Prifysgol **Wrecsam Wrexham** University

Welsh Language Annual Report

1st August 2023 – 31st July 2024



A Welsh version of this report is available to download on the University's website and hard copies inboth Welsh and English are available in offices open to the public.

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INTRODUCTION

Wrexham University is under a legal duty to comply with the Welsh Language Standards as imposed by the Welsh Language Commissioner. As an education provider the University also has a duty to promote the use of the language not only amongst our own employees and students but also with our other external stakeholders.

The compliance with the Welsh Language Standards is monitored through the formal committee structure of the University: The Welsh Language Monitoring Committee which meets three times a year. Responsibility for monitoring compliance lies with the University's General Counsel and University Secretary and the promotion of the use of the language and the embedding of it in the University's curriculum and educational practices lies with the Head of Welsh Medium Development.

Should the Welsh Language Commissioner request information on how we comply with the standards we are under a duty to provide it and we have continued to engage constructively with the Commissioner over the course of this reporting period, regarding our efforts to promote and encourage the use of the Welsh language.

This year has seen the first full year of operation of our Welsh Medium Academic Strategy and Action Plan, CYFLE, which was approved last year by both the University Academic Board and by Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. CYFLE is the first strategy of its kind to be implemented at the University focussing on the enhancement, provision and development of the Welsh language, and demonstrates the University's ongoing commitment to the use and promotion of the Welsh language. Its objectives are based on the principles that the Welsh language is for all at the University – staff, students, visitors and the wider community. The University also took part in the Welsh Language Commissioner's 'Defnyddia dy Gymraeg' (use your Welsh) campaign and joined hundreds of organisations across Wrexham at the official proclamation and parade for the Eisteddfod visit to Wrexham in 2025.

Staff and students now have more opportunities to engage with the Welsh language through Welsh in the Workplace pathways for students and the Welsh at Work scheme for staff. The development of Welsh language skills has led to the implementation of a full time Welsh Language skills tutor at the University. As a University, we are often promoting Welsh language initiatives by the Welsh Language Commissioner's office and celebrating the language and culture of Wales. For example, on St David's Day we celebrate the day by hosting a coffee morning and singing Welsh songs together as staff; we celebrate the Welsh language Shwmae/Sumae day with a coffee morning for staff and students at the Students Union; and we were proud to be present at the National Eisteddfod in Pontypridd in August.

Paul Davies Deputy Vice Chancellor

COMPLIANCE

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 replaced the Welsh Language Act 1993 and as part of this legislation, both the Welsh and English languages have equal legal status and neither must be treated any less favourably. Under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, all public bodies in Wales are required to comply with language duties which ensure that the Welsh language is nottreated less favourably than the English language. The duties include encouragement of the promotion of the Welsh language and require that provision is made for the accessibility of Welsh to the public.

In accordance with Section 44 of the 2011 Measure, the Welsh Language Commissioner issued a **Compliance Notice** on the 29th September 2017 to the University containing 178 individual standards to which the University is required to comply with under the following themes; service delivery, operational, policy making and record keeping.

The Standards detail the University's responsibilities in terms of providing bilingual services to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated any less favourably than the English language.

The standards aim to:

- make it clear to the University what its duties are in relation to the Welsh language,
- make it clearer to Welsh speaking students, staff and the public what servicesthey can expect to receive in Welsh from the University
- make Welsh language services more consistent and improve their quality.

The Welsh Language Commissioner has a statutory duty to monitor organisations' compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, and investigate compliants and breaches in compliance. It is within their power to impose enforcement action, county court judgements and fines.

The University is required to publish its Welsh Language Standards annual report by the end of January each year and to publicise it appropriately.

Implementing the Welsh Language Standards

Welsh Language Monitoring Committee (WLMC)

The Welsh Language Monitoring committee was established by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in August 2018 (following dissolution of the former informal Welsh Language Monitoring Group) and is currently chaired by Paul Davies the current Deputy Vice Chancellor. The committee consists of members of both senior management and operational staff at appropriate levels., it is an advisory committee that does not have delegated decision- making powers and is a Sub-Committee of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor has strategic leadership for the Welsh Standards both from a compliance and language perspective. The day-to-day implementation of the Welsh Language provision is met by the Head of Welsh Medium Development and the University's Welsh Language Champion. The day-to-day implementation of Welsh language compliance is met by the University General Counsel and University Secretary and the Information Governance and Compliance Manager. Ultimate responsibility for the University's compliance with the Welsh language standards lies with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

The Committee meets four times each Academic year as per its Terms of Reference.

This Annual Report is reviewed by the following committees within the University whose Terms of Reference include a requirement to monitor the University's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards:

- Welsh Language Monitoring Committee
- Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team
- People and Culture Committee

The role and function of the WLMC committee is to support and facilitate compliance with the Welsh Language Standards throughout the University, ensuring that:

- 1. **Policies and Procedures -** relevant policies and procedures are established to comply with legislation, oversight of implementation occurs and all policies and procedures are periodically updated.
- 2. **Management of Risk** the implementation of strategies/policies associated with legislation related to Welsh Language are monitored to ensure compliance and that the University undertakes timely record keeping and comprehensive reporting in accordance with the University's Compliance Notice.
- 3. **Practice** all practice promotes and engenders a culture of quality improvement and the sharing of good practice with regard to the Welsh Language, ensuring the availability of high quality information at the point of service delivery. In addition,

any necessary guidance, support, and help should provide clarity to ensure the correct interpretation of relevant Standards and how University practice can be compliant.

- 4. Communications and staff development the development and oversight of a communications and training programme is maintained to raise awareness within the University, and with others as appropriate, regarding all aspects of Welsh Language, providing appropriate advice in response to events and incidents and supporting staff to develop the skills and behaviours necessary to ensure compliance.
- 5. **Complaints-** reports are received, and recommendations made on actions, following any complaints (including but not limited to the Welsh Language Standards) and where appropriate remedial action is undertaken or recommended and that these actions are monitored.

Compliance with Standards

Written correspondence

When the preferred language of the person being contacted is unknown, or when groups of people are being written to through for example, email newsletters etc, all initial correspondence should be bilingual with Welsh positioned on the left, or on top, so that it appears first. Where the language preference is known, communication should be conducted in that language. When someone writes to the University using both Welsh and English, a bilingual response is provided.

University letterheads include a statement welcoming correspondence in both Welsh and English, advising the use of Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Email signatures and/or email footers state that correspondence is welcomed in Welsh and English, that response times are the same for both languages where employees are fluent speakers or learners. Signatures also include Welsh in the Workplace logos include bilingual job titles and contact details .

Guidance is provided to all staff during their induction on setting out of office replies in Welsh and English and reminders are distributed via the campus newsletter throughout the year.

Telephone calls

The University's main telephone number connects to an automated telephone system which greets the caller bilingually (Welsh message first). Thereafter, the system allows the caller to choose whether they wish to speak to an employee in Welsh or English.

Employees are instructed on how to deal with calls in order to ensure that callers receive the best service in the language of their choice.

Meetings

When arranging meetings with those external to the University, attendees are asked to confirm their preferred language in advance and simultaneous translation is offered if required.

The University conducts its internal meetings in English; however, it provides full simultaneous translation upon request.

Any minutes published on the University's website are provided in English and Welsh.

Events

Over 2023/24 the University has hosted various internal and external events to promote its work and engage with stakeholders.

Welsh language opportunities day was launched where local schools and further education colleges were invited on campus to meet Welsh academic staff and to learn about the Welsh language opportunities that are offered. All University open days now promote the Welsh language with staff on hand to meet and greet Welsh language families.

Wrexham University hosted the second Welsh language 'Hay Scribblers' event with external speakers as well as presentations from the Coleg Cymraeg branch officer.



The University graduation ceremony was conducted bilingually, with the presentation opened in Welsh by the University orator.

In April the University hosted its Annual Open meeting, and the Head of Welsh Medium Development presented a bilingual update to external stakeholders on recent Welsh language development as well as the forthcoming National Eisteddfod visit to Wrexham in 2025. 'Wrexham Talks' Research Public Lectures are a series of free, on-campus evening lectures run by the Research Office and are open to all. Wrexham Talks Research is a key part of the Wrexham University public face, and the lectures' purpose is to invite discussion and debate in a variety of thought-provoking subject areas. The University prides itself on applied research, research that transforms, and research that impacts the local community and the wider world; the lecture series share this in an accessible way for all.

All Wrexham Research Talks marketing materials are bilingual, including series brochures, posters, banners, the Eventbrite page, emails, email banners, and the website. The Research Office endeavours to provide a Welsh Speaker at Public Lectures to ensure that audience members can ask a question in Welsh at the end of the Lecture. All public lectures are recorded and made available on the University Websites with a Welsh transcript.

The Welsh Language Commissioner, Efa Jones and Osian Llywelyn, Quality Regulations Manager within the commissioner's office, visited the University in January and were joined by the Vice Chancellor of Wrexham University and Head of Welsh Development, to meet with the Speech and Language Therapy students. The session focused on how students use the Welsh language in healthcare settings as part of their placements, and also included a tour of the Health & Education Innovation Quarter (HEIQ).



All external events hosted by the University are conducted bilingual with the opportunity for participants to ask questions in Welsh or English. PowerPoint presentations at events are also bilingual and attendees are offered simultaneous translation which is provided if requested and all recordings of events are subtitled and uploaded onto the University website in Welsh.

Members of staff also attended a range of events including other University open days, and recruitment fairs where at least one employee attending is Welsh speaking.

In 2023/24 Wrexham University attended the National Eisteddfod in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Following the success of the visit to Boduan in 2023, the Rhondda visit involved over twenty staff with a variety of events taking place showcasing departments such as <u>Civic Mission</u>, the <u>Students Union</u>, <u>X-plore centre</u> and various academic areas with a themed day every week. Activities included.

- Monday, August 5 Learning Welsh
- Tuesday, August 6 Education
- Wednesday, August 7 Health
- Thursday, August 8 Law and Criminology
- Friday, August 9 Art



Wrexham University launched its work-based learning 'Allied Health' modules at the Eisteddfod in 2023/24. The Welsh language work-based modules will enable students to communicate with patients in their first language while on placement. Present at the launch was Nesta Mc Cluskey, Clinical Director of Allied Health Professionals at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Nia Wyn Williams, a Consultant Stroke Therapist joining Elen Mai Nefydd, the Head of Welsh Development, Ffion Roberts Senior Lecturer in Speech and Language therapy and Awel Wynne-Williams, lecturer in nursing participating in a panel discussion. The addition of the Welsh medium workbased learning modules are not only beneficial for students' development but also for patients in North Wales, whose first language is Welsh.

Elen Mai Nefydd, Head of Welsh Development was also interviewed by Ffion Emyr from BBC Radio Cymru whilst at the Eisteddfod regarding the recent Welsh developments at Wrexham University along with the Eisteddfod's visit to Wrexham in 2025.



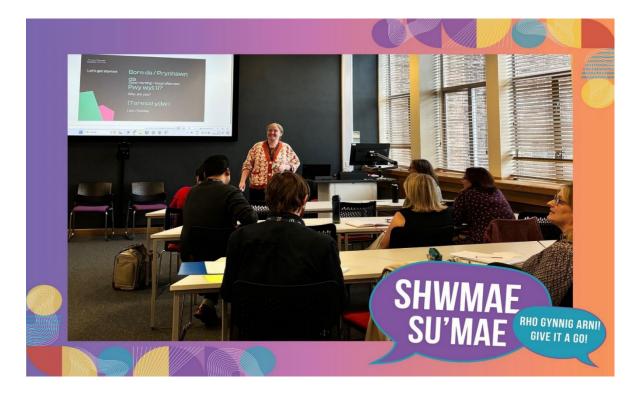
In April 2024 people and organisations in Wrexham were invited to take part in the official proclamation for the National Eisteddfod in Wrexham 2025. More than 500 local residents and members of Gorsedd Cymru formed a procession through the streets of Wrexham, followed by a ceremony held in the Gorsedd Circle on Llwyn Isaf in the city centre. This was an opportunity for local people and visitors to see one of the <u>Gorsedd's</u> colourful ceremonies. The current Archdruid, Myrddin ap Dafydd, also installed Mererid as the new Archdruid. The University was proud to be a part of this celebration and assist in welcoming the Eisteddfod officially to Wrexham in 2025.



Welsh learners joined the Mayor of Wrexham, Cllr. Andy Williams to take part in the St David's Day celebration parade held on Friday, 1st March 2024. The parade assembled on the paths of Llwyn Isaf outside the Guildhall the parade progressed along the streets of Wrexham.



Wrexham University took part in the 'Diwrnod Shwmae/Sumae Day' in October 2024. The day is designed to promote the idea of starting every conversation with shwmae, su'mae or shwdi! The event aims to show that the Welsh language belongs to all – fluent speakers, learners or those shy about their Welsh and encourages Welsh learners to 'give it a go' - 'rhowch gynnig arni' whatever their level of ability. The Day is celebrated annually on the **15th of October**





Signage, notices, publicity, and promotional materials, documents, and forms

University materials produced for students and external stakeholders are either bilingual, with Welsh positioned on the left or on top so that it appears first, or in separate Welsh and English versions. English only versions notify the reader that the material is available in Welsh.

Website and social media

The University website and associated web-services are fully bilingual, and users can easily switch between Welsh and English.

Main social media accounts are on <u>Twitter</u>, Facebook and <u>YouTube</u> and all tweets and messages are posted in Welsh and English on one feed.

All social media messages are responded to in the language of the original query. Videos on the University's YouTube channel are posted in Welsh and English wherever possible and subtitles are provided in Welsh and English when an interviewee speaks in one language.

Policies and Procedures

All policies and procedures presented for approval are required to be accompanied by a Welsh Language Impact Assessment Form to demonstrate that the introduction of such policies and procedures would not be detrimental to the Welsh Language. In 2023/24 the impact assessment form was reviewed to align with Cymraeg 2050 the Welsh Governments national strategy for increasing the number of Welsh speakers to a million by 2050.

The University also has a Welsh Language Policy which is reviewed every 3 years or as and when there are changes to legislation.

All policies, procedures or documentation that is uploaded to the University's website are in both Welsh and English.



Complaints

The University received one informal complaint in 2023/2024, relating to a Wrexham University social media page that did not include a bilingual title.

The University also received one formal complaint in 2023/2024, this was regarding a sign at a pop-up event where the Welsh text was slightly smaller compared with the English text.

Internal Spot Checks

The University's Information Governance and Compliance team operate regular spot checks of signage both within and external to premises. Colleagues within departments are notified of any issues identified to ensure correction. Details of these and actions taken to address are reported to the Welsh Language Monitoring Committee.

During this reporting period, there were a number of issues identified and highlighted to colleagues. These included:

- Some out of office automatic responses that had English only messages, bilingual messages but where the Welsh text did not match the English text, or where the Welsh text was not displayed in the same format as the English text
- Some posters displayed on University premises that were not bilingual (Welsh and English)
- A webpage for International students that was not populated in the Welsh version.
- No Wrexham University Instagram page.
- Signage where the Welsh text was smaller than the English
- Some documents on the website that had the English and Welsh versions saved in different formats, such as Microsoft Word and PDF.

These themes were identified through internal spot checks, such as reviewing the website and associated social media pages, mystery calls to the three campus receptions, and reviews of posters displayed around buildings.

RECRUITMENT

The University continues to evaluate the requirement for Welsh language skills at the vacancy request stage and recruiting managers are supported to consider the requirement for Welsh speaking skills by their HR Business Partner. It is mandatory for the Recruiting Manager to indicate at the vacancy request stage whether Welsh skills are Essential or Desirable for each request. A further enhancement to the recruitment system was implemented in 2023/24 which ensures that the information on the vacancy request is automatically populated to the advert when the vacancy is advertised. This removes the manual element of having to add a sentence to each advert eliminating the risk of not displaying the level of Welsh Language skills required for the role.

When advertising Welsh essential posts, the University will consider using Welsh language recruitment websites. At interview stage, at least one member of the selection panel is a fluent Welsh speaker and asks the candidate at least one question in Welsh, requiring a response in Welsh.

Our application form provides a space for applicants to indicate if they wish to use the Welsh language at interview, or at any other method of assessment. It also explains that we will provide a translation service, if required.

When we offer a new post, we ask the individual whether they wish to receive any formal correspondence, including the contract of employment, in Welsh.

In the reporting year, we advertised new and vacant posts (as detailed below):

Standards 145/145A - In relation to the number of vacancy adverts in 2023/2024 – please find data below.

01/08/2023 to 31/07/2024			
	Academic	Professional Services	Totals
Welsh Essential	3	2	5
Welsh Desirable	121	145	266
Welsh Not Required	0	0	0
Total adverts			271

WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS

To support compliance with Welsh language standards 134/158 the University implemented a new HR System in August 2022 with the employee Self Service module going live in October 2022. A staff survey to capture information on Welsh Language Skills was planned to take place during 2023/2024, however due to the delay in the migration of the new recruitment and HR system this was delayed to 2024/2025. It is anticipated that data will be collected from new starters and existing employees during 2024/2025 which will follow the CEFR <u>framework</u> recommended by the Welsh Language Commissioners Office. The survey results for 2024/2025 will be available by the end of the Academic Year.

WELSH MEDIUM DELIVERY AND ENHANCEMENT

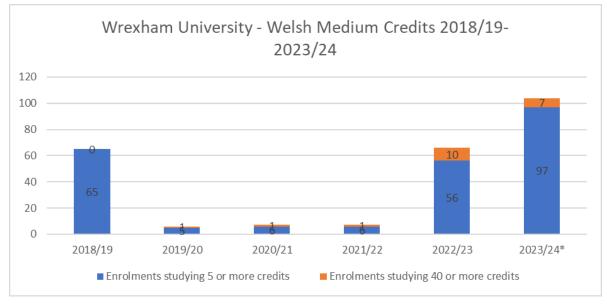
Since 2022 Wrexham University has been committed to the development of Welsh and bilingual provision through it's strategy - CYFLE. Regular updates on CYFLE are reported to the Learning Teaching and Quality Committee, the Recruitment and Retention committee, the Academic Board, The Welsh Language Monitoring Committee and Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.

In addition, an annual review and update on Welsh Language provision was completed for Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol in November 2023, alongside a mid-year review at the end of May 2024. A review of the Inter-professional provision in Health was also completed in June 2024.

At the end of each semester staff at Wrexham University were asked to record any Welsh medium activity within their programmes. https://forms.office.com/e/6chzaQ0zRg

Data on Welsh medium credits

Seven students on fourty credits or more; Ninety seven students on five or more credits



Fourty credits in the medium of Welsh are now offered on the Speech and Language Therapy programme and the Football training programme. Twenty credits are offered on the Law programme and Allied Health programmes including Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Operating Practices can now offer work-based learning modules through the medium of Welsh.

The Faculty of Social Life Sciences launched their Foundation programme in 2024 including Welsh language modules and the Faculty of Arts Computing and Engineering are developing modules for 2025.

As of the beginning of the 2023/24 academic year, students on the Professional Policing degree at Wrexham University are required to complete the Welsh in the Workplace module as part of their studies. Fifteen students successfully achieved a Level 2 Welsh in the Workplace qualification. This will help prepare them for working with North Wales Police where this is a professional requirement. Wrexham University have worked closely with North Wales Police on developing this provision and for 2024/25 this is being extended to Law and Criminology students also.

Interprofessional Welsh Language awareness day

In January 2024 two of the Academic Development Team led on the first Interprofessional Welsh Language awareness day in Health and Nursing. The event titled 'Care and Language Hand in Hand' saw more than two hundred Nursing and Allied Health students taking part in a collaborative Inter-professional Education Day – with a focus on the Welsh language within healthcare settings. The event featured talks from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) and Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol representatives.

The day consisted of a morning conference with speakers from the Health Board and Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, in the afternoon the cohorts were able to network

with other students and discover more about the different Allied Health disciplines, as well as take the opportunity to speak with various organisations, such as Menter laith, Coleg Cambria and the University's Welsh Language Tutor, Teresa Davies. Students were also able to learn more about Welsh language classes and societies to practice the language outside of the classroom. The afternoon session saw students take on mini-Welsh lessons, based on their ability, aimed to increase their confidence, and widen their healthcare related vocabulary.



Learning Lunch

The Head of Welsh Development delivered a Learning Lunch to all staff across various departments of the University on the findings of the research conducted by OB3 company and Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol regarding students' attitudes to studying in Welsh at Welsh universities and students' attitudes to leaving Wales to study over the border in England. Staff at the University contributed to the consultation document on this research and reported the findings to Y Coleg Cymraeg Academic Board at Aberystwyth University in May. Some of the themes identified in the research included:

- the need further support for students on the transition into HE from Welsh medium education.
- support for confidence building, flexibility and support with terminology
- The need for more Welsh-medium staff at the University.

National Award

The Head of Welsh Development was recognised for her contribution to the Welsh

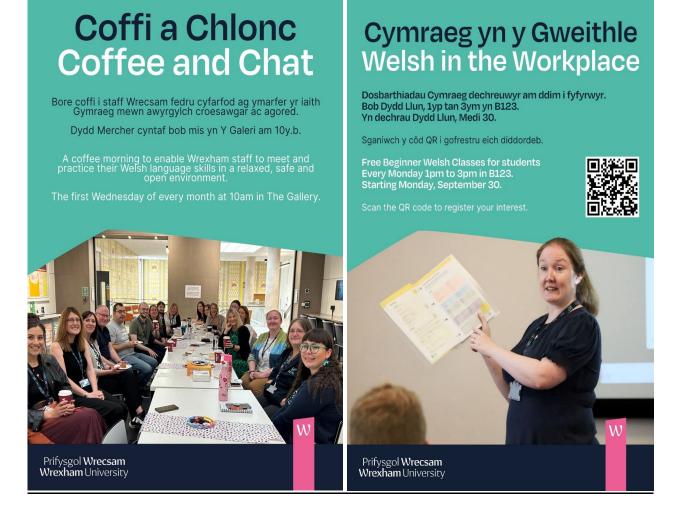
language and bilingual education provision in the higher education (HE) sector at a prestigious national awards ceremony. Y Coleg Cymraeg Annual Awards took place in June at Canolfan S4C yr Egin in Camarthen, where Elen Mai Nefydd received the Outstanding Contribution Award, which recognised her hard work and dedication throughout her two decades working in HE.



Welsh at Work Scheme

Funding for the Welsh Work scheme for 2024/25 was approved by the Welsh Language Centre and as a result the University is now able to provide five levels of Welsh Language study for all staff. Sixty members of staff took an interest in the courses this year. As part of the scheme, the University runs a coffee morning 'Coffi a Chlonc' on every first Wednesday of each month which is well attended by staff and these sessions now directly link to the learning activities of the staff who follow the Welsh Work scheme.

A Welsh learner who became fluent in three years was appointed as the Welsh language tutor and was awarded the Welsh Language champion of the year at the annual Student Union awards in May 2024.



Welsh in the Workplace

These pathways are designed for all students at the University and assist students to improve their Welsh Language skills while studying at Wrexham University. These pathways are free of charge for all students studying at Wrexham University.

Welsh Language Certificate

During 2023/24, two students from Wrexham University were successful in completing the Welsh Language Skills certificate run by Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.



'Coleg Cymraeg'

The 'Coleg Cymraeg' branch at the University (Cangen Wrecsam) was established in 2022 and is still thriving, the branch is an opportunity to discuss 'Coleg Cymraeg' academic matters with staff and students at the University. All are welcome to the meetings but an established core membership of Welsh language staff (operational and academic) as well as student representation has now been established. Five branch meetings are held during the academic

branch meetings are held during the academic calendar.

The 'Coleg Cymraeg' Academic Board is a forum for hearing the voice of the higher education academic community and to advise on activities in the sector. Membership includes: the Chairperson, representatives of the student and staff communities; providers (individuals with strategic responsibilities for the Welsh language within their organisation); co-



opted members. Wrexham University representatives on the board are Elen Mai Nefydd (Head of Welsh Development, Awel Wynne Williams (Children's Nursing Lecturer) and Effon Roberts (Lecturer in Speech and Language and Welsh champion for Health and Llio Owen (student representative)

Wrexham University recruited three Coleg Cymraeg student ambassadors in 2023/24. The ambassadors' roles are important to represent the Welsh language at the University within the student body but also to represent the University on a national level through the Welsh Language. The appointed ambassadors were Hedd Owen from the Physiotherapy programme, Hanna John from Professional Policing and Catherine Lewis from Nursing in St Asaph.



Freshers Week/Students Union

Welsh and bilingual events were promoted to students at Wrexham University during Freshers week. The activities included a formal presentation from the Head of Welsh Development on the Welsh language opportunities on offer, an informal coffee morning, and a Welsh/bilingual Bingo event.



A Welsh language music event was also offered during the Freshers Fair.

Staff from the branch also attend the subject panels of Y Coleg Cymraeg 4 – Law, Psychology, Social work, Health, and Football Coaching.



WORKPLAN FOR 2024/25

CYFLE'S revised Action Plan builds on the work established in 2023/24 with further developments taking shape around Welsh language provision, including:

- Increase in Welsh/bilingual students and a continued growth in Welsh medium credits. Areas of growth include Health, Law, Football Training and Youth and Community, with areas of development for Welsh language skills in Social Work, Allied Health and Nursing, STEM and Criminology.
- Protecting the legal rights for students to study and receive services through the medium of Welsh.
- Contributing to the Governments initiative for a million Welsh speakers by 2050 by continuing the partnership with the Welsh Language Centre.
- Increasing levels of Welsh provision for staff and by upskilling students in Welsh language skills in preparation for the workplace.
- Contributing to the enhancement of a bilingual workforce through developments in formalising Welsh language awareness in interprofessional work in health.
- Solidifying community and cultural links in anticipation of events such as the National Eisteddfod visit to Wrexham in 2025, the City of Culture bid in 2029 which in turn will enhance our civic mission
- Strengthening our relationship with Coleg Cambria through Welsh language opportunities.
- Further developing Welsh employability provision through the medium of Welsh.
- Further developing learning and teaching materials through the Welsh language, especially through the success of the recent grant from *Y Coleg* to develop Welsh medium simulation resources through the medium of Welsh.

FURTHER INFORMATION / PROVIDE FEEDBACK

For further information regarding the University's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, or if you wish to provide us with constructive feedback regarding our Welsh language provision, please contact the following email address: welshcompliance@wrexham.ac.uk