

Third Annual Report on the Welsh Language Standards 2020

Based on data collected for the period
1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020

1 INTRODUCTION

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure established a legal framework to impose duties on certain organisations to comply with standards (Welsh Language Regulation (No. 6). The Standards aim to

- provide greater clarity to organisations on their duties on the Welsh language
- provide greater clarity to Welsh speakers about the services they can expect to receive in Welsh
- ensure more consistency of Welsh language services and improve their quality

The duties which derive from the Standards mean that organisations in Wales should not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language.

From 1 April 2018 the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama has a statutory duty to comply with the Welsh Language Standards as stated in the Compliance Notice which was issued on 29 September 2017. The Welsh Language Standards supersedes the College's Welsh Language Scheme.

In accordance with the requirements of the Standards, the College must produce an annual report in relation to each financial year, which deals with the way in which the College has complied with the standards. The report must be published no later than 6 months following the end of the financial year to which the report relates. This annual report deals with the period between 1 August 2019 and 31 July 2020.

The matters that must be reported on include:

- How the College has complied with the standards with which we were under a duty to comply during that year (per class of standards – service delivery, policy making, operational);
- The number of complaints received (per class of standards – service delivery, policy making, operational);
- Welsh language skills of employees;
- The number of members of staff who attended training courses offered in Welsh;
- The number of staff who wear a 'Working Wales' badge at the end of the financial year;
- The number of new and vacant posts advertised which were categorised according to various requirements in respect of Welsh language skills.

The report will be available on the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama's website from 31 January 2021.

1.1 Note with Respect to the Covid-19 Pandemic

This report covers the period in which the Covid-19 Pandemic became a major factor in the governance, administration, learning, teaching and public life of the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama. In almost all respects, the College's working practices have been adapted, sometimes at

great speed, and with some contextual constraints. Throughout this period, RWCMD has strived to ensure that its obligations are maintained and delivered in a timely way, mindful that requirements of Government with respect to health and safety in a pandemic, and the particular requirements of the ever-changing Covid-19 context, are sometimes held in tension with its statutory obligations in other areas, and frequently with the needs and wishes of its stakeholders.

To this end, RWCMD reports that:

- Whilst the College has been closed to the public, its public reception services have continued bilingually, including by phone and email. However, it has not been possible to ensure that the reception element of student and staff daily admission to the building (including daily temperature checks) has been always available bilingually.
- Signage and directional guidance within the building, including advice on social distancing was installed bilingually;
- Information and signage relating to Covid-19 testing was available bilingually; and
- Communication to stakeholders has been provided bilingually in accordance with our obligations, except in those cases where pressure of time and the need for immediate communication has been a mitigating factor.

2 GOVERNANCE AND MONITORING

2.1 Management of Welsh Language Policy and Compliance

The College's Welsh Language Steering Group, led by the Director of Finance & Operations, has management responsibility for the College's Welsh Language policy. In the Summer Term 2020, and as part of a general review of committees and groups at RWCMD, the Steering Group was enhanced, and as well as now reporting directly to the Senior Management Team, is obligated to review and monitor the activities of other committees and groups.

2.2 Monitoring

The Steering Group meets on a termly basis to review ongoing compliance with the Standards. Other monitoring activity includes regular inspections of Estates and signage, visitor services and communications.

3 COMPLIANCE

How the College has complied with the standards

Numerous resources and guidelines have been provided to RWCMD staff on its intranet 'RWCMD Hub'.

Through its regular Committee Calendar, staff meetings and one-to-one discussion, staff are reminded on a continuous basis of the requirements of compliance with the Standards in relation to their activities. Responses to questions or concerns are considered on an ad hoc basis, to support the resources which are publicly accessible.

During the period of this report, the College complied with the designated classification of standards in the following ways:

3.1 Service Delivery Standards

- 3.1.1. All communication to all staff and/or all students is done bilingually.
- 3.1.2. No meetings held principally in Welsh during this period. However, participants invited to virtual Open Days during this reporting period were asked to indicate language preference and staff and students were available to converse and answer questions in the Welsh Language on demand.
- 3.1.3. RWCMD has commissioned LfB Cymru Cyf to fulfil Welsh Translation services and maintains a central point of contact for the collation of materials to be translated professionally. Testun and Cymen were commissioned to provide translation services of part of the website.
- 3.1.4. In November 2019, RWCMD relaunched its website, now bilingual.
- 3.1.5. As an addition to the bilingual website, the RWCMD Financial Statements (Annual Report and Accounts) are also now available.

3.2 Policy Making Standards

- 3.2.1. RWCMD had replaced its former Welsh Language Policy with a Standards Implementation Policy (available on our website), which seeks to articulate the way the Welsh Language Standards are observed in practice. In turn, this points at other procedural documents which remain under constant revision, as well as drawing on the relationship with the University of South Wales, its parent body. It may be noted that with respect to certain policies, most notably Human Resource

Management and Health and Safety, RWCMD remains committed to the services of the University of South Wales.

- 3.2.2. During the reporting period, RWCMD published its revised Strategic Plan, which incorporates articulation of the place of the College as the National Conservatoire of Wales, including its language and culture.
- 3.2.3. No other new specific policies were considered or approved during the reporting period.

3.3 Operational Standards

- 3.3.1. The following is an example of the resource made available to staff on the RWCMD Hub (intranet):

The screenshot shows a blue header bar with the text 'HUB / HWB' and navigation links: 'ASIMUT', 'MOODLE', 'OFFICE 365', 'LIBRARY', 'GO TO....', and 'ENGLISH (ENGLISH)'. Below the header, there is a sidebar with a list of links: 'Correspondence', 'Meetings', 'Out of Office Replies', 'Signage', 'Telephone Calls', and 'Welsh Speakers'. The main content area is titled 'WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS' and 'Welsh Language Standards'. The text below the title reads: 'The Welsh Language Standards are a set of legally binding requirements that aim to improve the bilingual services that the public, students and staff can expect to receive from the College. The Standards establish what our responsibilities are in providing these services, ensuring that the Welsh language is not treated any less favourably than the English language. The Standards come into force on 1 April 2018.' Below this text is a section titled 'Guiding Principles' with a list of three bullet points: 'Individuals have the right to deal with us in Welsh.', 'When material is produced in both Welsh and English, the Welsh language must not be treated less favourably than the English language.', and 'Welsh language material should be of an appropriate quality and standard.' At the bottom of the screenshot, there is a link: 'View a copy of the Welsh Language Standards issued to the College.' and a note: 'If you have any questions regarding the Standards, please contact one of the following members of staff.'

- 3.3.2. **The number of staff who wear a ‘Working Wales’ badge at the end of the financial year**

‘Iaith Gwaith’ badges are distributed to all staff who have indicated that they are fluent Welsh speakers (17 in total) and can be requested via the co-ordinators or by contacting the Marketing Department.

A number of staff are able to offer services in Welsh or bilingually as a result of growing confidence and developing their skills.

3.4 Record Keeping Standards

3.4.1. **Records of staff language competencies**

RWCMD has previously completed a full and comprehensive survey of Welsh Language skills.

During this reporting period, new members of staff were asked to indicate their competency in the Welsh Language.

In addition to the figures reported previously, 2 further and new members of Support Staff have indicated full fluency in Welsh. Particularly of note was the appointment of a new Director of Music who is fluent in Welsh.

The declared aspiration to conduct a revised full survey of staff language competencies was not fulfilled during the reporting period, in large part due to energies and resources being dedicated to pandemic management. A revised survey is being developed for the current reporting period. However, please see training (3.4.3 below).

3.4.2. **The number of complaints received (per class of standards – service delivery, policy making, operational)**

No complaints, either formal or informal, were received during the reporting period. The Complaints Procedure is available on the RWCMD website.

3.4.3. **The number of members of staff who attended training courses offered in Welsh**

During the 2019/20 Academic Year, 15 staff members (5 academics, 10 support staff) undertook the introductory Welsh class, and 4 members of staff (all of whom were academic staff) the advanced Welsh class.

Whilst it had not been possible to conduct a full survey of staff during the reporting period, the resource invested in the development of online learning and teaching facilities has enhanced training opportunities for staff. A call for expressions of interest in June 2020 resulted in a significant rise in the requests for training, notably from RWCMD's associate staff from within the performing arts professions.

3.4.4. **New and vacant posts**

During the reporting period, 23 jobs were advertised, of which 1 had Welsh Language as a requirement, and 11 as desirable.

4 FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any queries regarding the annual report or any aspect of the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, please contact:

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