope, Mr. Huw Powell, Dr Sara Parry, Mrs. Carys Wyn Roberts, Mrs. Gwerfyl Wyn Roberts, Dr. Paula Roberts, Ms. Eileen Tilley, Dr. Catrin Haf Williams, Yr Athro Gerwyn Williams, Miss Sarah Williams, Dr. Einir Young, Mr. Emyr Roberts (Secretary).

Apologies : Dr. Jason Walford Davies, Dr. Lowri Hughes, Mr. Bryn Jones, Professor Densil Morgan, Dr. Delyth Morris, Mrs. Mairwen Owen, Mr. Wyn Thomas, Mrs. Gwenan Williams, Dr. Prysor Williams.

1. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Mr. Dyfrig Jones and Dr Sara Parry to their first meeting of the School.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the School's meeting held on 28th January 2009 were accepted as a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Item 3(i) College of Health and Behavioural Sciences – School of Sports, Health and Exercise Sciences

It was reported that the Welsh medium scholarships had been held back because of the University's financial situation. However, assurances had been given that they would soon be released and two of them were already being advertised. The chair agreed to keep an eye on the situation.

(ii) Item 3(v) – Module Handbooks

It was reported that the Module Handbooks provided for Freshers' Week and more recently for the preregistration period had been a success and that they had made a strong statement

about the Welsh medium provision in the University. Dr Lowri Hughes was thanked for her work in providing the Handbooks.

(iii) Item 4 – Welsh medium FTEs

It was reported that the final figure for Welsh medium FTEs for 2007/08 was 542.7.

4. TASIG REPORT

The Chair presented a summary of the discussions of the Welsh Language Strategy Task Group in the meeting held on 18th March 2009.

- A review of the membership of TASIG is underway and the names of Welsh medium champions on all College Management Boards are being confirmed.
- A number of meetings were held with UMCB officials, JMJ residents and University officials concerning the future location of the hall. An agreement was reached that the hall will move from College Road to the Tegfan and Bryn Dinas buildings on Ffriddoedd Site in September 2010. One request that students made in agreeing to the move was to try to secure a link building between the two buildings and a promise was obtained that the University would place this high on its list of projects. This will enable students to create a community in the new hall. It was agreed that the University would be able to use pictures of the new hall in student recruitment and in discussions with parents.
- The work of the *Coleg Ffederal* Planning Board has been completed and the Chair, Professor Robin Williams will submit his report to the Minister in the Assembly in June. A Consultative Forum was held on March 25th and it was attended by Dr Einir Young and Dr. Delyth Morris from the University. Their report on the meeting has already been circulated to members of the School. It is hoped that about £6m of new money will be available over 5 years to establish the College.
- Work is progressing on the development of the idea of offering a Welsh Language Skills Certificate aimed at giving recognition to students' language skills gained while studying through the medium of Welsh. It is hoped that such a certificate will encourage students to take advantage of the Welsh medium provision and will also be valuable to employers.

5. STUDENT RECRUITMENT

1. It was reported that there was considerable concern about the number of Welsh medium applications to the University for 2009/10. In light of that concern, Mrs Carys Roberts was invited to give a presentation to members of the school.
2. A report was received from Mrs. Carys Wyn Roberts, Head of the Recruitment Unit, about plans for the future. Applications for September 2009 are 7% up and the number of students holding Bangor as their first choice is 16.4% higher, which is encouraging. However, there are exceptions with a fall in Welsh, Electronics,

Environment and Natural Sciences and Music. It is difficult when looking at UCAS figures to see in which language students will be studying. The module handbooks will be vitally important together with the bursaries offered when trying to secure enrolments on the Welsh-medium modules and courses. The promotion of the idea of studying in Welsh is handled at a national level through MANTAIS. The economic advantages of working through Welsh must be emphasised and it must be noted that students are likely to get more individual attention.

There is also a need for a national awareness in 2010 of the changes in student funding when the £1,800 given by the Assembly to students from Wales towards their fees will disappear. Currently there is no way of knowing what effect this will have.

Other factors must also be considered such as the fact that the percentage of students in this age group will decrease over the next 10 years which will mean a smaller pool of potential students. There will also be more occupational qualifications in schools and new learning pathways. There are many changes on the horizon and many challenges for the future.

3. The following points were noted by members:

All new students from Wales who come to Bangor in September should receive the Welsh medium module handbook in the pack they are sent before they arrive at the University.

Also ask UMCB to advertise the Welsh medium provision.

The system for giving day students an introduction before Freshers' Week should be formalised

It is essential that the record in the Academic Registry shows whether students are doing a module through Welsh.

In the long term the University strategy will have to be flexible to meet the needs of its audience and to make sure that there is a demand for courses that are being developed by conducting thorough market research.

6. PODCASTS AND THE WELSH LANGUAGE

A presentation was given by Mrs. Bethan Wyn Jones from the Information Technology Services Department on developments in Podcasts and the Welsh language in the University. An audio file including video and pictures can be transmitted over the Internet, for instance lectures or parts of lectures, feedback, presentations, summaries, notes, instructions. Short clips are more effective than complete lectures.

Mrs. Jones was thanked for her interesting presentation and she was asked to share her presentation with members of the school via the website (**Action BWJ**).

7. BALA NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

It was reported that the University's presence at the Bala National Eisteddfod will be the same as the three previous years with a large stand and a good provision for holding activities and events.

Staff are requested to contact Ms Elinor Elis Williams in the Student Recruitment Unit by mid-May at the latest with ideas for activities, celebrations, launches, discussion panels, music or inviting specific people. A calendar will then be published of events held by the University at the Eisteddfod

An alumni event will be held at lunchtime on the Wednesday following the Vice-Chancellor's reception.

8. RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK

Mr Dyfrig Jones noted that a period of consultation was underway on the Research Excellence Framework. There is a need to ensure that Welsh medium research is scored in a way that ensures that it is not undervalued.

It was agreed to note the School's concern and to refer the matter to the attention of TASIG in its next meeting. **(Action ER).**

9. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the School will be held at 2.15 pm, Thursday, 15 October 2009 in the Council Chamber.

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