



Coleg Gwent - Bilingual Strategy: 2016-2019

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Introduction

In its document **A living language: a language for living - Welsh language strategy 2012 to 2017** the Welsh Assembly Government states:

Our vision is to see the Welsh language thriving in Wales. To achieve that, the strategy aims to see an increase in the number of people who both speak and use the language. Our six aims are:

- to encourage and support the use of the Welsh language within families
- to increase the provision of Welsh-medium activities for children and young people and to increase their awareness of the value of the language
- to strengthen the position of the Welsh language in the community
- to increase opportunities for people to use Welsh in the workplace
- to improve Welsh language services to citizens
- to strengthen the infrastructure for the language, including digital technology.

The strategy also emphasises the importance of the Welsh Government's **Welsh-medium Education Strategy** as an essential component in producing the Welsh speakers of the future - alongside encouraging the use of the language in families.

Coleg Gwent's Bilingual Strategy (2016-2019) is a considered and integrated response that lays out how Coleg Gwent will respond to these responsibilities and those identified in the Welsh Government's *Welsh medium Education Strategy, Colegau Cymru's Normalisation of Bilingualism: A Strategy for Further Education 2016-2021* and the *Welsh Government draft strategy: a million Welsh speakers by 2050*.

Estyn's Inspection Framework will continue to place a focus on bilingualism. Estyn is committed to the opinion that learners should have the right to vocational opportunities through the medium of Welsh at age 16 and within the options proposed by 14-19 learning partnerships. Estyn will give detailed attention to Welsh-medium learning opportunities 14-19 and progression rates from a language point of view.

The 5 local authorities in the College's catchment area are amongst those with the lowest level of incidence of Welsh speakers in Wales. At the 2011 census, Caerphilly had 11% of its population able to speak the Welsh language, whilst Torfaen had 10%, Newport had 9%, Blaenau Gwent had 8%, and Monmouthshire had 10%. It is against this background of low levels of Welsh speaking population that the College is striving to develop its Welsh Language provision.

In January 2016, around 6% of Coleg Gwent staff felt they had advanced or fluent skills in Welsh (figure includes Welsh for Adults staff). All new staff are asked to assess their Welsh language skills and all staff are offered Welsh for Adults courses free of charge and during work hours.

Data from enrolment forms for 2016/17 indicate 353 (4.7%) of learners consider themselves to be Welsh speakers and/or have attended Welsh medium schooling. 0.4% of learners stated their preferred language for correspondence was Welsh. The number of learners coming from Welsh medium secondary schools is measured and the number who proceed with Welsh medium courses will be established as part of a survey to extend our understanding of the level of Welsh Language skills amongst learners.

The College had its current Welsh Language Scheme approved in 2011 which is due to be replaced by the new Welsh Language Standards during 2017. The Welsh Language Standards are a comprehensive set of regulations that cover all that we do and services we offer the public, with the aim of ensuring that Welsh is treated no less favourably than English. The College is fully committed to implementing these standards and to making bilingualism a top priority.

Coleg Gwent accepts the challenge to play a full and proactive role in the planning and delivery of bilingual learning and training. The College recognises that they serve a variety of areas and communities – differing in their economic, cultural and linguistic nature and this desire and determination to respond positively leads to some key principles that will underpin developments.

Vision

Coleg Gwent will be full and pro-active partners in the **planning and delivery** of a post-14 education and training system that provides appropriate opportunities for learners to study and learn through the language of their choice, thereby preparing them for work and life in a bilingual Wales.

To ensure **provision** to satisfy the needs and aspirations of learners and employers on the basis of equal opportunities across Wales.

Strategic Aims

The Strategic Aims of this strategy are influenced by those identified in the Welsh Government's *Welsh medium Education Strategy and Colegau Cymru's Normalisation of Bilingualism: A Strategy for Further Education 2016-2021* and *Welsh Government draft strategy: a million Welsh speakers by 2050*.

The strategic aims are as follows:

- To focus on the priority areas identified by the Welsh Government for developing bilingual provision and contributing to the Welsh Education Strategic Plans of each local authority that the College serves.

- To contribute towards the Welsh Government's aim of creating a million Welsh speakers by 2050; working in collaboration with schools, other providers and employers.
- Increase the number of learning opportunities through the medium of Welsh under the 14-19 Learning Pathways.
- Continue to respond and support the learning requirements of our bilingual learners.
- To secure linguistic progression from the statutory education phase into post-16 and post-18 course options that maintain and strengthen Welsh linguistic skills; enabling learners to access the provision that best suits their needs.
- Recruit Welsh speaking staff particularly in vocational priority areas.
- Provide a programme of staff development; embedding the Welsh dimension and Welsh Language skills.
- Continue to embed Welsh and bilingualism within the College's infrastructure and policies.

Colegau Cymru's Normalisation of Bilingualism Strategy, prioritises developments in four objectives, as follows:

Objective 1: Normalise the Welsh/bilingual ethos

Leaders will continue to embed Welsh and bilingualism in a sustainable way by incorporating Welsh within the further education sector's infrastructure, policies whilst sharing responsibility across the establishment. As a result, learners and staff will experience a bilingual ethos in each college in Wales, wherever they are. The action plan in Annex 1 will advise on how to do this and will support the Welsh Language Standards legislation and expectation on further education.

Objective 2: Develop Welsh medium and bilingual provision

The Welsh-medium Education strategy set out the following sectors as key priority sectors for Welsh within vocational delivery:

1. Health and Social Care
2. Childcare
3. Agriculture and Land based
4. Business Administration and IT
5. Leisure and Tourism
6. Media Studies and Performing Arts
7. Construction
8. Engineering

Objective 3: Increase bilingual skills

This objective has two parts that is driven by the responsibility of the sector to deliver an active linguistic offer to learners and to provide training to staff to support the delivery.

The sector must commit to providing support in order for the student to make an informed linguistic decision on how much to study in Welsh, bilingually or in English. The college is committed to sustaining and improving the language levels of their learners whatever their entry level.

Working with staff, the sector will actively promote bilingual communication skills amongst learners and allow them to follow a bilingual programme of learning. Ensuring linguistic continuity and development by developing bilingual communication skills are prerequisites to ensure the learner's success in studying a bilingual or Welsh medium main course or elements of it.

The success of this objective will ensure that objective 4 and the workplace requirements can be realised. This objective will also support the investment in objective 2 and support sustainability of provision.

Objective 4: Workplace Demand

In the current economic climate, more and more employers and workers acknowledge the economic advantages of the Welsh language. To support the demand from workforce there needs to be an improved correlation between workforce plans and post-14 provision to ensure fit for purpose skills. Workforce plans need to be informed by an analysis of community language needs and data on the Welsh language skills of the workforce. This joined up thinking will ensure that colleges can meet the needs of businesses in terms of skills and linguistic ability.

In fact a Welsh Government Task and Finish Group set up to look at the Welsh language and economic development¹ recommended that there should be a joint approach to economic development and the language, adopting an area based approach which would facilitate the designation of 'special economic language zones'. Education plays a key role in achieving this.

The report also went on to say that evidence received suggests that there is a demand for a bilingual workforce to meet business and customer needs. This can be addressed by developing linguistic skills and confidence to meet the requirement of businesses.

Consideration needs to be given to ensuring that the development of the language contributes to the development of the economy and vice versa.

The *Welsh Government draft strategy: a million Welsh speakers by 2050* emphasises a shared responsibility in the following areas:

PLANNING AND LANGUAGE POLICY

- The Welsh language to be part of everyday life
- The Welsh language should be at the heart of planning services
- More teachers and other professionals to be able to work through Welsh

EDUCATION

- More children and Welsh people to be in Welsh medium education from primary school through to college or university
- Increase the number of young people who leave education with bilingual skills so that they can work through the medium of Welsh

MAKE THE LANGUAGE A NORMAL PART OF LIFE

- More people who speak Welsh to use it and or the people who don't speak it to appreciate it
- Make sure that the Welsh language is relevant to everyone

PEOPLE

- More Welsh speakers to pass the language on to their children
- More places where people use Welsh naturally (like at work, with friends and in local community)

SUPPORT

- Make sure the foundations for the language are in place to help people use Welsh. This means making sure that the essentials are in place such as digital tools, translators and resources
- Make sure the Welsh language media is varied and relevant

RIGHTS

- Making sure that laws which ensure some services are provided in Welsh are relevant and up to date

Action Ref.	Action	SMART Outcome	Timing	Owner	Priority	KSA/TWF Ref.
BL1	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor outcomes of bi-lingual learners and ensure outcomes are comparable with English medium learners and meet national comparators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet Successful Completion target 	Termly July 2016	AW	High	KSA1
BL2	Teaching, Learning & Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase and improve the range of teaching and learning resources to meet the needs of Welsh speaking learners Investigate options in releasing staff to create bilingual resources in priority areas Raise awareness and promote the use of Welsh medium and Welsh language qualifications/resources Review the options available for developing and assessing skills in Welsh Develop a programme of staff development in bilingual teaching methodology, embedding the Welsh dimension and Welsh for Adults courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank of teaching/learning resources to be developed within existing Teaching and Learning Resource area of Moodle 10% increase in number of learners choosing bi-lingual opportunities Guidance document for tutors on Welsh assessment opportunities 15% increase in uptake for Welsh related staff development activity 	Ongoing Aug 2016 Aug 2017	AW/CE AW AW/ HoS	Medium	KSA2
BL3	Care, Guidance & Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and encourage learners to use Welsh in/out of the classroom Utilise Welsh Buddy scheme to 'mentor' Welsh learners Increase participation in Welsh events Continue to support learners and staff through HWB and training opportunities Develop Bilingual Handbook as guidance document for teaching staff in supporting Welsh learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10% increase in number of learners using Welsh in/out of classroom 10% increase in number of learners attending Welsh events 10% increase in number of staff attending Welsh training opportunities 	Ongoing July 2017	AW/WBs	Medium	KSA3
BL4	Curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan provision to develop further bi-lingual opportunities to maintain and improve learner language skills in Welsh, focusing on the WG priority areas Produce clear guidance for Heads of School in capturing and recording bilingual activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10% increase in number of Welsh medium/bi-lingual courses 10% increase in number of learners within B2 and B3 LA26 field 	Ongoing July 2017	AW AW/VD	High	KSA4

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide linguistic progression through collaboration with HE Increase number of learners who fall within B2 Category for LA26 Type of Welsh medium learning Work with Welsh for Adults in developing a Welsh course for care and health learners Develop, in conjunction with FE SE Colleges a bi-lingual study skills package for learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of bi-lingual blended learning unit (x ref LA26 above) 20% increase in number of learners completing additional Welsh courses 	July 2017	AW/GWP		
BL5	<p>Leadership & Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit Welsh speaking tutors, particularly in priority areas Encourage staff to attend Sabbatical, Sgiliaith training and WfA courses Develop a Coleg Gwent Bilingual Strategy that effectively responds to the core objectives of the Normalisation of Bilingualism Strategy for FE Recruit 8 Welsh buddies to support & develop Welsh medium/bi-lingual opportunities Arrange Sgiliaith training for managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5% increase in recruitment of bi-lingual tutors in priority areas 10% increase in number of staff attending Welsh training opportunities A Bilingual strategy that meets objectives of Bilingualism Strategy for FE 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>August 2017</p> <p>October 2016</p> <p>October 2016</p>	<p>AW/PH</p> <p>AW/PH</p> <p>AW</p>	High	KSA5
BL6	<p>Engage with partners, employers and communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Welsh Medium Schools and encourage attendance of taster events The College to attend networking events and lead engagement with external partners – Menter Iaith, Urdd; promoting the benefits and sharing best practice of bi-lingual learning. Respond to the workplace demand for Welsh speakers and embed the value of bilingualism in the workplace e.g. Welsh language awareness sessions, Welsh medium work experience To participate fully in the Welsh Education Strategic Plans of each local authority that the College serves and share current college targets for bilingual provision and delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5% increase in number of Welsh Medium School learners attending taster events Opportunities for promoting benefits and sharing best practice Increase the number of learners attending Welsh medium work experience/work placements by 10% 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>August 2017</p> <p>September 2016</p>	<p>AW</p> <p>AW / HoS</p> <p>AW</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p>	KSA6