



BWRDD YR IAITH
GYMRAEG • WELSH
LANGUAGE BOARD

HM Revenue and Customs

Welsh Language Scheme 2008 - 2012

1. Introduction
2. Who we are and what we do
3. Service Planning and delivery
 - Policies, legislation and initiatives
 - Delivering services
 - Services undertaken on our behalf by third parties
 - Standards of quality
4. Dealing with Welsh speaking customers in Wales
 - Written correspondence
 - Telephone communications
 - Public Meetings in Wales
 - Other meetings with customers in Wales
 - Other dealings with customers in Wales
5. Our public face in Wales
 - Publicity campaigns, exhibitions and advertising
 - Publications
 - Web sites
 - Forms and associated explanatory material
 - Corporate identify in Wales
 - Signs in Wales
 - Official notices, public notices and staff recruitment notices
 - Press releases and contact with the media
6. Implementing the scheme
 - Staffing and recruitment
 - Language Training
 - Information and Communications Technology
 - Internal arrangements
 - Monitoring
 - Reviewing and amending the scheme

Feedback and complaints

1. Introduction

To comply with the Welsh Language Act 1993, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) adopts the principle that, in the conduct of its public business and communication in Wales, it will treat the English and Welsh languages on the basis of equality in appropriate circumstances and when reasonably practicable.

This scheme sets out how HMRC intends to fulfil this commitment to its customers and was prepared under Section 21 (3) of the Act and in accordance with guidelines issued by the Welsh Language Board under Section 9 of the Act. . The scheme received the full endorsement of the Welsh Language Board on 31 March 2008.

In this scheme, the term public means our customers whether individuals, legal persons or corporate bodies. It includes the public as a whole, or a section of the public, as well as individual members of the public. The term includes voluntary organisations and charities. Directors and others representing limited companies are also within the meaning of the term 'public'.

The measures in this scheme carry the full authority, support and approval of our organisation.

2. Who we are and what we do

HMRC is responsible for collecting the bulk of tax revenue as well as paying tax credits and child benefit, and strengthening the UK's frontiers.

We manage:

- Income, Corporation, Capital gains, Inheritance, Insurance Premium, Stamp, Land and Petroleum Revenue Taxes
- Environmental taxes, Climate Change and Aggregates Levy and Landfill Tax
- VAT
- Customs duties
- Excise duties
- Frontier protection
- National Insurance
- Tax Credits
- Child Benefit and Child Trust Fund
- Enforcement of the National Minimum Wages
- Recovery of Student Loan repayments

HMRC's Ambition puts customers at the heart of everything we do and we are committed to making it as easy as possible for customers to get it right. Our aim is to administer tax and customs control systems fairly and efficiently by enabling customers to comply with their obligations and receive tax credits and other entitlements.

The nature of our organisation means that offices outside Wales deal with many of our customers in Wales and computer-generated correspondence is issued from central business locations across the UK. Our website addresses are: www.hmrc.gov.uk and www.businesslink.gov.uk

3. Service planning and delivery

3.1 Policies, legislation and initiatives

- 3.1.1 Our policies, initiatives and services will be consistent with this scheme. They will support the use of Welsh and will, whenever possible, help our customers in Wales use Welsh as part of their day-to-day lives.
- 3.1.2 HMRC legislation is made in English in Parliament. However, where a statutory provision in English is reproduced in Welsh in an HMRC publication, the Welsh translation may be taken into account in resolving any uncertainty around the English text.
- 3.1.3 When we contribute to the development or delivery of policies, initiatives, services or new legislation led by other organisations, we will do so in a way that is consistent with this scheme.

3.2 Delivering services

- 3.2.1 This scheme will apply to all HMRC business units, wherever they are located, that provide services to customers in Wales. Each business unit will be responsible for providing its services in the Welsh language in accordance with this scheme.
- 3.2.2 This scheme will apply to businesslink.gov.uk as HMRC are custodians of the business.gov programme that delivers it. [Businesslink.gov.uk](http://businesslink.gov.uk) will be responsible for providing its services in the Welsh language consistent with this scheme and specifically with section 5.3.
- 3.2.3 Where any customer in Wales indicates, whether in writing or orally, that they wish to deal with us in Welsh, we will, where practicable, provide our services to them in Welsh.
- 3.2.4 We will let the public know that our services are available in Welsh.

3.3 Services undertaken on our behalf by third parties

- 3.3.1 Any agreements or arrangements, which we make with third parties, will be consistent with the relevant parts of this scheme, when those agreements or arrangements relate to the provision of services to customers in Wales.

3.4 Standards of quality

- 3.4.1 The Department's customer service standards apply equally to services provided in Welsh as to services provided in English.

4. Dealing with Welsh speaking customers in Wales

4.1 Written correspondence

- 4.1.1 When someone writes to us in Welsh we will ensure that the reply will be in the same language, if a reply is needed.
- 4.1.2 Our target time for replying to letters in Welsh is exactly the same as for replying to letters in English.

- 4.1.3 When we send standard or circular correspondence to several recipients in Wales, it will be bilingual, where appropriate.
- 4.1.4 Where Welsh and English versions of correspondence are published separately, our normal practice is to ensure that both versions are available at the same time.
- 4.1.5 Enclosures sent with bilingual letters will be bilingual, where available.
- 4.1.6 Enclosures sent with Welsh letters will be Welsh or bilingual, where available.
- 4.1.7 We will record the language preference of customers who wish to correspond with us in Welsh.

4.2 Telephone communications

- 4.2.1 The diverse nature of our business and our locations means it may not always be possible to provide an immediate response in Welsh. To help us provide the best service possible, we ask callers to phone the following numbers for a Welsh language service:
 - 0845 302 1489
For Income Tax, National Insurance Contributions, Tax Credits, Child Benefits, Child Trust Fund, Construction Industry Scheme, etc.
 - 0845 010 0300
For VAT, Customs and Excise matters
- 4.2.2 In offices where no Welsh speaker is available, our normal practice is to transfer the call to a Welsh speaking colleague located elsewhere who is qualified to deal with the enquiry. If no such Welsh speaker is available, the caller will be given the choice, as appropriate, of having a Welsh speaker phone back as soon as possible, continuing the call in English or submitting their query in Welsh by correspondence.

4.3 Public meetings in Wales

- 4.3.1 At public meetings held by HMRC in Wales our normal practice is to facilitate the use of Welsh, where required. When we arrange seminars, training courses or similar events for customers in Wales, we will assess the need to provide them in Welsh.
- 4.3.2 Where we arrange public meetings in Wales we will:
 - Issue bilingual invitations informing the public that a Welsh language service will be available,
 - Provide bilingual or Welsh language handouts and other written material, where practicable
 - Produce Welsh language versions of any video or audio tapes
- 4.3.3 We will aim to ensure that suitably qualified Welsh speakers attend public meetings, as necessary.

4.4 Other meetings with customers in Wales

4.4.1 When we attend face-to-face meetings with customers, we will establish their Welsh language preference at the earliest opportunity and will aim to ensure that a suitably qualified Welsh speaking member of staff is available to deal with them.

4.4.2 In the absence of a suitably qualified Welsh speaker, we will offer customers the choice of continuing the meeting in English, or dealing with the subject by correspondence in Welsh.

4.5 Other dealings with customers in Wales

4.5.1 When we undertake public surveys, our normal practice will be to ensure that all aspects of communication with the public will be bilingual where reasonably practicable.

4.5.2 Where practicable, customers will be able to respond to surveys in Welsh or English.

5. Our public face in Wales

5.1 Publicity campaigns, exhibitions and advertising

5.1.1 Our normal practice is to publish all publicity, public information, exhibition and advertising material we use in Wales either bilingually, or as separate Welsh and English versions. Any separate Welsh and English versions will be equal with regard to size, prominence and quality - and we will aim to ensure that both versions are available simultaneously and are equally accessible.

5.1.2 Any advertisements placed in English language newspapers (or similar material) distributed mainly or wholly in Wales (except papers that have a UK wide distribution), will be bilingual, or will appear as separate Welsh and English versions (with both versions appearing simultaneously, and being equal with regard to size, prominence and quality).

5.1.3 In Welsh language publications advertisements will be in Welsh only.

5.1.4 Television, cinema and radio advertising will be conducted in Welsh and English whenever possible. Television campaigns, which appear on S4C during Welsh programming hours, will be in Welsh. Radio campaigns broadcast on or during Welsh language programmes on commercial radio stations will be in Welsh.

5.1.5 When staffing exhibition stands and displays, our normal practice is to ensure that suitably fluent Welsh speakers attend, as appropriate.

5.2 Publications

5.2.1 We will publish appropriate material bilingually, with the Welsh and English versions together in one document.

- 5.2.2 Where Welsh and English versions are published separately (for instance, where a single document would be too lengthy or bulky), our normal practice is to ensure that both versions are of equal size and quality, are available at the same time and are equally accessible. Each version will note clearly that the material is available in the other language.
- 5.2.3 The above will also apply to material made available electronically on our website, on CD Rom or otherwise, where practicable.
- 5.2.4 We will agree criteria with the Welsh Language Board to identify objectively when material should be published as separate Welsh and English versions or as bilingual documents.

5.3 Websites

- 5.3.1 Our website will include some key information in both Welsh and English. The pages of HMRC's site available in Welsh will not be an exact copy of the pages available in English.
- 5.3.2 We will provide Welsh versions of the interactive pages on our websites, where practicable.
- 5.3.3 When designing new websites, or redeveloping our existing websites, we will take into account the Welsh Language Board's guidelines on website design, where practicable.
- 5.3.4 Welsh versions of English language publications will be posted on our websites at the same time, if available.

5.4 Forms and associated explanatory material

- 5.4.1 We will aim to ensure that all forms and associated explanatory material for use by customers in Wales will be fully bilingual, with the Welsh and English versions together in one document.
- 5.4.2 If the Welsh and English versions are published separately (for instance, where a single document would be too lengthy or bulky), both versions will be of equal size and quality - and our normal practice is to ensure that both versions are available at the same time and are equally accessible.
- 5.4.3 When we enter information, such as the customer's address, on Welsh versions of forms that are sent to customers we will do so in Welsh.
- 5.4.4 When other organisations distribute forms on our behalf, we will aim to ensure that they do so in accordance with the above.
- 5.4.5 We will agree criteria with the Welsh Language Board to identify objectively when material should be published as separate Welsh and English versions or as bilingual documents.

5.5 Corporate identity in Wales

5.5.1 HMRC will adopt a bilingual corporate identity in Wales. Our name, contact details, logo, slogans and other standard information will appear in Welsh and English on all material that displays our corporate identity.

5.6 Signs in Wales

5.6.1 All permanent and temporary HMRC signs will be bilingual with the Welsh and English text treated equally with regard to size, legibility and prominence.

5.6.2 Where separate Welsh and English signs are provided, they will be equal in terms of format, size, quality and prominence.

5.7 Official notices, public notices and staff recruitment notices

5.7.1 Official notices, public notices and staff recruitment notices placed in English language newspapers (or similar media) distributed mainly or wholly in Wales, will be bilingual, or appear as separate Welsh and English versions. Notices will be in Welsh in Welsh language publications.

5.7.2 The Welsh and English versions will be equal in terms of format, size, quality and prominence – whether produced as a single bilingual version, or as separate Welsh and English notices.

5.7.3 Posts advertised in the English language media which require Welsh language proficiency will be advertised in Welsh, with a brief description in English.

5.7.4 Recruitment notices placed in English language journals (and other publications) with a UK-wide distribution may be in English, unless the post is one where the ability to speak Welsh is essential, in which case the notice may be fully bilingual, or in Welsh with a brief explanation in English.

5.7.5 Any official notices, public notices or staff recruitment notices placed elsewhere in Wales will be bilingual.

5.8 Press releases and contact with the media

5.8.1 Press releases to the Welsh language press and broadcasting media in Wales will be issued in Welsh and English where deadlines permit.

5.8.2 Where possible, we will ensure that Welsh speakers are available to undertake interviews with the Welsh language press and broadcasting media.

6. Implementing the scheme

6.1 Staffing and recruitment

6.1.1 HMRC will monitor the recruitment and placing of Welsh speaking staff and will take appropriate action through our recruitment process to maintain the delivery of our Welsh language service.

6.1.2 When fluency in Welsh is considered to be desirable or essential this will be stated in the job competencies and advertisements.

6.2 Language Training

6.4.1 We will develop the ability of our Welsh speaking staff to operate in Welsh by providing vocational training in Welsh, where practicable.

6.3 Information and Communications Technology

6.3.1 Where practicable, the need to provide information and services in Welsh will be considered as we develop design and purchase information and communications technology products and services.

6.3.2 Where practicable, we will modify our existing information and communications technology systems to ensure that they enable us to provide information and services in Welsh - and operate in accordance with this scheme.

6.3.3 As we develop and procure information and communications technology systems we will take into account the Welsh Language Board's Bilingual Software Guidelines and Standards.

6.4 Internal arrangements

6.4.1 The scheme will be publicised to our staff, and to the public in Wales. It will be published on our website in a prominent place.

6.4.2 Staff working in areas which are likely to be directly affected will receive detailed guidance on handling enquiries in Welsh and other implications of the scheme.

6.4.3 Any form of contact with the public in Wales, which is not specifically dealt with by this scheme, will be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the general principles of this scheme.

6.5 Monitoring

6.5.1 We will appoint a senior member of staff to co-ordinate the work required to deliver, monitor and review this scheme.

6.5.2 We will regularly monitor and evaluate the delivery of our Welsh language service against the commitments made in this scheme and consider action, as appropriate, in consultation with the Board.

6.5.3 We will agree a system of monitoring reports and action plan with the Welsh Language Board outlining progress in delivering this scheme.

6.6 Reviewing and amending the scheme

6.6.1 We will review this scheme within four years of its coming into effect.

6.6.2 Also, from time to time, we may need to review this scheme, or propose amendments to this scheme, because of changes to our functions, or to the circumstances in which we undertake those functions, or for any other reason.

6.6.3 No changes will be made to this scheme without agreement with the Welsh Language Board.

6.7 Feedback and complaints

6.7.1 Feedback and complaints about the scheme should be directed to the senior member of staff with responsibility for the scheme, at the following address:

Welsh Language Scheme Coordinator
HM Revenue and Customs
12th Floor, Phase 2
Government Buildings, Tŷ Glas
Llanishen
Cardiff CF14 5TS

029 2032 6636