

# Good practice guide for sector and standard setting bodies

To assist in determining the demand for Welsh language skills, Welsh translations of national occupational standards and vocational qualifications through the medium of Welsh



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
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## Guidance

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To assist in determining the demand for Welsh language skills, Welsh translations of national occupational standards and vocational qualifications through the medium of Welsh

<b>Audience</b>	Sector and standard setting bodies.
<b>Overview</b>	This guide is for sector and standards setting bodies to assist them in determining the demand for Welsh language skills, Welsh translations of national occupational standards (NOS) and vocational qualifications (VQs) through the medium of Welsh.
<b>Action required</b>	Sector and standard setting bodies should consider this guidance when gathering, analysing and disseminating information about demand for Welsh language skills, Welsh translation of NOS and VQs through the medium of Welsh.
<b>Further information</b>	Enquiries about this guidance should be directed to: Vocational Regulation and Quality Assurance Branch Qualifications and Learning Division Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Welsh Assembly Government Tŷ'r Afon Bedwas Road Bedwas Caerphilly CF83 8WT  Tel: 01443 663692/663715



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## Introduction

- This guide is for sector and standards setting bodies to assist them in determining the demand for Welsh language skills, Welsh translations of national occupational standards (NOS) and vocational qualifications (VQs) through the medium of Welsh.
- It offers advice to sector and standards setting bodies on the steps to take and issues to consider in gathering, analysing and disseminating information about demand for Welsh language skills, Welsh translation of NOS and VQs through the medium of Welsh.
- Welsh language skills and Welsh medium skills are covered in this document, but they are dealt with jointly and referred to as Welsh language skills.
- DCELLS wishes to thank Sector Skills Councils, Standard Setting Bodies, The Alliance of Sector Skills Councils, The Wales Employment and Skills Board, The Welsh Language Board, and The UK Commission for Employment and Skills for the assistance provided in developing this guide.

## Background and context

1. The Welsh Assembly Government's national action plan for a bilingual Wales, *Iaith Pawb (2003)*, states clearly its policy of maintaining the Welsh language in all aspects of life in Wales. *Iaith Pawb* stresses the importance of the sector bodies' role in addressing skills needs in their particular sector. The results of Future Skills Wales (FSW) research demonstrate that (English-Welsh) bilingual skills are highly valued by employers in a number of sectors. However, there is lack of clarity about the nature and the level of the Welsh language skills required by employers. Whilst 9% of businesses, according to the FSW 2005 survey, reported a need for Welsh language skills, actual demand may be higher, given that 29% of businesses indicated the importance<sup>1</sup> of Welsh language skills for their sectors, in particular in the area of customer service.
2. Some employers require skills through the medium of Welsh; others simply require staff with different levels of fluency. This may range from the need for vocationally skilled staff who are able to speak conversational Welsh – for meeting and greeting people in a reception role to those who need to be fluent in technical terminology and able to deal with complex situations effectively through the medium of Welsh, orally and in writing.
3. As part of their core remit in Wales, sector and standard setting bodies have primary responsibility for identifying and measuring the demand for skills, including Welsh language skills. A small number of sector and standard setting bodies have taken steps to gather information about the demand for Welsh language skills in their sectors. However, it appears that there is a general lack of reliable detailed information about the demand for such skills in most sectors. This document is an attempt to provide guidance for sector and standard setting bodies in measuring the demand for Welsh language skills, NOS and VQs.

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<sup>1</sup> It may be helpful to clarify the difference between need and importance. Where **need** for Welsh language skills has been identified, it is taken that Welsh language skills are required in job roles by the sector ; **importance** on the other hand suggests that they are not absolutely essential, but could provide real added value.

## Measuring demand

This section is divided into five parts:

- (i) Welsh language skills
- (ii) Welsh translations of NOS
- (iii) VQs through the medium of Welsh
- (iv) Making use of the information
- (v) Identifying future demand

### (i) Welsh language skills

4. In order to establish more consistent and reliable information based on employer demand for Welsh language skills, it is important for sector and standard setting bodies to engage in a thorough and systematic fashion to identify demand for Welsh language skills. The duty in identifying their sector's needs should be a key component of each body's strategic and business plan for Wales and in their Welsh Language Scheme.
5. As a first step, sector and standard setting bodies should undertake research to establish the availability of Welsh language skills within their sectors. From this work it should be possible to identify how many staff have Welsh language skills and at what level they can function, and also their current job roles. Employers may also want to be able to determine whether Welsh language skills are useful/essential/desirable/not needed for particular job roles. The research should also be designed so that it can provide information about any gaps and future needs.
6. Welsh language skills should be included as a discrete section in employer skills surveys undertaken by sector and standard setting bodies. In order to assist in establishing consistency in the information gathering process, a common set of questions have been developed which sector and standard setting bodies can use as a starting point (see **Appendix 1**). Of course, some bodies may wish to drill down further to gain more detailed information which is specific to their sector. For this purpose, sector and standard setting bodies will need to design additional questions.
7. When establishing relationships with 'new' employers, sector and standard setting bodies should seek as much information as possible about Welsh in the organisation – number of staff with Welsh skills and to what level, job roles where Welsh skills are required etc.
8. Although Skills Surveys (via on-line questionnaires, telephone interviews and possibly face to face interviews) may be the primary method for gathering information from employers, it is important that other means are

used where appropriate. For example, it would be appropriate to use focus groups, employers forum, existing advisory/consultation groups, and also expert individuals from their sectors. All these could provide useful information about skills needs of employers in the sector. It would be appropriate for sector and standard setting bodies to include Welsh language skills etc as a regular item (e.g. twice a year) on the agenda of relevant groups in Wales.

9. Sector and standard setting bodies should give due consideration to findings about Welsh language skills needs from research carried out by other organisations, both at local and all-Wales levels - which may include learning and training providers, higher education institutions and various projects and initiatives. These may be able to complement or fill gaps in the information available from skills surveys.
10. The Welsh language skills needs of small and very small organisations in Wales are particularly important in some sectors. These organisations will include local voluntary organisations and national charities as well as sole traders and small family-run operations. Many of them will be located in the more rural Welsh speaking areas in North and West Wales. Very often, they will conduct a significant part of their operations through the medium of Welsh on a daily basis, and in doing so they are seen as providing a valued service to customers. Research also suggests that there can be economic benefit to employers who are able to conduct their business in the customer's language, i.e. in Welsh.
11. Sector and standard setting bodies should encourage employers in their sectors to analyse their organisations' Welsh language skills needs and also the existing Welsh language skills of staff, and how best to fill any skills gaps to meet the current and future needs of the organisation. Employers should also be in a position to assess future demand for Welsh language skills in their organisation.

For further detailed guidance, see the Welsh Language Board's *Guidelines for organising Welsh language training in the workplace (2009)*, [www.byig-wlb.org.uk/english/publications/Publications/56.pdf](http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/english/publications/Publications/56.pdf).

## **(ii) Welsh translation of NOS**

12. Over recent years, sector and standard setting bodies have been able to access funding from the Standards Development Programme to translate suites of national occupational standards into Welsh. Research evidence suggests that the Welsh translations have been useful for employers and training providers/practitioners in designing and delivering training

programmes. Learners have also benefitted from having the Welsh translation available to them.

13. Sector and standard setting bodies should continue to provide Welsh translations where demand is identified. In some sectors, legislation and government policy may be the key driver for providing the translated versions; other key factors for consideration will include meeting the demand from employers, training providers and other stakeholders, and also information about qualifications based on NOS.
14. Sector and standard setting bodies should include proposals to translate NOS into Welsh in their annual strategic plans. Information about the demand for translations is gathered from the relevant organisations in Wales. It should be one of the elements in the consultation in Wales relating to NOS development work. Whilst it is preferable for sector and standard setting bodies to include Welsh translation needs in annual bids to UKCES as part of core contracts, in order to mainstream Welsh medium issues into their work, on occasion it might be possible for funding to be made available from DCELLS to sector and standards setting bodies to support translation work which is required outside of the strategic plan for NOS. This should be seen as additional support in special circumstances, not as a main source of funding for translation of NOS.
15. Sector and standard setting bodies should be able to provide evidence of the need or demand for Welsh translation to support their proposals. For example, it would be appropriate to refer to the demand for Welsh language skills from the labour market information for the sector. Evidence could also be in the form of written expressions of support from employers, e.g. particular employers where Welsh is used on a day to day basis in the organisation – local unitary authorities, learning/training providers, voluntary/charity organisations and others where there is direct contact with customers or the general public. Useful information could also be available from awarding organisations, in particular those that have been in receipt of support from DCELLS to assist them to enhance their provision of Welsh medium VQs.
16. In the foreseeable future, the NOS strategy which is currently under development will promote a more strategic approach to identifying and prioritising NOS for translation into Welsh. It is suggested that Welsh language skills should be considered in the functional analysis and at particular stages thereafter. **Appendix 2** may assist in identifying the stages in the NOS development process where the issue of Welsh language skills and the translation of NOS should feature.
17. From time to time, it may be necessary to import or tailor NOS from suites owned by other sector or standard setting bodies. It is important to



establish whether Welsh translations are available already and ensure consistency in the terminology used. If a translation is not available, the sector or standard setting body should obtain permission from the originating body to translate the NOS into Welsh. The originating body should maintain a record of which of their NOS have been translated and by which sector or standard setting body.

18. If for any reason revisions are made to an existing suite of NOS, the sector or standard setting body should ensure that the corresponding Welsh version is updated to reflect those changes.
19. Several sector or standard setting bodies will have experience of engaging translation agencies for translating their NOS. It is recommended that sector or standard setting bodies should seek information and advice from the professional organisation for Welsh translators, *Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru (the Association of Welsh Translators and Interpreters)*. For the register of translators and interpreters, see [www.cyfieithwycymru.org.uk](http://www.cyfieithwycymru.org.uk) to identify translators with experience and a sound track record of translating technical materials. Some translators will have developed knowledge and expertise in terminology for particular sectors.
20. The cost of translation work should be kept under review. Information about current rates charged by translation agencies may be obtained from Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru. In addition to the cost of translating the NOS, quality assurance should be included in the total cost. Sector and standard setting bodies should satisfy themselves that the translation agencies have appropriate quality assurance arrangements in place. Of course, sector and standard setting bodies may wish to undertake an independent quality assurance check of the translation before they are made available on their website and NOS Directory, particularly to ensure sector relevance and fitness for purpose.
21. Sector and standard setting bodies should publicise the availability of the Welsh translations of their NOS. The translations should be placed on the NOS Directory and sector and standard setting bodies' websites. However, it is doubtful whether that in itself will be sufficient to bring them to the attention of potential users. It is suggested that they should be promoted as widely as possible via e-correspondence, features in sector and standard setting body newsletters, stakeholder meetings and in liaison with training providers. Note also that DCELLS maintains a central list of the NOS translated into Welsh at <http://www.new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/learningproviders/welshmededu/noswelshcontacts/?jsessionid=gBDQLBjJbFhphknTd1JhvMQT9rpBhfQpngWn9LIJyLyZzfycZvLLI-689210129?lang=en>.

22. It is important also that sector and standard setting bodies advise stakeholders, in particular employers, about the uses that can be made of the Welsh translations of NOS and the potential benefits that can be derived from them. Sector and standard setting bodies should obtain the assistance of organisations and individuals who have experience of using the Welsh translations successfully in areas such as training, development of CPD programmes and staff appraisals.

### **(iii) Vocational Qualifications through the medium of Welsh**

23. There has been a growing demand in recent years for the provision of VQs through the medium of Welsh in particular sectors. A number of awarding organisations have been supported with funding from DCELLS to develop their provision to meet that demand expressed by centres and learners. To date, learner demand has been the guiding factor in determining the support to be allocated to awarding organisations. For the future, a more strategic approach is required.
24. As sector and standard setting bodies are responsible for approval of qualifications made available for their sector, identifying gaps in the qualifications provision and taking steps to fill those gaps, it would be appropriate for sector and standard setting bodies to ensure that the Welsh medium offer in the qualifications provision is adequate and fit for purpose, and that awarding organisations are responding to identified need or demand. This would need to be incorporated into the work relating to the sector qualifications strategy (SQS) and associated action plans.
25. Welsh medium VQs need to be developed in those vocational fields where there is a need for Welsh Language skills in specific sectors/employment contexts. To this end, sector and standard setting bodies need to work with awarding organisations to make the appropriate qualification provision available. There needs to be rapid development in this area. It would be good practice for sector and standard setting bodies to check at qualification approval stage whether or not Welsh language needs have been considered by awarding organisations.
26. In their SQS development work, sector and standard setting bodies will have reviewed the existing qualifications provision and made some decisions about which qualifications will be fit for purpose and meet the needs of the sector. Similarly, sector and standard setting bodies should identify which Welsh medium VQs are available and continue to meet the sector's needs. Sector and standard setting bodies will be in a position to monitor the level, sufficiency and appropriateness of the qualifications provision within each of the four nations. Where Welsh medium provision is

found to be inappropriate, awarding organisations and their centres, and DCELLS, should be made aware of this as soon as possible.

27. As for the translation of the NOS, it would be appropriate for the sector and standard setting bodies to prioritise qualifications to be available in Welsh. Of course, it is important that centres and their candidates have a reasonable choice of qualifications available to them.
28. There is scope and opportunity to increase the number of Welsh medium VQs in partnership with awarding organisations, particularly in the climate of transition to new credit and qualifications frameworks (QCF and CQFW). As they are key organisations in this area of work, sector and standard setting bodies should collaborate with awarding organisations to enhance the provision of learning and assessment in Welsh. They should encourage awarding organisations to submit proposals to DCELLS to support development of Welsh medium qualifications.
29. Welsh medium vocational qualifications will not necessarily mean that the whole qualification will be delivered and assessed in Welsh. The unit based structure of the qualifications lends itself to the development of Welsh medium provision. It would not always be necessary for all the units to be undertaken through the medium of Welsh. It should be possible for learners to achieve one or more units of a qualification in Welsh.
30. This would allow providers who do not have the resources in terms of teachers/assessors and learning materials to deliver vocational programmes through the medium of Welsh. Providers would be able to take incremental steps to developing and delivering that provision.
31. Joint working and collaboration is key to success in the delivery of Welsh medium qualifications. Sector and standard setting bodies should consider developing a common format for reporting on Welsh medium qualifications - availability and promotion of qualifications for the sector, related training programmes, take-up of Welsh medium training and qualifications provision, supply of teachers and assessors/verifiers, learning resources/materials, future demand and planned developments. Sector and standard setting bodies could provide reports and updates to their key contact in the Qualifications and Learning Division in DCELLS during their half-yearly meetings.

#### **(iv) Making use of the information**

32. Many young and adult Welsh speakers are unaware of employment opportunities which require the use of the Welsh language and which may increase their earning potential. There needs to be a systematic approach

for identifying and publicising such opportunities. It would be appropriate for sector and standard setting bodies to seek the co-operation of Careers Wales and associated networks in such activity.

33. More extensive information from employers on posts which require Welsh language skills and the level of skills needed should be produced and publicised on sector and standard setting bodies' websites. This would help ensure that people are aware of the value of Welsh in the workplace and are given the progressive incentive to develop and acquire the language skills and continue their education and training through the medium of Welsh.
34. Sector and standard setting bodies should encourage employers to make best use of any current and newly appointed employees who have Welsh language skills at the appropriate level required in a particular job role/situation. And where appropriate, the employee should be supported in developing the skills to a higher level. Both the employer and the employee would benefit as a consequence.
35. Demand for Welsh language skills identified by sector and standard setting bodies and other sources should inform the development of sector modern apprenticeship frameworks and work-based learning programmes.
36. It is important that sector and standard setting bodies should inform providers of Welsh language skills needs in their sectors, particularly for learners aged 14-19. In doing so, they would influence the direction of that provision. Indeed, there should be identifiable links between the demand for Welsh language skills in a sector and the vocational provision and vocational qualifications relating to that sector, particularly for learners aged 14-19.
37. Publicising information about employer needs for Welsh language skills would possibly assist in increasing the take-up of Welsh medium learning and assessment. It would bring to the attention of learners, particularly learners aged 14-19, the possibility of employment in areas where they could utilise the Welsh medium skills developed during their education and training.
38. Proper identification of the demand for Welsh language skills will provide a valuable means by which Higher Education Institutions can focus on the development of provision for undergraduate and post-graduate level which most usefully meets demand.
39. Information about Welsh language skills needs will inform the development of training programmes and resources development projects. Sector and standard setting bodies are therefore encouraged to share information

about Welsh language skills with all relevant parties - learning and training providers, awarding organisations, careers organisations. They should also urge such organisations to publicise the information to the widest possible audience.

40. DCELLS should be kept informed of any prioritisation activity which might relate to VQs through the medium of Welsh. Such information could assist decisions in allocating support to awarding organisations to develop Welsh medium VQ provision.

#### **v) Identifying future demand**

41. It is important that every effort is made to gauge the level of future demand for Welsh skills in the workplace, Welsh translations of the NOS and for Welsh medium VQs so that all relevant organisations can plan effectively to meet identified demand.
42. Meeting the requirement of legislation, government policy initiatives and sectoral needs will provide the basis for determining the demand for Welsh language skills in the future. This should be the starting point for all sector and standard setting bodies. They should consider the demand resulting from each of these in turn.
43. Sector and standard setting bodies should include questions about Welsh language skills needs in their skills foresight process. This should also include demand for related CPD for upskilling.
44. Sector and standard setting bodies should conduct regular interviews with a core of employers, reflecting the range of sectors and size of employers in the footprint and taking account of demography and geographical location/distribution in Wales. This arrangement could act as a barometer for Welsh language skills needs in the future.
45. Learning providers should be asked to provide information on anticipated future demand for Welsh medium provision in their establishments. This information could be an indicator of the skills available to meet employer demand in the future.

## Appendix 1

### Set of common questions

- 1(a) Have you undertaken an assessment of the need for Welsh language skills in your organisation? Yes ..... No .....

If yes, please identify in the template below, the job roles in which Welsh language skills are needed and at what level (Basic/Foundation, Intermediate, High/Advanced, Proficient) are the skills required.

Job role/ Language Skills	Understanding	Speaking	Reading	Writing	No. of employees with Welsh language skills in each job role
eg Receptionist	High/Advanced	High/Advanced	Intermediate	Intermediate	5
Eg Sales assistant	High/ Advanced	High /Advanced	Basic	Basic	19

- 1 (b) Please specify which of the above job roles is/are not currently filled by a person with Welsh language skills at the required level?
- What support is available for employees to develop their Welsh language skills?
  - How difficult is it to recruit people with Welsh language skills (in general or with specific level of Welsh language skills)?
  - Are Welsh language skills among the most common in terms of future skills needs in your organisation?
  - What in your view are the benefits of having employees with bilingual (English-Welsh language) skills?
  - Is there a demand for national occupational standards to be available in Welsh as well as in English? If yes, please specify which NOS.
  - What is the demand from your employees for VQ provision (including any related training) through the medium of Welsh? Which VQs are the most important to be provided in Welsh?

## Appendix 2

### Diagram identifying activity relating to Welsh language skills and translation as part of the complete NOS System

