

This report is made in compliance with standards 152, 158, and 164 of the Welsh Standards Compliance Notice issued to the Valuation Tribunal by the Welsh Language Commissioner on 6 November 2017. It is made for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Original publication and subsequent variation of Compliance Notice

1. The Tribunal's original Compliance Notice was issued to it on 30 September 2016 with an effective date for all standards contained within it (except numbers 99 to 103, 122 and 145) of 30 March 2017. The effective date for the excepted standards just noted was set at 30 September 2017.
2. Following challenges made by the Tribunal, the Commissioner varied the original Compliance Notice by removing standards 64 and 67 altogether and removing the limitations originally placed against standards 65 and 65A. The Commissioner made her determination on 6 November 2017. A copy of the finalised Compliance Notice is available on the tribunal's website.

How the Tribunal has complied with the different classes of standards imposed upon it

3. The Tribunal has the following classes of standards imposed upon it:
 - Service delivery standards
 - Policy making standards
 - Operational standards
 - Record making standards

Service delivery standards

4. The Tribunal has complied with all the service delivery standards placed upon it. Many features were carried over from our performance commitments required under our former Welsh Language Scheme, including bilingual greetings and reception, correspondence and tribunal hearings in Welsh for service users, all guidance and information leaflets available in English and Welsh, bilingual signage and a fully bilingual website. The footers on letterhead stationery, tribunal notices and on email correspondence have been revised in order to emphasise that the use of the Welsh Language is welcomed and that its use will not lead to a delay in service delivery. Additionally, retainable postcards featuring the Cymraeg speech-bubble logo are now issued with the Tribunal's formal *acknowledgement of receipt of appeal* notice. These are bilingual and again encourage use of the Welsh Language for those who may not have originally approached us using the Welsh Language but who might wish to switch to its use for the remainder of the appeal process. A number of signs have been updated during the year to make them bilingual or to place Welsh in the most prominent position.

Policy making standards

5. Policy-making is undertaken by the Tribunal's Governing Council (the VTW's governing body). The Governing Council requires the development of all new policies and the revision of current ones to take into account the impact of the policies themselves on the use of the Welsh Language and on opportunities to use the Welsh Language. An annex noting the Welsh Language considerations the Governing Council has taken into account has been added to all policies which have been developed or revised this year, so that it is clear that an assessment of Welsh Language impact has been undertaken. No new policies or revised policies have had an adverse effect on the use of the Welsh Language.

Operational standards

6. The language preferences of all staff and members in connection with the applicable operational standards were identified shortly before the year commenced and were recorded. Two members of staff (out of 20) and 25 tribunal members (out of 138) chose Welsh as their preference for all applicable standards. One new member of staff was appointed during the year and their language choice was subsequently recorded. No new tribunal members were recruited during the year, and so no further updates to language preferences were required.
7. Welsh Language spell-checking and grammar-checking software continued to be part of the standard workstation build for all members of staff.
8. In assessing the Welsh Language skills of all staff, four were identified as fully proficient and two as nearly fully proficient at the beginning of the year; however, the number of fully proficient dropped to two during the course of the year owing to overall staff reduction within the organisation.
9. Welsh language training was continuously on offer to all members of staff who wished to take it up. During the year six members of staff were granted release from working time to attend Welsh Language training courses.
10. The organisation's standard email signature for all staff was modified show whether the sender is a Welsh Language speaker or a learner of the language.
11. Appropriate badges and/or lanyards are available to Welsh-speaking staff and these staff are encouraged to use them.
12. One new post was advertised during the year (in both English and Welsh), and applications were welcomed in either language. The post was assessed as Welsh essential at VTW skill level 2 (basic).

Recording keeping standards

13. The Tribunal has compiled the records it is required to compile under the standards applicable to it. Details of the records for the year are shown in Appendix A.

WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS - REQUIRED RECORDS

Standard number	Requirement	End of year result												
140	Number of complaints relating to compliance with standards	None												
141	Have copies of written complaints about compliance with standards been retained?	There were no written complaints, and so there are no retained documents.												
142	Have copies of other written complaints relating to the Welsh Language been retained?	There were no other written complaints, and so there are no retained documents.												
143	Is there a record of the steps taken to ensure compliance with the policy making standards?	Yes. A record is placed in an annexe at the end of each new or revised policy.												
144	Number of staff with Welsh Language skills as at the end of the year (and if recorded the relevant skill level)	2 Fully proficient <i>VTW level 5</i> 1 High level <i>VTW level 4</i> 1 Good conversational <i>VTW level 3</i> 7 Basic <i>VTW level 2</i> 4 Very low or nil <i>VTW level 1</i>												
145	The number (and percentage) of staff who have attended training is Welsh in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment and interviewing Performance management Complaints and disciplinary procedures Induction Dealing with the public Health and safety 	<table> <tr> <td>Recruitment and interviewing</td> <td>None (0%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Performance management</td> <td>None (0%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Complaints and disciplinary procedures</td> <td>None (0%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Induction</td> <td>None (0%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dealing with the public</td> <td>None (0%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Health and safety</td> <td>None (0%)</td> </tr> </table>	Recruitment and interviewing	None (0%)	Performance management	None (0%)	Complaints and disciplinary procedures	None (0%)	Induction	None (0%)	Dealing with the public	None (0%)	Health and safety	None (0%)
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Dealing with the public	None (0%)													
Health and safety	None (0%)													
147	Number of advertised posts this year? Has a copy of the assessment of the required Welsh Language skills for the post(s) been retained?	One Yes (in the person specification – and linked to VTW Welsh Language skill levels document)												
148	The number of advertised posts categorised as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welsh skills essential Welsh skills need to be learnt Welsh skills are desirable Welsh skills are not necessary 	<table> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Welsh skills essential (VTW level 2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>Welsh skills need to be learnt</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>Welsh skills are desirable</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>Welsh skills are not necessary</td> </tr> </table>	1	Welsh skills essential (VTW level 2)	0	Welsh skills need to be learnt	0	Welsh skills are desirable	0	Welsh skills are not necessary				
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