



Welsh Language Standards
Annual Report for 2016/17
Welsh National Opera

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Mae'r adroddiad yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg / This report is available in Welsh

Introduction

The Welsh Language standards, introduced as part of the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011, put 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 Measure, and as of 25th of January 2017, has complied with a number of standards, and as detailed below, a number of additional standards were imposed on the 25th of July.

‘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 online
- Use social media
- Issue any public documents
- Provide reception service during our productions

Due to the to the timing of the standard imposition process, this report, which is our first, covers the period between the date when the standards became operational and the end of our Financial Year (31st August). The focus is on the work undertaken to prepare for the standards.

The Standards and WNO - Overview

A total of 136 standards have been imposed on WNO in 5 areas:

Standards	Compliance 25.01.2017	Compliance 25.07.2017	Total
Service Delivery	52	5	57
Policy Making	9	-	9
Operational	18	24	42
Record Keeping	7	1	8
Supplementary	20	-	20

The Standards and WNO – Planning

Following receipt of the Final Compliance Notice in late July 2016, WNO decided to take a strategic approach in planning for the standards. Having sought the assistance of specialist consultancy **Ateb**, a full **audit and analysis** was undertaken to establish where we needed to focus in preparation for the standards.

A detailed **Action Plan** was produced which highlighted the work that was needed to ensure we were able to comply by the imposition date in January. Key staff and relevant teams were involved in the production of the plan.

New and revised **guidelines and documents** were produced covering a wide range of areas to help WNO staff comply, these included a comprehensive Compliance Plan, which is available on our website and a staff compliance guide.

A new Welsh **Language Charter** was developed, designed to explain to the public about how we aim to provide services through the medium of Welsh.

As part of the preparatory work an **internal communications campaign** was developed, the objectives were to:

- Raise awareness of staff of their responsibilities
- Highlight the help available to them in their day to day working lives

Working with **Ateb** and colleagues from the Wales Millennium Centre, briefing sessions were held in January for staff. The focus was on raising awareness and delivering a strong and consistent message about what we needed to do in response to the standards.

The standards and the WNO – Service Delivery

Actions put in place to ensure compliance with the Service Delivery standards included putting processes in place in the following areas:

- **Corresponding with WNO**
 - Putting plans in place to ensure 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
 - Offering our 'friends' and donors the opportunity to receive correspondence from us in Welsh
- **Contacting by phone**
 - Ensuring that each employee who receives phone calls directly from the public greet in Welsh
- **Publications and written material**
 - 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
 - Promoting our Welsh language services in our seasonal programme
- **Digital and online**
 - We reviewed our website to ensure that it was fully bilingual
 - We developed a specific section on our website which contains all the information about how WNO complies with the language standards

We believe that we are successfully complying with the required standards in this area. During the reporting period, no complaints were received relating to our compliance with the Service Delivery standards.

The standards and WNO – Policy Making

We developed an assessment tool, to assess the impact of relevant new and revised policies on:

- opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language
- treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language

Using the tool, our HR policies were assessed, all of which are now available in Welsh.

We believe that we are successfully complying with the required standards in this area. During the reporting period, no complaints were received relating to our compliance with the Policy Making standards.

The standards and WNO – Operational

Our preparatory work focussed on developing a new policy on using Welsh internally for the purpose of promoting and facilitating the use of the language and confirming the compliance requirements in respect of key Human Resources areas such as recruitment, personal development and disciplinary and complaint procedures.

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 13 posts, they were classed as follows:

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	7
Posts where Welsh language skills were not necessary	5

We now also record the number of employees who have **Welsh language skills** at the end of each financial year, at the end of 2016/17 the position was as follows:

Total Number of staff = 234

Total number of staff with Welsh language listening, reading, speaking and writing skills, based on self-assessment (level 3 and above) = 21 (9%)

Total number of staff with basic Welsh language listening and reading skills, based on self-assessment (levels 1 and 2) = 54 (23%)

Total number of staff with basic Welsh language speaking and writing skills, based on self-assessment (levels 1 and 2) = 18 (8%)

In accordance with standard 124, which was imposed in late July, we offer **training** in Welsh in certain areas, when training in those areas are provided in English. During the reporting period, one relevant training opportunity was offered to management, none of the attendees noted that they would wish to receive the training through the medium of Welsh.

We believe that we are successfully complying with the required standards in this area. During the reporting period, no complaints were received relating to our compliance with the Operational standards.