



PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF
STAFF IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WELSH
LANGUAGE STANDARDS

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF STAFF IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION

Bangor University is situated in an area where the Welsh language is a natural part of everyday life and where around 65% of the population speak Welsh. A high percentage of University staff and students are also bilingual. Bangor University recognises the value and the importance of Welsh as a skill in the workplace and it is committed to developing a workforce that can work through the medium of Welsh and English for the purposes of teaching, research and administration. This Code of Practice ensure that the University maintains a level of Welsh language skills amongst staff that reflects the local percentages of Welsh speakers and which enables it to maintain a viable bilingual community. This Code of Practice also ensures that the University responds to the statutory obligations upon it through the Welsh Language Standards.

The following guidelines have been designed to assist managers to develop teams that will be able to operate bilingually.

Please note the following:

- These guidelines are applicable to all posts at Bangor University. All managers should refer to them when a new post is created or when a temporary post becomes permanent.¹
- External recruitment / employment agencies should also use these guidelines.
- Guidance on the underpinning principles of the Code of Practice can be sought from Canolfan Bedwyr; guidance on the implementation of the Code and the appointment process can be sought from Human Resources. The Code's implementation will be overseen by the Panel Arolygu Safonau'r Gymraeg (The Welsh Language Standards Scrutiny Committee) and the Bilingualism Committee.

¹ For employees whose contracts are transferred to permanent status after four years of employment, the language requirements of the post shall not be revised.

THE PROCESS

When a new post is created, a manager is required to decide on the relevance of Welsh language skills to the post and on what kind of Welsh language skills are necessary to fulfil the requirements of the post. These decisions will depend on the:

- type of post
- nature of the role
- language skills of the team
- responsibilities of the team

This Code of Practice is relevant to **all** stages of the appointment process as outlined below:

1. **Creating Post and specifying Language Requirement.**² See details below.
2. **Creating Job Specification:** note the kind of language skills that will be needed. See p.6
3. **Shortlisting:** ensure that the post's language requirements are taken into consideration (e.g. when selecting panel). See p.7
4. **Interviewing:** ensure that the post's language requirements are taken into consideration (e.g. when selecting panel). See p.7
5. **Training and Monitoring:** if necessary, ensure successful candidates receives the support needed to develop Welsh language skills. See p.8

The guidelines for deciding on a post's Language Requirements will depend on the type of post created. For the purpose of this Code of Practice, posts are placed in one of three categories:

Category 1: Support Staff (Manual, Clerical, Managerial and Professional posts). For further information see p. 3. Note that this category also includes Senior Managers in the support Services as well as in any other services/centres not within the scope of an academic School / College.

Category 2: Academic and Research posts. For further information see p. 4

Category 3: Senior Academic Management posts (e.g. heads of school, heads of College, pro vice-chancellor). For further information see p. 5

² In areas of dispute about the language requirement of a given post, the final decision will be taken by the PVC Welsh-Medium who may consult with other senior colleagues.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT: Category 1 – Support Staff

The LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT options for these posts are:

- **WELSH ESSENTIAL**
- **WELSH ESSENTIAL OR COMMITMENT TO LEARN TO A SPECIFIED LEVEL³**
- **WELSH DESIRABLE**

WELSH ESSENTIAL

- Welsh language ability is one of the essential criteria for these posts.
- It is necessary to ensure that everyone who is interviewed has Welsh language skills to the necessary level.

WELSH ESSENTIAL OR COMMITMENT TO LEARN TO A SPECIFIED LEVEL

- If individuals appointed to these posts do not have the necessary Welsh language skills, a firm commitment to learn from the appointee and a firm commitment from the manager to support the learning will be required.
- Managers must commit to releasing the staff member from his/her duties **during working hours** to enable him/her to reach the necessary language level. The staff member will need to be released from his/her post for between 1-4 hours a week (depending on the level to which he/she is expected to learn) and / or for a block period of training. If this is not feasible, or if the individual needs to have Welsh language skills from the outset, the job should be categorised as WELSH ESSENTIAL.
- Any staff member who is learning Welsh as part of their post will be assessed (e.g. by sitting and passing language examinations) until they have reached the language level noted in their contract. The staff member's progress will be monitored regularly. The attainment of the necessary language level will be part of the requirements of the staff member's probationary period.

WELSH DESIRABLE

- Welsh language ability is one of the desirable criteria for these posts.
- Welsh language ability will only be assessed as a means of differentiating between candidates who are equal at interview along with other desirable criteria.

SELECTING APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE POSTS

Charts A and B give managers guidance on deciding on the Language Requirement of a post. The charts should be used as follows:

- **Chart A for posts on grades 1-6.**
- **Chart B for administrative/managerial posts on grade 7 and above, including Senior Managers**

Explanatory notes for the charts: REGULAR CONTACT: contact that occurs every day, or every other day, throughout the work week. SUFFICIENT BILINGUAL CAPACITY: 65% of the team able to speak Welsh and English (this corresponds to the percentage of University staff who note that they speak Welsh or that they are learning Welsh).

³ This category is usually reserved for specialist posts where the number of qualified applicants may be limited.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT: Category 2 – Academic and Research Posts

The LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT options for these posts are:

- WELSH ESSENTIAL
- WELSH DESIRABLE
- NO SPECIFIC WELSH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT. CANDIDATES WILL BE EXPECTED TO WORK POSITIVELY IN A BILINGUAL ENVIRONMENT

WELSH ESSENTIAL

- Welsh language ability is one of the essential criteria for these posts.
- It is necessary to ensure that everyone who is interviewed has Welsh language skills to the necessary level. For academic posts, this means the ability to speak, read and write Welsh to a high level.

NO SPECIFIC WELSH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT. CANDIDATES WILL BE EXPECTED TO WORK POSITIVELY IN A BILINGUAL ENVIRONMENT

- Welsh language ability is not a criteria for these posts.

SELECTING APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT FOR ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH POSTS

- **Chart C** gives managers guidance on deciding on the Language Requirement of a post.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT: Category 3 – Senior Academic Management Posts

This section of the Code of Practice is designed to offer guidance on the appointment of senior academic management posts (e.g. heads of school, heads of college, pro vice-chancellors). These posts are dealt with separately to other academic posts as the posts combine both academic and managerial responsibilities and are often fixed term appointments.

Guidelines

The following should be borne in mind when appointing to these posts:

- The posts are of key importance in delivering the University's aim, as outlined in its strategic plan, of embedding and strengthening bilingual management and administrative activities and of supporting Welsh language teaching and research.
- In order to achieve this aim, it must be ensured that there is sufficient bilingual capacity at all senior managerial levels.
- In subject areas where there is a strong dimension of Welsh medium teaching and research and / or where Welsh is an important vocational skill, an ability to deal with staff and students and external bodies through the medium of Welsh must be recognised as an important professional skill.
- Individuals appointed to senior academic posts influence the linguistic culture of their area of responsibility and influence the language of work therein.

Having considered the above, members of the panel should allocate one of the following language requirements to these posts:

- Welsh Essential
- Welsh Desirable
- No Specific Language Requirement

Monitoring Procedures

The language requirements of these posts will be monitored in the same way as other posts. That is, the post will proceed through the usual process which will allow the relevant officers from Human Resources and Canolfan Bedwyr, as well as the Pro Vice-Chancellor Welsh Medium, to scrutinise the language requirements. If there is disagreement about the language requirements, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Vice Chancellor.

CREATING JOB SPECIFICATION

Once the language requirement of the post has been established, for Welsh Essential / Welsh Essential or Commitment to Learn posts a decision needs to be made on the kind of Welsh language skills needed to fulfil the requirements of the post. Canolfan Bedwyr and HR can offer guidance and a bank of descriptors is available for use.

ADMINISTRATIVE POSTS: POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

Post A: candidates will be required to speak and write Welsh to a high level (e.g. marketing officer, translator, trainer). The job specification should therefore note: *The ability to speak and write Welsh fluently in a broad range of situations is essential for this post.*

Post B: candidates will be required to speak Welsh fluently and write a range of e-mail messages in Welsh (e.g. clerical officer, PA). The job specification should therefore note: *The ability to speak Welsh fluently and to complete tasks such as writing e-mail messages to a range of audiences in Welsh is essential for this post.*

Post C: candidates will be required to carry out some work-related tasks in Welsh (e.g. IT project manager). The job specification should therefore note: *The ability to use Welsh with confidence for some tasks is essential for this post - e.g. contribute to some bilingual meetings and write simple e-mails in Welsh.*

Post D: candidates will be required to be able to speak Welsh in most situations relevant to the post, but will not be required to read and write Welsh (e.g. security officer). The job specification should therefore note: *The ability to use Welsh with confidence for some tasks is essential for this post –e.g. talking to staff and students, answering telephone calls, dealing with emergency requests in Welsh.*

Welsh Essential or Commitment to Learn Posts

To the descriptors above add the phrase: *Applications are welcome from those who are committed to developing their Welsh language skills to this level.*

Welsh Desirable

It is not compulsory to include a description of the kind of language skills needed with this language category, but managers can do so. Managers may also choose to include the following sentence: *If candidates are not currently able to speak/write Welsh, there are many opportunities to learn if the successful candidate wishes to.*

ACADEMIC POSTS:

Welsh Essential: the job specification should note that the ability to speak and write Welsh is essential for this post.

No Specific Welsh Language Requirement. Candidates will be expected to work positively in a bilingual environment: the job specification should note that: *Bangor University is a bilingual organisation and all members of staff are expected to work positively in this bilingual environment.*

SHORTLISTING

Welsh language skills should be 'scored' in the same way as other skills that are in the 'essential' or 'desirable' categories. The Human Resources Department offers guidelines on the short-listing process. Please note that School/Departmental representative who is leading the recruitment process is responsible for:

- arranging the translation of any application submitted in Welsh (where necessary).
- ensuring that applications submitted in Welsh only are given full consideration as part of the initial screening and the short-listing process.
- ensuring that for WELSH ESSENTIAL/ WELSH ESSENTIAL OR A COMMITMENT TO LEARN TO A SPECIFIED LEVEL posts the candidates' language skills are assessed by a bilingual member of the short listing panel. If there is no one in the school / department who can assess the candidates' ability in Welsh, a representative from Canolfan Bedwyr can do so. The representative from Canolfan Bedwyr will also then be a member of the interviewing panel with the specific remit of assessing a candidate's Welsh language ability.
- ensuring that for academic posts that are WELSH ESSENTIAL the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Welsh Medium & Community Engagement) or his/her representative is a member of the shortlisting panel.

INTERVIEWING

Composition of Panel for posts that are WELSH ESSENTIAL / WELSH ESSENTIAL OR COMMITMENT TO LEARN

- At least one member of the interviewing panel (not including the HR representative and the language tutor) must be bilingual in order to be able to assess the candidates' Welsh language ability.
- If there is no one in the school / department who can assess the candidates' ability in Welsh, a representative from Canolfan Bedwyr can do so. (As part of the training on recruitment, the Staff Development department within Human Resources can provide training on assessing Welsh language abilities).
- The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Welsh medium and Civic Engagement) or his / her representative must participate in the interview for WELSH ESSENTIAL academic posts and for WELSH ESSENTIAL / WELSH ESSENTIAL OR A COMMITMENT TO LEARN administrative posts on Grade 9 or above.
- For Welsh Essential posts, the interview will be conducted in Welsh with simultaneous translation facilities provided for non-Welsh-speaking members of the panel. Candidates for Welsh Essential posts can be asked to answer some questions in English. The same is true of candidates for Welsh Desirable posts who have noted that they wish to hold their interview in Welsh.

ASSESSING LANGUAGE LEVELS

WELSH ESSENTIAL: There must be an assessment of whether the applicant has the necessary Welsh language skills. (This means the ability to do in Welsh what you would expect someone to do in English for an English medium post, e.g. answer a question/give a presentation/ write a letter or report).

- A candidate's spoken Welsh can be assessed at interview.
- A candidate's written Welsh can be assessed through the application form. An additional language test can also be set and guidance and examples can be sought from Canolfan Bedwyr.

If there is no suitable candidate for all aspects of the post, the options are:

- to appoint someone with the necessary Welsh language skills who meet the essential criteria for the post but who may require reasonable and appropriate training in particular aspects of the post.
- re-advertise
- re-advertise and consider making some changes to the nature of the post (without altering the grade requirement of the post) so that it is likely to attract more candidates with appropriate language skills.

WELSH ESSENTIAL OR A COMMITMENT TO LEARN TO A SPECIFIED LEVEL: The candidate's ability in Welsh must be assessed in conjunction with the other skills necessary for the post. In such a case Welsh will be one of several considerations. If the best candidate at interview does not possess the required Welsh language skills, the process they must follow to learn Welsh/improve their Welsh skills to the necessary level must be explained. An explanation should be given of the kind of tasks they will be expected to carry out in Welsh once they have reached the required level, and also the support that will be available to them to do so. It should also be made clear that learning Welsh to the required level will be a condition of their probationary period.

At the close of the interview, the Chair of the Panel will note on the 'Departmental Interview Assessment Form' what the candidate's ability in Welsh is. If the individual appointed does not possess the required language skills this will be noted on the form and in due course in e-recruitment. This will allow the Staff Development team to ensure that training provision is in place for the individual concerned. The Human Resources Department will record the need to learn Welsh to an appropriate level within an appropriate timescale on the individual's contract, since it will be a condition of appointment.

WELSH DESIRABLE: For posts with this Language Requirement the candidates' ability in Welsh will be assessed only if two candidates at interview are deemed to be of equal standing. Ability in Welsh would then be assessed as a means of differentiating between the strongest candidates. In these circumstances, Welsh language ability would be assessed by asking the candidates to answer one or two questions in Welsh. If none of the panel members are able to assess Welsh language skills, a member of staff from Canolfan Bedwyr or from Human Resources can be called upon. A short telephone interview, where two standard questions will be asked of the candidates will be held, and an assessment of their ability in Welsh will be given to the panel.

TRAINING AND MONITORING

The Development Plan

Where the attainment of specific skill levels in Welsh is necessary to achieve the requirements of the post and where the appointee does not reach that standard, the line manager of the person appointed must undertake to release that individual for a period from his/her duties to follow an appropriate programme of courses provided for them by the University. There will be a clear understanding between the appointee, the school/ department and the institution (via the Human Resources Officer) about what is expected of the appointee with regard to learning Welsh. When a new member of staff joins the University under these conditions, the new member of staff, his/her manager, the University Welsh tutor / a member of staff from Canolfan Bedwyr will meet to develop an appropriate Development Plan. The manager and the appointee will sign the Development Plan to note their commitment to it.

Training

The University will provide a range of Welsh courses for the necessary period in order to support new staff members who need to learn Welsh/improve their Welsh language skills as part of their contract. These lessons will enable the staff member to attain the necessary language level that was agreed on for the Development Plan (e.g. by passing the relevant examination). These language classes will enable the individual to use Welsh in their job.

Monitoring Development

For those for whom learning Welsh is part of their work contract, the monitoring process will be linked to the probationary process as noted below:

6 months probationary period: For the first six months, the Welsh language tutor in discussion with the Human Resources Department will be responsible for gathering information about each individual's progress. All that is expected in this period is confirmation that the member of staff has started on a training course and is being released from work regularly to attend the course. After this, the monitoring will happen each year until the manager and the University language tutor are agreed that the individual is using Welsh to the appropriate level to carry out their job.

For posts with a probationary period of more than 6 months the monitoring process will take place in conjunction with the annual probation reports over the probationary period of up to 3 years. It will be the responsibility of the line manager of the relevant staff member and the University's language tutor to ensure that the agreed Development Plan is being implemented.

The development of staff members whose employment contract contains a specific language requirement will be reported to the Human Resources Department annually. The Human Resources Staff Development Team will also be reporting on their development to Canolfan Bedwyr.

In cases of unsatisfactory performance

If the report received by Human Resources is unsatisfactory the following actions are suggested:

- i. For **administrative appointments**, a meeting should be arranged between the staff member, a representative from the Department, the University's Welsh language tutor and / or the Staff Development Officer to discuss the reasons for the lack of development and then to agree on a development programme for the individual for a specific period of time e.g. 6 months or a year. Each one of the above will sign a relevant statement to express their support for the action taken. [See (ii) below]. For **academic appointments**, a meeting should be organised between the member of staff, a representative from the School, the University's Welsh language tutor and the Pro Vice Chancellor (Welsh Medium and Civic Engagement) to discuss the reasons for the lack of progress and then to agree on a development programme for the individual for a specific period e.g. 6 months or a year. Each of the above will sign a relevant statement expressing their support for the action taken. [See (ii) below].
- ii. Extend the probationary period with a stronger condition that further action will have to be taken to try to accelerate progress. This could involve e.g. more lessons, attendance at summer school, sessions with a departmental language mentor, more careful monitoring.
- iii. Where there are further weaknesses after 6 months or a year the Pro Vice Chancellor (Welsh Medium and Civic Engagement) will hold a further meeting with the persons named in the relevant sections above and will agree on a further development programme. Where satisfactory progress is not achieved following the action outlined above the line manager, in consultation with the Human Resources Department, should consider whether the inability to use Welsh impairs the individual's ability to carry out the full requirements of the post and consider, for example, whether the individual's duties should be changed.

Chart A: Grades 1 - 6

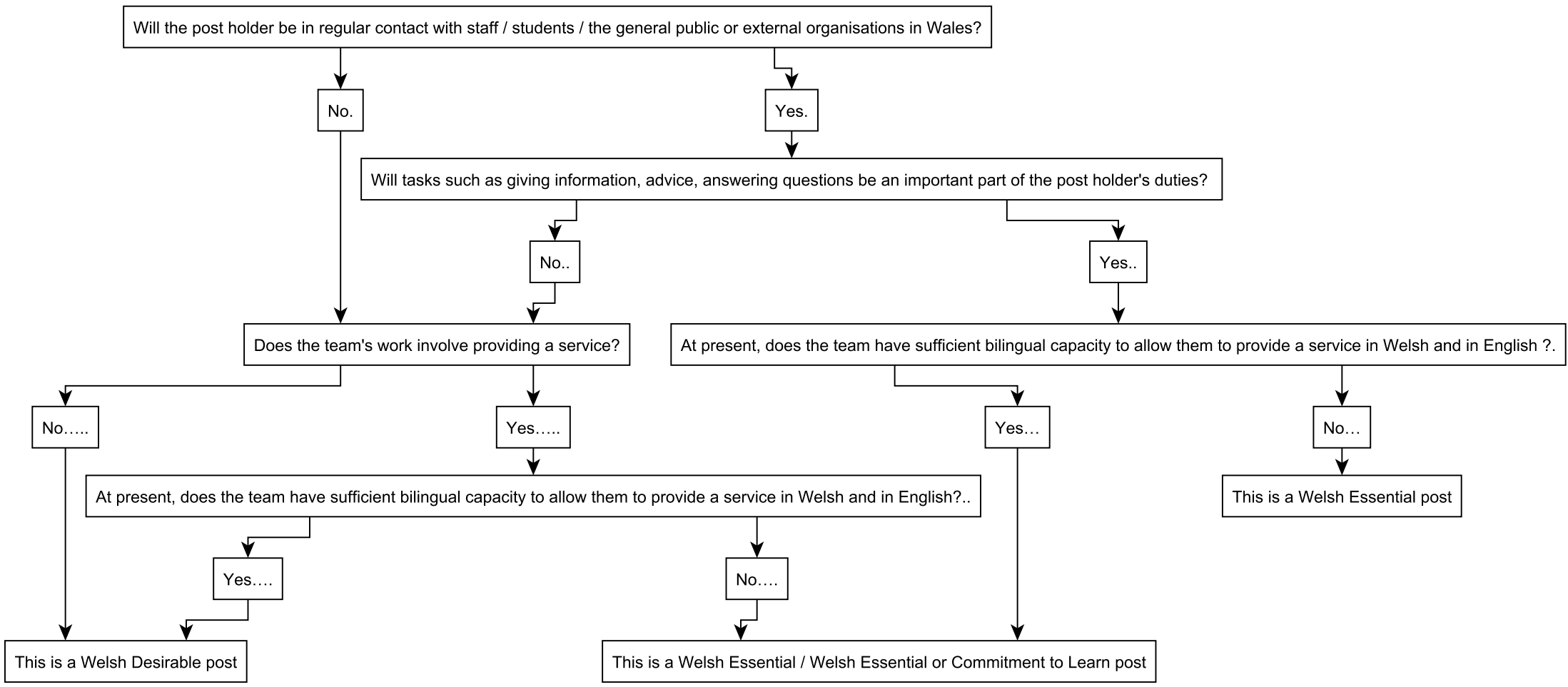


Chart B: Grade 7 and Above

