

Driving Standards Agency

W E L S H L A N G U A G E

S C H E M E

Prepared under the
Welsh Language Act 1993

BWRDD YR IAITH
GYMRAEG • WELSH
LANGUAGE BOARD



The Driving Standards Agency has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business it will treat the English and Welsh languages on the basis of equality.

This scheme sets out how the Driving Standards Agency will give effect to that principle when providing services to the public in Wales.

This scheme was prepared under Section 21 of the Act - and in accordance with guidelines issued by the Welsh Language Board under Section 9 of the Act. It came into effect on 8 April 2002 and this amended version was approved on 3 December 2008.

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Introduction

Under the Welsh Language Act 1993 every public body providing services to the public in Wales has to prepare a scheme setting out how it will provide those services in Welsh.

This is our scheme.

It describes how we will give effect, so far as is both appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable, to the principle established by the Welsh Language Act that, in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, the Welsh and English languages should be treated on a basis of equality.

The scheme covers the services that we provide to the public in Wales.

In this scheme, the term **public** means individuals, legal persons and 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'. It does not, however, include persons who are acting in a capacity which is representative of the Crown, Government or the State. Consequently, persons who fulfil official functions of a public nature, even though they are legal persons, do not come within the meaning of the word *public* when they are fulfilling those official functions.

Further information about the scope and purpose of Welsh language schemes can be found in the Welsh Language Board's guidelines (www.Welsh-language-board.org.uk).

Background

The Driving Standards Agency

The Driving Standards Agency (DSA) was created as an executive body in April 1990 and was established as a Trading Fund under the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 (as amended) on 1 April 1997. Its primary aim is to promote road safety in Great Britain by improving driving standards and in particular by testing drivers (including motorcycle riders) and driving instructors fairly and efficiently. It is responsible for three of the Secretary of State's statutory functions:

- driving tests, including the theory test
- supervising car driving instructors
- the compulsory basic training (CBT) scheme for learner motorcyclists

The DSA is also responsible for maintaining the Highway Code.

In pursuing its aims, the DSA is expected to meet the following objectives:

- Road safety. To provide a centre of excellence for driver training and driving standards, ensuring high and consistent standards in the assessment of drivers and driving instructors in Great Britain.

- Customer service. To provide high quality, modernised services based on an understanding of customer needs, working closely with other parts of Government, particularly the Driver Vehicle Operations (DVO) group, to deliver joined-up services.
- Staff development. To ensure that everyone in DSA is developed and trained with the skills they need to achieve the DSA's objectives.
- Efficiency. To improve continually the efficiency and effectiveness of the DSA's operations in accordance with Government policy and best business practice.
- Finances. To achieve the annual fee by full recovery of costs, and ROCE targets.

The headquarters of the DSA is in Nottingham and it has a training establishment at Cardington, Bedfordshire. The Agency employs over 2,500 people, which includes about 2,000 examiners of which about 100 are in Wales.

The DSA conducts practical driving tests from a national network of 418 driving test centres. 191 of these are operational in the south. There are 28 operational in Wales. Nationally some handle motorcycle, lorry and bus tests. There are two Administrative offices; Newcastle and Cardiff who manage the workforce in the field and manage area resources. The Cardiff office serves Wales, part of the Midlands and the South of England. The Newcastle office serves part of the Midlands, and the North of England and Scotland. All postal applications are processed at Newcastle.

The Theory and Hazard Perception test delivery has been contracted out to a private company but the DSA retains the responsibility for the control of these test, and maintenance of the question bank in both Welsh and English. The private company is responsible for running the theory and hazard perception test operations, including making bookings, conducting the PC-based tests and issuing results. There are some 160 theory test centres across GB of which 9 are situated in Wales. The theory and hazard perception test is available on screen in both English and Welsh at all test centres in Wales and those in England whose catchment include areas of Wales.

Service Planning and Delivery

Policies, Legislation and initiatives

The DSA will assess the linguistic consequences of any new policies and initiatives when formulating them, as well as changes or modifications to existing schemes and processes, or their reorganisation. It will ensure that new policies are consistent with the language scheme and do not undermine it. It will also ensure that measures contained in the scheme are applied to new policies and initiatives when they are implemented. Our policies, initiatives and services will be consistent with this scheme. They will support the use of Welsh and will, whenever possible, help the public in Wales use Welsh as part of their day to day lives.

The DSA will ensure that all new policies and initiatives will promote and facilitate the use of Welsh wherever possible and will move the organisation closer to implementing the principle of equality at every opportunity. 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 which is consistent with this scheme.

The DSA will consult with the Welsh Language Board in advance regarding proposals which will affect the scheme.

Delivering Services

The DSA's Welsh Language Scheme has been agreed by representatives of all branches within the agency and has the full support of the Management Board and its authority for implementation.

The Chief Executive of the DSA and the Operational Delivery Manager at Cardiff will ensure that the principle of language equality is considered and applied in all aspects of the DSA's work which impinges on the general public in Wales from wherever it is conducted. They will be responsible for ensuring that every section and operating unit, including contractors, follows the scheme and that the service delivered through the medium of Welsh is equal in all respects to that given through the English language. They will also be responsible for informing the public of the commitment to language equality. The costs of maintaining this language scheme will be met from its existing or future budgets.

The Operational Delivery Manager in the Cardiff Office has been given the responsibility of running and monitoring the scheme on behalf of the Chief Executive. This officer will be responsible for identifying the need for change and informing the Chief Executive accordingly. The Operational Delivery Manager will be the point of contact for enquires about the scheme and its operation. This officer will be identified in all the agency's general literature and at all points of contact with the public.

Heads of Branches within the DSA will be responsible for ensuring that the provisions of the scheme are taken into account in the work of their own areas and for the progression of individual measures identified in the scheme. Furthermore, the DSA will ensure that everyone in the Agency is familiar with the scheme, how it will be implemented and how they are individually affected.

Service in the Welsh language will be delivered at each of our test centres in Wales as well as those outside Wales whose catchment area includes parts of Wales. We will operate on the basis of exchanging or sharing Welsh speaking members of staff with centres where there are no Welsh speakers. By this method we can ensure that a driver may choose his/her preferred language at the time of booking a practical or theory test and that the tester/invigilator will also be Welsh speaking.

The DSA will ensure that the administration of its services in the Welsh language will be integrated smoothly into its general administrative processes and methods.

Standards of Quality

All the requirements that have been set in the DSA's Service Standard leaflet and the DSA Business Plan will apply equally regardless of language when these apply to services to the general public. Bilingual customer service standards will be produced and bilingual service standards will be displayed in DSA Test Centres throughout Wales.

Variation in the demand for service in the Welsh language, which will be evident from district to district, will not affect the quality of the service. The standard and quality will be constant throughout Wales.

The standards that have been established by the DSA in this scheme will apply to all other organisations who perform statutory duties on its behalf. The whole scheme will apply to those organisations but in later sections of this document, special references have been made to certain operations in this context in order to emphasise the need to conform in those very important areas. This does not lessen the need to conform in all other areas.

Dealing with the Welsh Speaking Public

Correspondence

The DSA (and by definition its contractors and sub-contractors) welcomes correspondence in Welsh and English and correspondence in Welsh will be dealt with as promptly as that in English, and in accordance with our Customer Service standards.

Outgoing letters written in Welsh but translated from an English original will all be signed by the respective author, as will both Welsh and English halves of bilingual letters.

The DSA will answer letters from customers in Wales in the language of the letters received, or in the language requested if a preference is declared by the writer. Similarly, correspondence will be in Welsh if verbal contact was in Welsh or if a preference for Welsh was expressed.

When we initiate correspondence with an individual, group or organisation, we will do so in Welsh when we know that they would prefer to correspond in Welsh.

We will use a scoring system, agreed with the Board, to identify objectively any standard or circular correspondence which need not be published in Welsh, or bilingually (for instance, when the correspondence is very technical or lengthy). Circular and standard letters to destinations in Wales as well as enclosures (e.g., location maps, leaflets, forms, instructions) will be bilingual regardless of their point of origin in the UK, other than those identified.

When communication is by electronic means, the commitments made in this section still apply.

Documents such as legal agreements, agreements with contractors, landlords and tenants or any other script requiring specialist attention in its construction will be written or translated whenever necessary by a person with expertise in that field. Such documents will normally be offered in the recipient's preferred language only.

Enclosures sent with bilingual letters will be bilingual, when available.

Enclosures sent with Welsh letters will be Welsh or bilingual, when available.

All Welsh e-mail correspondence that we issue from Wales will bear a Welsh (or bilingual) electronic signature.

Telephone communications

Our normal practice is to ensure that the public can speak in Welsh or English when dealing with us by telephone.

The DSA welcomes enquiries in Welsh or English. There is a separate national number (0300 200 1122) which should be dialled to access Welsh speaking operators. An Interactive Voice.

Response system will respond in Welsh, giving the caller the choice of accessing either the practical test line or the theory line. The system will then deliver the call to the appropriate Welsh speaking clerk. In addition, switchboard staff in England who are likely to receive enquiries from Wales, will be trained to transfer a caller to the Welsh line on request.

If a caller wishes to have a discussion in Welsh on a specific issue and the appropriate Welsh speaker is not immediately available, the DSA will offer to return the call within the working day, or early the next working day if the call is received late in the day, by a Welsh speaker. Failing that, the caller will be informed of the delay and will be offered a discussion in English as a temporary measure or to put the query in writing in Welsh. This clause also applies to such calls made to our headquarters in England including those on the CBT enquiry line and Pass Plus Hotlines.

We will encourage our staff in Wales to answer the telephone with a bilingual greeting and use bilingual messages on their personal answer-phones.

Answering machines on customer booking and enquiry lines will have a bilingual message when they are attached to numbers in Wales.

When we set up telephone help-lines, or similar facilities, to give information, services or support to the public, we will provide a Welsh language service. This will be advertised alongside the English language service. Both services will share the same telephone number.

Because of their location it would not be practicable for staff in our offices outside Wales to conduct telephone conversations in Welsh.

Public meetings

We will provide simultaneous translation from Welsh into English at our public meetings unless we have established that all participants are likely to use the same language.

Invitations and advertisements for public meetings will be bilingual and either note that translation facilities will be available or invite the public to let us know in advance in which language they wish to speak.

We will let those attending public meetings know when translation facilities are available; and encourage contributions in Welsh.

When selecting staff to attend public meetings, our normal practice will be to ensure that suitably qualified Welsh speakers attend, as necessary. Meetings such as Open Days will involve less formal contact between the public and members of staff. Here, the DSA will

ensure that there will be access to Welsh speaking and English speaking staff who can deal with enquires, or converse with individuals in their chosen language.

Members of staff who may get involved with educational bodies e.g., on Schools Projects or visits, will ensure that such bodies know that service to schools is offered in either English or Welsh. With advanced knowledge of the school's language requirement, the appropriate member of staff will be chosen. Literature generated for schools in Wales will be bilingual for both primary and secondary sectors.

We will discuss with the Welsh Language Board, how we can promote our Welsh language services to schools and colleges and include this in the action plan for the scheme.

Any information, publicity and reports relating to public meetings will be bilingual.

Other dealings with the public in Wales

Driving test candidates may take the practical and/or the theory test in Welsh or English.

When we arrange or attend face-to-face meetings with the public, we will establish their language preference at the earliest opportunity and, whenever possible, ensure that a suitably qualified Welsh speaking member of staff deals with those whose preferred language is Welsh.

If no suitably qualified Welsh speaker is available, we will offer the choice of continuing the meeting in English, or dealing with the subject by corresponding in Welsh.

The above will also apply to meetings held using videoconferencing and similar equipment.

Because of their location it would not be practicable for staff in our offices outside Wales to conduct face-to-face meetings with the public through the medium of Welsh.

Our Public Face

Publicity campaigns, exhibitions and advertising

We will use a scoring system agreed by the Board to identify objectively if any publicity, public information, exhibition and advertising material we use in Wales should be produced bilingually, or as separate Welsh and English versions. If the Welsh and English versions have to be published separately, both versions will be equal with regard to size, prominence and quality - and both versions will be available simultaneously and will be equally accessible.

Any advertisements placed in English language newspapers (or similar material) distributed mainly or wholly in Wales, 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).

In Welsh language publications advertisements will be in Welsh only.

Television, cinema and radio advertising will be conducted in Welsh and English. Television campaigns which appear on S4C during Welsh programming hours will be in Welsh. Radio

campaigns broadcast during Welsh language programmes on commercial radio stations will be in Welsh.

Our normal practice will be to avoid using Welsh language subtitles, or dubbing adverts into Welsh (excepting voice-overs).

Telephone response lines and other ways of responding to campaigns in Wales will be bilingual or will include a separate Welsh response service.

When staffing exhibitions stands and displays, our normal practice will be to ensure that suitably qualified Welsh speakers attend, as necessary.

Publications

We will use a scoring system agreed by the Board to identify objectively when material should be published as separate Welsh and English versions or as bilingual documents.

Our normal practice will be to publish material made available to the public bilingually, with the Welsh and English versions together in one document.

If the Welsh and English versions have to be 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 will be to ensure that both versions are available at the same time and are equally accessible. Each version will note clearly that the material is available in the other language.

If not available free of charge, the price of a bilingual document will not be greater than that of a single language publication - and the price of separate, Welsh and English versions will be the same.

The above will also apply to material made available electronically on our website, on CD Rom or otherwise.

Websites

Our websites will include pages in both Welsh and English.

Our normal practice will be to provide Welsh versions of the interactive pages on our websites.

When designing new websites, or redeveloping our existing websites, we will take into account the Welsh Language Board's *Bilingual Software Guidelines and Standards* and any other guidance issued by the Board with regard to developing websites.

Whenever we post English language publications on our websites, the Welsh versions will be posted at the same time, if available.

We will prepare a programme, to be agreed with the Welsh Language Board, setting out how we will increase the Welsh language content of our website, over time. All the information on our website used by the general public will be included in this programme.

Forms and associated explanatory material

We will use a scoring system agreed by the Board to identify objectively when material should be published as separate Welsh and English versions or as bilingual documents.

Our normal practice will be to ensure that all forms and associated explanatory material for use by the public in Wales will be fully bilingual, with the Welsh and English versions together in one document. This will include interactive forms published on our websites.

If the Welsh and English versions have to be published separately (for instance, where a single document would be too lengthy or bulky), both versions will be of equal size and quality - and we will ensure that both versions are available at the same time and are equally accessible. Each version will note clearly that the material is available in the other language.

When we enter information on Welsh versions of forms that are sent to the public, we will do so in Welsh.

When we enter information on bilingual forms that are sent to the public, we will do so bilingually unless we know that the recipients would prefer to receive the information in Welsh or English only.

When other organisations distribute forms on our behalf, we will ensure that they do so in accordance with the above.

Corporate Identity

The DSA will adopt a fully bilingual corporate image in Wales. The Agency's name, address, logo, corporate slogan and any other standard information will be bilingual on all letter headings, fax paper, business cards, identification badges, publications, signs, vehicles and other goods and materials used in Wales.

Signs in Wales

The Agency's information boards and signs on buildings / testing centres will all be bilingual throughout Wales. New items will be produced bilingually but existing items will be replaced with bilingual ones as they need replacing or at the latest within three years of the publication of this scheme.

Within and outside buildings in Wales, all official new and replacement signs and notices which give warning, prohibit, instruct, request a code of behaviour or otherwise inform or promote the safety of staff, visitors and candidates will be bilingual.

Welsh and English will be equal in size, quality, legibility and prominence. In rare instances it may not be possible to produce bilingual signs, and separate Welsh and English signs of equal prominence, quality and size will be displayed.

Official Notices, Public Notices and Staff Recruitment

All job advertisements, official notices and public notices placed by the DSA in the media, any kind of journal based in Wales, job centres or in any other situation will be bilingual, and may be in Welsh only in Welsh language newspapers. Advertisements placed in papers, periodicals or journals, where their circulation is mainly outside Wales, may be in English only.

unless, in the case of job advertisements, the ability to speak Welsh at the outset is a requirement of the job.

Press Releases and contact with the Media

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

As above when we post press releases on our website, our normal practice will be to post them in Welsh and English.

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

Implementing the Scheme

Staffing and Recruitment

The DSA will ensure that its Cardiff Office and relevant Driving Test Centres in Wales will have access to sufficient and appropriately skilled Welsh speakers to enable them to deliver a full service through the medium of Welsh. The following procedures will be implemented accordingly:

We will identify those workplaces and jobs where the ability to speak Welsh is desirable or essential. This requirement may be defined as a component of a workplace or team, or attached to a particular job.

From time to time, we will undertake audits to establish the number, ability level and location of staff that can speak, read and write Welsh (including staff that are learning Welsh). We will also identify staff who wish to learn Welsh.

The results of these two exercises will be compared to identify workplaces where there is a shortage of Welsh speaking staff.

We will respond to any shortages through our recruitment and training activities.

We will also consider the possibility of transferring staff able to speak Welsh to fill those posts where the ability to speak Welsh is desirable or essential.

The DSA has enough Welsh speaking examiners at its practical test centres to ensure that the demand for tests in Welsh is met and that the waiting times for tests are not affected by language preference. Sometimes this may entail borrowing staff from other areas.

Recruitment

When recruiting staff we will be guided by the information gathered by following the procedures described under *Staffing* above.

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

Where no suitable Welsh speaking candidates can be found for a post where Welsh is desirable, the person appointed will be encouraged to learn Welsh.

When no suitable Welsh speaking candidates can be found for a post where Welsh is essential; we will make temporary arrangements under the Welsh language service (by providing, for example, Welsh speaking staff from elsewhere in our organisation to deliver parts of the service).

Information packs and application forms will be provided in Welsh and English for all of our jobs where fluency in Welsh is considered to be desirable or essential. For all other jobs, information packs and application forms will be provided in Welsh when requested by a job applicant.

Language and Staff Training

The DSA will actively encourage learning Welsh and, as part of its staff training programme, will provide Welsh language training to allow employees to achieve or maintain the required fluency in Welsh. This will be in line with corporate priorities to ensure that the DSA meets its obligations in line with the Charter Mark Standards, Investors in People Principles and the Welsh Language Act.

Members of staff who are appointed on the understanding that they learn Welsh in a given period will be automatically enrolled on a Welsh course, and time off during working hours to achieve the required level of fluency will be agreed.

The DSA will continually assess the need for vocational training through the medium of Welsh where this would be beneficial to the DSA and to members of staff in their everyday work, and review the situation regularly.

Contractors carrying out statutory work on our behalf such as the Theory Test operator will be expected to follow these staff training guidelines also

Information and Communications Technology

The need to provide information and services in Welsh, and operate in accordance with this scheme, will be catered for as we develop, design and purchase information and communications technology products and services.

Whenever possible, 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.

As we develop or procure ICT systems we will take into account the Board's *Bilingual Software Guidelines and Standards*.

Partnership working

When we are the strategic and financial leader within a partnership, we will ensure that any public service aspects comply with this scheme

When we join a partnership which another organisation is leading, our input to the partnership will comply with this scheme and we will encourage the other partners to comply.

Internal arrangements

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

Managers will have the **responsibility** of implementing those aspects of the scheme relevant to their work.

We will appoint a senior member of staff to **coordinate** the work required to deliver, monitor and review this scheme.

We will prepare, and continuously update, a detailed **action plan** to be agreed with the Board, setting out how we will ensure that we will operate in accordance with this scheme. The action plan will come into effect on the date on which the scheme comes into effect, or as soon as possible thereafter. The plan will include targets, deadlines and a report on progress against each target.

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.

We will produce **desk instructions**, or similar guidance, for our staff to ensure that they know how to implement the measures contained in this scheme.

The DSA will use the services of competent and tested professional translators who are experienced in translating from English to Welsh and vice versa.

Any agreements or arrangements with third parties will be consistent with the terms of this scheme and all contractors who carry out work to the DSA's instructions, or carry out delegated statutory duties on behalf of the DSA, which involve services to the public in Wales such as the Theory Test operator will follow its terms.

The DSA will use as many means as possible to make the public aware that they may use English or Welsh when communicating with any of its offices or officers by correspondence, telephone or face to face. Every member of staff will be encouraged to offer a choice of language in as natural a way as possible, in particular those who meet the general public in their everyday work.

Monitoring

We will monitor our progress in delivering this scheme against the targets set out in its accompanying action plan.

Our existing monitoring and reporting procedures will include reference to progress in delivering this scheme, as appropriate.

We will send monitoring reports to the Welsh Language Board, when requested by them, outlining progress in delivering this scheme.

Reviewing and amending the scheme

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

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.

No changes will be made to this scheme without the Welsh Language Board's approval.

Complaints and Suggestions for Improvements

A bilingual version of the "Service Standard Leaflet" will set out the service standards and the general complaints procedure. Complaints about the scheme and its operation should be made via the National Number. The Interactive Voice Response system will route you to the appropriate Welsh speaking officer who, if necessary, will transfer you to the Operations Delivery Manager, either immediately or when he/she becomes available. Alternatively, complaints may be sent by letter to the Operations Delivery Manager at the Office in Cardiff.

If the complaint regarding language is not answered satisfactorily, the matter can be taken up with the DSA's Independent Complaints Advisor and ultimately, if necessary, with the Welsh Language Board.

The DSA welcomes suggestions to improve its service to Welsh speakers, and these should be sent to the Operations Delivery Manager

Addresses

The Driving Standards Agency	Telephone: 029 20 581060
PO Box 351	Welsh enquiry line: 0300 200 1133
Caradog House	
1 - 6 St Andrew's Place	
CARDIFF CF10 3UL	

Headquarters address:	Driving Standards Agency
	The Axis Building
	112 Upper Parliament Street
	NOTTINGHAM
	NG1 6LP
	Tel: 0115 936 6666

Main targets for scheme delivery

Target	Date of completion
1. Website We will agree with the Welsh Language Board a programme to increase the Welsh language content on our websites and update them website on this basis.	31 July 2009
2. Staff awareness session Send staff awareness message(s) to promote knowledge of the scheme amongst staff.	Within 2 months of scheme approval
3. Staff guidance Provide guidance to staff informing of the scheme and the implications for their work and the point of contact for any enquiries.	Ready for scheme approval
4. Publications Use the scoring system to review existing main publications to assess which ones should be available in Welsh. Translate any documents identified on a rolling programme.	30 September 2008 30 September 2009
5. Publicity for the scheme Publicise the scheme on our website and any relevant publicity material.	Within 2 months of scheme approval
6. Signs DSA will ensure that all signs for the new Multi Purpose Driving Test Centres in Wales are bilingual.	31 October 2008