



QAA's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards

Background

The compliance notice for QAA lists 113 Welsh Language Standards that apply to the organisation; a number have a clarifying circumstance to reflect our specific and specialist context.

This document outlines how we meet and monitor these standards, as well as how we promote the Welsh language more broadly.

Overall approach

Through several key mechanisms, QAA's approach to meeting the Welsh Language Standards across the organisation is a holistic one and designed to create understanding and appreciation. Some of our key mechanisms for raising awareness of the standards and the Welsh Language more broadly include *Welsh Language Standards and Awareness* training for staff and a cross-organisational Welsh Language Working Group.

Reporting

QAA reports annually to the Welsh Language Commissioner against standards 152, 158 and 164 about the way in which we have complied with the service delivery, policymaking and operational standards that apply to us. The report notes the overall owner of each standard or group of standards, what we do, how we monitor these, and reporting. We also draw on any evidence requests submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner throughout the year. We provide recent examples of publications, news items, social media and other information to demonstrate our compliance and Welsh language promotion activities. This report is produced bilingually, is published on our website, and promoted following publication. Our annual report is published by January each year, which is within the six-month timeframe from the end of the financial year required by standards 152, 158 and 164.

Overview of QAA's compliance

Service delivery	Policy making	Operational	Record keeping	Monitoring and reporting
These standards are shaded orange	These standards are shaded blue	These standards are shaded green	These standards are shaded red	These standards are shaded purple

Service Delivery		
Sub-grouping	Standards	What we do
Correspondence	1-7	<p>We actively welcome correspondence in Welsh and will always reply to such correspondence in Welsh within the same timeframe as correspondence received in English. QAA works closely with a translator to ensure that correspondence in Welsh does not receive a delayed response.</p> <p>Correspondence that follows a verbal conversation in Welsh will be in Welsh unless requested otherwise. See information below about QAA's Welsh language telephone line.</p> <p>Circular letters/news items concerning our work in Wales are published bilingually.</p> <p>We ensure that language preferences are recorded in our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system as part of recording GDPR preferences. A bilingual template for collecting language preferences is available to all staff via the QAA intranet in the dedicated Welsh Language Standards SharePoint site. To monitor this, we record the date that contacts are asked for their preferences. This is a mandatory part of registration for all events based in Wales.</p> <p>A statement that we welcome correspondence in Welsh is used in email signatures by those who correspond with organisations and contacts in Wales.</p> <p>The communications preference template includes a link to an English and Welsh version of QAA's privacy notice. The privacy notice notes 'language preference' as a category of 'personal data collected or processed', which covers Welsh language preferences.</p> <p>QAA's Enquiries Service Standards are published in both English and Welsh and these are reviewed annually.</p>

		Enquiries relating to our work in Wales can be sent via email in English or Welsh.
Telephone contact	8, 9, 11, 12, 14-17, 19-21	<p>We welcome telephone calls in Welsh and English. QAA has an enquiry line which is operated during office hours by a Welsh-speaking staff member.</p> <p>QAA does not have a main telephone line for work in Wales; however, there is a direct Welsh language line which is advertised on the website and in the email signatures of all colleagues who correspond with contacts and organisations in Wales. Alternatively, QAA's main enquiry line has an automated system that provides the opportunity for the caller to be directed straight to the Welsh language telephone line where appropriate. The Welsh language telephone line is tested monthly by QAA staff and logged accordingly.</p>
Meetings	24, 24A, 25, 25A, 25D	<p>QAA is committed to treating Welsh and English equally in respect of meetings we hold in Wales, and we seek to ensure that we have enquired about, and acted on, the language preference of individuals. This includes the use of the bilingual template for collecting language preferences and collecting preferences on event registration (noted above).</p> <p>Where Welsh preference speakers are present at a meeting but less than 10% of the attendees wish to speak Welsh, QAA will inform all attendees that the meeting will take place in English. If we meet with colleagues from a higher education provider, which has been organised through our key contact for the provider, we will ask our contact to confirm if a translation service is required. This also applies to review meetings. Where a meeting is arranged with colleagues in Wales, we will state whether it will take place in English or Welsh (depending on the number of Welsh preference speakers at the meeting in relation to the 10% threshold).</p> <p>QAA is experienced in using virtual simultaneous translation facilities, namely through Zoom and Microsoft Teams. QAA normally uses Microsoft Teams for meetings that require simultaneous translation. For events, QAA continues to use Zoom's simultaneous translation function.</p> <p>To make effective organisational use of simultaneous translation, we have written staff guidance on booking and setting up simultaneous translation.</p> <p>Welsh Language Standards and Awareness training raises awareness of this guidance and provides some tips for using online interpretation.</p>

		We have identified several Welsh simultaneous translation services as preferred suppliers to ensure consistency in our translations.
Public events	31-34	<p>Any publicity for matters dealing exclusively with our work in Wales is produced in Welsh.</p> <p>Where bilingual or separate signs in Welsh and English are provided, they are equal with regard to format, size, quality, legibility, structure and prominence.</p> <p>QAA has not hosted a public event in Wales for many years and does not fund public events in Wales. QAA also does not organise meetings that are open to the public.</p> <p>Registration to all events relating to Wales is available bilingually. If more than 10% of the registrations are Welsh preference speakers and it is an event in Wales, a translation service will be made available.</p> <p>QAA has a licence for the events platform <i>Cvent</i> to host online events and provide event booking sites. The platform uses Zoom as the video streaming plug-in, which ensures we can make a simultaneous translation service available. The event booking pages are also fully customisable therefore all default text and other information has been translated into Welsh. An assessment was undertaken to ensure it would fulfil the Welsh Language Standards before acquiring the software.</p>
Publicly available documents, strategies, annual reports and materials, including forms, brief guides for students or a general audience	39, 40, 43, 44-47	<p>Any publications that deal exclusively with our work in Wales or are intended to provide information for a general audience in Wales are published in Welsh and English. Both versions are made available at the same time and have equal prominence.</p> <p>QAA uses a translation and design service to ensure that publications in Welsh are designed effectively in Welsh. This also promotes consistency in our translations. Furthermore, QAA notes where publications are available in English and Welsh.</p> <p>Registration forms and evaluations for events in Wales or our work relating to Wales are made available in both languages. We also have Welsh forms for expenses, travel and subsistence claims, communications preferences and enquiries.</p>
Website	48, 51, 52	The QAA website provides users with the option to view our webpages in Welsh.

		<p>We regularly review all the content on our pages in Welsh and continue to expand our content. This is an ongoing area for development. QAA is in discussion with the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office and Ateb Cymru to reach an appropriate solution regarding our corporate identity which will ensure we comply with the Welsh Language Standards.</p>
Board meetings and related	37	<p>A redacted version of the minutes appears on our website.</p> <p>All documentation in relation to the QAA Wales Strategic Advisory Committee (a sub-committee of the QAA Board) is available to members in both languages. In cases where more than 10% of the meeting has a Welsh language spoken preference, simultaneous translation will be made available.</p>
Licences, certificates and rules	38, 41	<p>AVA licences are produced in Welsh for AVAs working in Wales; licences to use QAA intellectual property can also be produced in Welsh where required.</p> <p>QAA does not publish any rules that apply to the public.</p>
Press statements	42	<p>Press releases and media statements made in respect of our work in Wales or in relation to provision in Wales are issued at the same time in both English and Welsh.</p>
Social media	54, 55	<p>Welsh language requirements, where social media use is aimed at higher education in Wales, are incorporated into the social media protocols. All of QAA's social media relating to Wales comes from the central QAA account. Posts are published in both languages (or alongside each other) where the work relates to Wales.</p>
Signage and notices	57-59, 65, 66	<p>We provide bilingual or separate signs and notices in Welsh and English as required by these standards; all notices will place the Welsh language first. See information about standards 61 and 61A for more information.</p>
Reception services	61, 61A	<p>QAA does not have a physical office in Wales and therefore does not have its own reception service. QAA's office (in Gloucester) is open for office working; therefore, all visitors will be greeted by individuals only, rather than a dedicated reception service.</p> <p>As noted above, QAA operates an automated telephone line that allows for immediate direction to the Welsh language line, if appropriate.</p>

Invitations to tender	72, 73, 73A, 75, 76	The Procurement Manual reflects the requirements of these standards.
Promoting our Welsh language services	77 (78)	We seek to ensure that our stakeholders in Wales are aware of our commitment to the Welsh language. For example, all webpages relating to QAA's work in Wales are made available bilingually on the website and we operate a quarterly QAA Cymru e-newsletter, which is made available publicly in English and Welsh. The orange speech bubble (<i>laith Gwaith</i>) is used in the newsletter as a widely recognised symbol of the availability of Welsh language services. The newsletter uses Mailchimp to ensure an accessible bilingual user experience. Additionally, the Quality Enhancement Review and Gateway Quality Review (Wales) handbooks contain an annex summarising our Welsh language commitment.
Corporate identity	79	As noted above, this is an ongoing area for development arising from our Welsh Language Audit in 2023. QAA is in discussion with the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office to reach a suitable solution.
Complaints procedure re WL	150 service delivery 156 policy making 162 operational	<p>See 141-143 below.</p> <p>All complaints, including any about compliance, are logged in accordance with QAA's Compliments, Comments and Complaints procedure, and records are retained in line with QAA's document retention schedule.</p> <p>Any complaints relating to QAA's Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards relating to service delivery standards (150), policy making standards (156) and operational standards (162) follow the same process as other complaints (the details are included in the QAA Complaints Procedure document available in English and Welsh).</p> <p>The <i>Complaints About QAA and Appeals Against Decisions</i> webpage is available in English and Welsh.</p>
Policy making		
Creating, revising and reviewing policy	84,85,86	All QAA's corporate policies have review dates. QAA also has a developing Welsh Language Policy (see standard 94). The QAA Policy Framework and Policy Impact Assessment Checklist includes a Welsh language impact assessment to ensure that, if a consultation constitutes a policy decision, the Welsh language is considered appropriately.
	Plus, record keeping standard 144	

		<p>QAA has formalised a Policy Impact Checklist relating to Welsh language which is available to staff via the Welsh Language Standards SharePoint site.</p> <p>All QAA policies relating to our externally facing functions are developed or reviewed as required and all relevant policies include consideration of policy making standards.</p>
Consulting on policy	87-89	<p>QAA considers whether consultations constitute a policy decision under these standards and, where it does, will include a relevant consultation question.</p> <p>QAA has not undertaken a consultation in relation to our work in Wales that constitutes a policy decision. Where QAA has undertaken a consultation relating to work in Wales, the consultation questions always take account of Welsh language requirements.</p>
Research on policy making	91-93	<p>QAA considers whether research it commissions or undertakes is intended to assist a policy decision under these standards and, where it does, will include a relevant requirement in the research brief. QAA has not recently undertaken research to assist a policy decision. Where research is undertaken, the Policy Framework and Policy Impact Checklist will be used to ensure an impact assessment on the Welsh Language Standards is undertaken (see information above).</p>
Operational		
Use of Welsh internally	94	<p>QAA is in the process of developing an internal Welsh language policy. The policy aims to capture our approach to meeting the standards, consolidate guidance/documentation that supports our commitment, and support staff to further their understanding of our work in this area and how it applies across the organisation. As a UK-wide organisation, we continue to assess how the policy can best suit all strands of our work in Wales and its relationship to our UK-wide work.</p>
Welsh language skills, capacity, awareness and development	123, 126-129	<p>Language skills of candidates are assessed on application to job roles that include Welsh language skills as part of the person specification.</p>
	Plus, record keeping standard 145	<p>Our HR system has the functionality to keep a current record of the language skills of all employees. These are reviewed annually. We also include information on Welsh language courses as part of the Welsh Language Standards and Awareness Training. Growth</p>

		<p>conversations and 1:1 meetings are used to identify development needs and we are proactive in providing training.</p> <p>The training provides information on: the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011; QAA's obligations under this measure in practice; the Cymraeg 2050 strategy; how to record Welsh language preferences; how compliance is monitored; and some frequently asked questions. Furthermore, the training includes updates from, and work of, the Welsh Language Commissioner as appropriate. The Welsh Language Standards and Awareness training forms part of induction processes for all new starters. QAA also maintains a record of staff who have attended the training.</p> <p>QAA has created a frequently asked questions resource for staff that is revised regularly in line with staff queries relating to our Welsh language obligations.</p>
Recruitment and appointments	132, 132A, 133, 133A, 133B, 135, 136	<p>We assess the need for Welsh language skills in roles and review regularly. Where Welsh language skills are essential for a post, we will seek to appoint a Welsh speaker.</p> <p>Any vacancy advertised in the Welsh media, which will include all those involving our work specifically for Wales, will be advertised bilingually, and text will be included in the advert advising candidates to indicate if they wish to use Welsh during the recruitment and selection process. Specific information about the post will be available in both languages.</p> <p>Applications where Welsh language skills are essential or desirable may be submitted in either language and will be treated equally; all linked correspondence will meet the relevant standards.</p>
	Plus, record keeping standards 147,148	
Software for checking grammar and spelling in Welsh	116	Welsh language packs are available to all staff for Microsoft Windows Applications.
Intranet pages to support staff in using Welsh	121	A Welsh Language Standards SharePoint site is used to manage, support and monitor the application of the standards across QAA. This SharePoint site also houses a range of resources for staff including quick links to the Welsh Academy Dictionary and key terminology.

		The Welsh Language site contains bilingual templates for staff use including questionnaires for GDPR and Welsh language preferences and forms for claiming expenses. Staff are made aware of these templates during QAA Welsh Language Standards training.
Email signoffs and messages	130,131	An email footer is uploaded on Welsh Language Standards SharePoint site and used by staff who work directly with Wales. A bilingual email signature template is part of the QAA email signature template guide.
Record keeping		
Complaints	141-143	All complaints, including any about compliance, are logged in accordance with QAA's complaints procedure. All complaints, including those about compliance with the standards, are retained in line with QAA's document retention schedule.
Policy making	144	Records are kept within the Welsh Language Standards SharePoint site. The Welsh Language and Policy Impact Checklists are also available on the SharePoint Site. Welsh Language Impact assessments are submitted to QAA's Welsh Language Working Group.
Employee language skills	145	Employees are encouraged to update their skills in the HR system regularly. The HR system has the functionality to record language skills including written, reading, translation and verbal proficiency. QAA advertises Welsh language courses available through the Welsh Government website via the Welsh Language Standards and Awareness Training.
Recruitment and Welsh language needs	147,148	These records are kept by HR.
Record of the applicable standards and	149, 153 155, 159 161, 165 167	The main record is maintained through this document and within the Welsh Language Standards SharePoint site. QAA's Welsh Language Working Group includes a standing item for compliance queries.

publish how we intend to comply	Also see record keeping responsibilities above	Supplementary documents (such as a functional specification for business processes) may be sited elsewhere. Our internal policy will include information on how we comply (see standard 94). Our annual report (see the website) also notes how we comply with our standards.
Monitoring and reporting		
Monitoring of how we meet standards, promoting the services we offer, and facilitating their use Publish our arrangements on the website	151 service delivery 157 policy making 163 operational	<p>There are a series of interrelated mechanisms used to monitor how we meet our Welsh Language Standards. Each standard has a designated owner linked to functional responsibilities and there is a designated Director with oversight. To complement this oversight, QAA operates a cross-organisational Welsh Language Working Group. The working group normally meet three times a year.</p> <p>The membership of this group is drawn from departments who work with contacts and organisations in Wales. The approved terms of reference for this group notes responsibility for: regular review of the compliance notice and how this applies to QAA work relating to Wales, action areas of potential, non-compliance, enhance Welsh Language compliance and encourage best practice across the organisation, and provide advice and guidance on the annual report on QAA's engagement with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.</p> <p>The group has the following standing items: compliance queries, Welsh language promotion ideas, and Welsh language impact assessments.</p> <p>In addition, this group is regularly informed of updates from the Welsh Language Commissioner, developments in the Cymraeg 2050 strategy and considers how QAA makes a wider contribution to the Welsh language in Wales.</p>
Produce an annual report on each financial year, promote and publish on the website	152 service delivery 158 policy making 164 operational	The annual report is produced in autumn and considered by QAA's Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), which signs it off on behalf of the QAA Board prior to publication. The annual report covers the previous QAA financial year (1 August to 31 July). The report is published on our website and promoted.
Supply information to the Welsh Language	154 service delivery 160 policy making 166 operational	Information will be supplied on request.

Commissioner re compliance with standards	168 record keeping	
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