

Supplementary  
guidance:  
inspecting the  
Welsh language  
in work-based  
learning

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### **What is the purpose?**

To provide guidance to inspectors for evaluating Welsh language outcomes and provision when it is a line of enquiry.

### **For whom is it intended?**

For inspectors of all work-based learning providers.

### **From when should the guidance be used?**

January 2014

## **1 Introduction**

Increasing the number of Welsh speakers and the number of people who use the Welsh language in their daily lives are government priorities.

The publication of the Welsh Assembly Government's Welsh-medium Education Strategy (April 2010) reaffirms its commitment to improving the quality of Welsh-medium and bilingual provision. The Strategy also sets a direction for improving how Welsh is taught, in particular Welsh second language. It sets an expectation that all work-based providers, should move forward on the improvement agenda.

The advantages for learners of increasing their competence in Welsh and in being bilingual are well-documented. They include:

- extending language skills for the workplace;
- expanding their horizons and enriching their experiences of life;
- enhancing intellectual growth and mental agility<sup>1</sup>; and
- gaining an appreciation of diversity.

When evaluating Welsh language outcomes and provision, it is essential that you always consider what is reasonable when taking into account the linguistic background and context of the provider.

Inspectors should take account the linguistic background of the area the provider serves. For example, inspectors should expect that the achievements of learners in Welsh should be enhanced in providers serving an area where there is significant use of Welsh in the local community.

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<sup>1</sup> Research in Canada has revealed that bilingualism enhances attention and cognitive control in children and older adults and, in 2007, highlighted the impact of bilingualism on delaying the onset of dementia symptoms.

The Common Inspection Framework requires inspectors to comment on standards in 1.1.5 Welsh language and provision in 2.1.3 Welsh language provision in providers. It does not require inspectors to provide an overall judgment for these aspects. Inspectors should give careful consideration to the impact of any important areas for improvement relating to the questions overleaf on the judgment for the relevant quality indicator. When considering whether an area for development is important, inspectors should take into account the proportion of learners involved or affected by the shortcoming, in the light of the socio-linguistic nature of the provider and that of the area it serves.

## **2 Evaluating Welsh language**

### **Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?**

#### **1.1 Standards**

Inspectors should consider the following questions when inspecting and reporting on aspect 1.1.5 Welsh language:

- Does attainment in Welsh compare favourably with that in similar providers?
- Are learners making good progress in Welsh medium vocational sessions?
- Where applicable, do learners have a good grasp of terminology in Welsh in learning areas and across the curriculum?
- Where applicable, are learners developing increasing competence in using their Welsh skills?
- As appropriate, are learners confident and competent in using Welsh in a range of situations?
- In Welsh-medium provision, do a significant proportion of learners complete written work and final assessments in Welsh in all vocational areas and courses?

#### **1.2 Wellbeing**

- Do learners display positive attitudes and enjoyment in learning through the medium of Welsh?
- What proportions of learners are involved in extra-curricular or community events or activities where they are able to use their skills in Welsh?

### **Key Question 2: How good is provision?**

#### **2.1 Learning experiences**

Inspectors should consider the following questions when inspecting and reporting on aspect 2.1.3 Welsh language provision and the Welsh dimension:

- Do the provider's curriculum organisation and the time allocation enable learners to make and sustain good progress in their Welsh medium/ bilingual vocational skills?

- Is there continuity between school and the provider in terms of learners' experiences in Welsh and, where applicable, the extent of Welsh-medium provision?
- Where applicable, do learners have access to a full range of Welsh-medium vocational options?
- Do Welsh learners have increasing opportunities to develop their use of Welsh in a range of situations in the workplace?
- Do learning experiences across the curriculum enhance the development of learners' knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales?

## **2.2 Teaching or training**

- Is there a sequence of vocational learning activities that reinforces learners' skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing Welsh and their inter-dependency?
- Is there sufficient consolidation of new Welsh vocabulary and sentence patterns to ensure that learners use them with increasing independence?
- Are all Welsh learners given regular opportunities to apply and build on what they have learnt in previous session?
- Is there sufficient vocational trainer intervention to improve quality and accuracy of learners' oral competence in Welsh?
- Do Welsh-speaking vocational trainers make increasing use of Welsh as a medium of communication, both in sessions and in other situations?
- Where applicable, do learners have good opportunities and support to develop their Welsh skills?

## **2.3 Care, support and guidance**

- Is there good support for learners who are latecomers and have limited or no previous competence in Welsh?
- Are learners aware of the advantages of learning Welsh and becoming increasingly bilingual?

## **2.4 Learning environment**

- Does the provider have an ethos that promotes the Welsh language and culture and positive attitudes towards them?
- Is there extensive use of Welsh in displays and signage around the providers' buildings?
- Does the provider encourage learners and staff to make increasing use of Welsh, at the appropriate level, as a medium of informal communication?

## **Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?**

### **3.1 Leadership**

- Does the provider take good account of national priorities relating to Welsh as identified in Iaith Pawb and the Welsh Assembly Government's Welsh-medium Education Strategy?

### 3.2 Improving quality

- Do managers at all levels have a realistic view of what needs to be done to improve outcomes and provision in Welsh?
- Do improvement plans identify clear proposals to address areas in need of development?
- Is there clear evidence of a commitment to moving forward on the improvement agenda in relation to the Welsh Assembly Government's Welsh-medium Education Strategy?

### 3.3 Partnership working

- Is the provider working well in partnership with other providers to extend the availability of Welsh-medium provision on offer to learners, especially to meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure?
- Is there joint-working between work-based providers and secondary schools to ensure consistency and progression in learners' learning experiences in Welsh at transition?
- To what extent does the provider take advantage of the support offered by other bodies, such as Sgiliaith<sup>2</sup>, Mentrau Iaith<sup>3</sup> and Welsh for Adults regional consortia?

### 3.4 Resource management

- Where applicable, does the provider have enough staff who can train effectively through the medium of Welsh to ensure progression and continuity in Welsh-medium provision?
- Are all trainers who deliver Welsh vocational training confident to do so?
- Where applicable, is there good quality support for non-specialist Welsh vocational trainers and for other staff within the provider, such as participation in the Sabbaticals Scheme<sup>4</sup> or other Welsh training programmes?
- Is the provider taking every reasonable action in relation to the cost-effectiveness of delivering Welsh-medium provision?

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<sup>2</sup> Canolfan Sgiliaith offers support on bilingualism and Welsh and English communication skills to further education colleges. It offers practical advice on good practice, staff training, and resources, with the aim of enhancing students' bilingual skills and experiences.

<sup>3</sup> The Mentrau Iaith (Local Language Initiatives) support efforts to sustain the language at a community level. There are also Language Action Plans in designated areas that have been set up by the former Welsh Language Board to increase the use of the Welsh language in areas of special linguistic significance by co-ordinating activities for local people and institutions. Both the Mentrau Iaith and the Language Action Plans work in partnership with local and national organisations and stakeholders on various projects to promote the use of Welsh.

<sup>4</sup> The 'sabbaticals scheme' is a programme funded by the Welsh Government to increase the number of qualified teachers and lecturers who teach through the medium of Welsh. The first course was held in spring 2006.