



Welsh language standards

Annual Report 2017/2018

This report has been produced in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh language standards

Mae'r adroddiad yma hefyd ar gael yn y Gymraeg

This report is also available in Welsh

Contact

Please contact us on cymraeg@wno.org.uk if you would like further information about this report

Introduction

The Welsh Language standards, introduced as part of the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011, puts a legal framework in place which gives individuals the right to access certain services through the medium of Welsh.

Welsh National Opera (WNO) is subject to the standards, and as of January 2017 we have been complying with a total of 136 standards which cover the following areas:

Standards	Total
Service Delivery – Relating to the way we deliver services to the public	57
Policy Making – Relating to our policy decisions	9
Operational – Relating to provisions for our staff	42
Record Keeping – Relating to how we keep records	8
Supplementary – Relating to how we report on progress	20

WNO is committed to achieving the standards - our Welsh heritage and language is important to us and it is what makes us unique. We make sure Welsh is not treated less favourably than English, when we:

- Write letters or emails
- Receive phone calls
- Organise meetings and events
- Promote our work in print or on-line
- Use social media
- Issue any public documents
- Provide reception service during our productions

This, our second report, covers the 2017/2018 financial year which came to an end on the 31 of August 2018.

Overview

A detailed **Action Plan** which identified the work that was needed to ensure we were able to comply by the imposition date was produced. Key staff and relevant teams were involved in the development of the plan, with new and revised **guidelines and documents** produced covering a wide range of areas to help WNO staff comply.

As part of this a new **Welsh Language Commitment** was developed, designed to explain to the public how we aim to provide services through the medium of Welsh. As part of the

preparatory work an **internal communications campaign** was implemented, the objectives were to:

- Raise awareness of staff of their responsibilities in relation to the standards
- Highlight the help available to them in their work from day to day

Service delivery standards – Highlights

We are very pleased with how our staff have approached the standards, compliance is considered to be 'business as usual' in key departments, with the Director of Marketing & Sales continuing to provide the organisational leadership on the standards from an operational perspective.

During the year we launched our new website, working closely with the designers, and our retained Welsh language advisors, we ensured that it fully complies with the requirements of the standards. The site also has a specific page which is home to all things related to the standards themselves.

We reviewed and updated our Brand & Style Guide to ensure that the requirements of the standards are considered, helping employees to achieve compliance and ensure a consistent style and format to our printed and digital materials.

Service delivery standards – compliance and complaints

We believe that we are successfully complying with the requirements of all standards imposed within this class.

During the reporting period, we received no complaints in relation to the way we comply with the Service Delivery standards.

Policy making standards – Highlights

Having developed a policy assessment matrix, we continue to make use of the tool to assess the impact of relevant new and revised policies on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language. The same tool ensures that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.

Policy making standards – compliance and complaints

We believe that we are successfully complying with the requirements of all imposed standards within this class.

During the reporting period, we received no complaints in relation to the way we comply with the Policy Making standards.

Operational standards – Highlights

We provided briefings and refresher sessions to staff about the requirements of the standards, ensuring that key messages are re-enforced. These include:

- Ensuring that when we write to someone for the first time or if we don't know in which language they would like us to correspond, that we will write to them bilingually
- Ensuring that we state clearly in our correspondence, advertisements and publications that we welcome contact through the medium of Welsh

- Ensuring that each member of our staff who receives phone calls directly from the public will greet them in Welsh.
- Ensuring that all documents, promotional material and advertisements that we produce are available in Welsh and English and that both languages feature as prominently as the other

Operational standards – specific reporting requirements

In line with the requirements of the standards, we consider the need for Welsh language skills for every new post or vacancy we advertise. During the reporting period we advertised a total of 51 posts, they were classed as follows:

Total No. of post advertised during reporting period	51
Posts where Welsh language skills were essential	1
Posts where Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post	0
Posts where Welsh language skills were desirable	50
Posts where Welsh language skills were not necessary	0

In line with the requirements of the standards, we keep a record of the Welsh language skills of our staff. Based on a self-assessment questionnaire, the number of employees who assessed themselves as having Welsh language skills are as follows:

Total number of staff at the end of the year	263	
Welsh language skills	No.	%
Staff with Welsh language listening, reading, speaking and writing skills, based on self-assessment (level 3 and above)	20	8
Staff with basic Welsh language listening, reading, speaking and writing skills, based on self-assessment (levels 1 and 2)	88	33
Staff with no skills or yet to complete assessment at the end of the year	154	59

In line with the requirements of the standards, we offer training in Welsh in the following areas, when training is provided in English:

- Recruitment and interviewing
- Performance management
- Complaints and disciplinary procedures
- Induction
- Dealing with the public
- Health and Safety

During the reporting period, none of the attendees for the relevant courses noted that they would wish to receive the training through the medium of Welsh. However, we confirm that we have procedures in place to respond should the offer be accepted.

As an employer, we actively encourage our staff to learn or improve their Welsh skills, during the year, 22 staff members enrolled on the 'Work Welsh' online training, 1 staff member of staff undertook a week-long residential course while another has been attending weekly classes.

Due to an increasing level of interest in Welsh lessons, we plan on taking a more focussed and strategic approach in the future by undertaking a whole staff mapping exercise to establish their requirements.

Operational standards – compliance and complaints

We believe that we are successfully complying with the requirements of all imposed standards within this class.

During the reporting period, we received no complaints in relation to the way we comply with the operational standards.