

TOWARDS  
CYMRAEG  
2050

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**HEFCW and the Welsh language  
in higher education**



Noddir gan  
**Lywodraeth Cymru**  
Sponsored by  
**Welsh Government**

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The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales – HEFCW – is the public body operating between Welsh Government and higher education providers. We regulate full time undergraduate fee levels at higher education providers, ensure a framework is in place for assessing the quality of higher education and scrutinise the performance of universities and other designated providers. We also provide funding for higher education teaching and research, and apply our influence and expertise to help deliver Welsh Government priorities for higher education that also have wider societal and economic benefits.

## Introduction

HEFCW's Student Opportunity and Achievement Committee provides advice on all matters relating to student opportunity and achievement in higher education, including Welsh medium, to our Council. It has an enhanced interest in the Welsh language given the role of higher education in supporting Welsh Government's initiative *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers*.

Following the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards in April 2018, 2018/19 was a year of change and development for us. Consequently, we thought it would be useful to reflect on our work relating to the Welsh language and to bring this to the attention of the Committee.

As a public organisation we welcome and encourage the use of the Welsh language on a daily basis. We have worked closely and in partnership with Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol since its establishment in 2011. We engage regularly on matters relating to Welsh medium higher education and provide support for, and encourage the important work being conducted in relation to the Welsh language. We also engage with other stakeholders involved in the higher education sector.

We recognise the importance of celebrating work that promotes the Welsh language and our role in normalising bilingualism in higher education. The report to our Student Opportunity and Achievement Committee brought together the different ways in which we engage with the Welsh language and Welsh medium provision. The Committee was encouraged by the work conducted to date and its effect on the higher education sector and wider population. The document highlights several projects and good practice and reflects on opportunities where further work could be done in the spirit of *Cymraeg 2050*.

In 2019 we are working to uphold the Welsh Language Standards and take forward our commitment to *Cymraeg 2050*.

**Dr David Blaney,**  
HEFCW Chief Executive,  
October 2019

## About Us

As a public body, we comply with the [Welsh Language Standards](#). From April 2018, these Standards superseded our [Welsh Language Scheme](#). We monitor compliance and activities annually against our implementation plan, and publish the outcomes in our annual report.

For some time before this, we have had a bilingual public presence through our website, facilities, public meetings and communications avenues. Our policies are scrutinised internally to ensure that they actively support Welsh medium and bilingual education, and to consider how they can have a positive effect on using Welsh.

## What does this publication aim to do?

This publication brings together examples of positive work conducted by HEFCW and the higher education sector. It provides an opportunity to celebrate areas of growth and success for higher education providers and those in their surrounding communities.



## WHAT IS OUR AIM?

To help create and encourage a higher education system that fosters Welsh language and culture, and encourages it to thrive.



## WHO DO WE WORK WITH?

We work in partnership with a number of organisations, including Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, Estyn and the National Centre for Learning Welsh amongst others to realise our aim for a strong Welsh language culture throughout higher education.

We funded the work of Y Coleg from 1 March 2011 until 31 March 2018, after which the Welsh Government directly funded its main activities and the Welsh medium Scholarship schemes.

The Welsh Language Skills Certificate has allowed students to gain a certificate that serves as evidence of their language skills and their ability to work through the medium of Welsh.

Following a review of the Coleg's activities in 2017, Welsh Government decided that Y Coleg should extend its strategic and planning roles to the post-16 sector, covering further education and Apprenticeships, enabling all post-16 learners to benefit from some Welsh medium and bilingual provision.

# Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol



© Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol – Y Coleg – develops Welsh medium higher education and ensures that students have the opportunity to maintain their Welsh language skills for future employment.

We have worked closely with Y Coleg since it was established in 2011 to increase Welsh medium provision in higher education.

We have helped Y Coleg to:

- invest in new staff and provision
- focus on key target areas, and
- support take-up of the Welsh Language Skills Certificate.

It works with all of our higher education providers to plan and support Welsh medium courses.

We continue to have regular liaison meetings and annual Chief Executive meetings with Y Coleg, supported by a memorandum of understanding and data sharing agreement. We also continue to engage with Y Coleg thanks to our observer status on its board, and attendance at its annual court and congregation.

## Y Coleg's Courses

Y Coleg has worked closely with higher education providers to develop high-quality courses and resources for students. Course choice has increased significantly since it was founded, to some 1,000 courses today. This has been made possible through Y Coleg's academic staffing scheme.

## Y Coleg's Staff

Y Coleg's staffing scheme was introduced in 2011/12, and the final intake of staff will complete their five year appointments in 2019/20.

Most staff have been kept on as permanent employees by their institutions beyond the period of financial support by Y Coleg.

This scheme has increased the capacity of Welsh language provision within the sector, and we support all efforts that contribute to the Welsh medium teaching targets for higher education.

## Y Coleg's Work Experience Scheme

Y Coleg developed a bespoke work experience scheme to provide students with an opportunity to undertake a period of work experience in Welsh during their higher education studies.

## The Subject Grants

In 2017/18, subject grants were piloted to help ensure that provision is maintained and continues to grow. These were listed at Appendix 6 in the Coleg's [2017/18 Annual Report](#).

Additional subject grants are being awarded annually to support these areas that Y Coleg previously supported through lectureships where funding will cease with the final cohort in 2019/20.

## Associate Lecturer Scheme

The Associate Lecturer scheme was launched in 2018. This scheme provides Welsh speaking tutors with a direct link to Y Coleg, following the end of formal funding for lectureships.



Photos: Students from Y Coleg  
© Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

In 2015/16, the staffing scheme supported 116 lecturing posts, both full time and part time – which equated to the largest ever single investment in Welsh medium provision in the higher education sector.

Y Coleg's network of employers has meant that 100 students have been able to take part in work experience every year.

"Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol... has supported a range of measurable outputs and outcomes which represent a significant step towards creating a sustainable system for Welsh medium higher education." HEFCW's 2015-16 Remit Letter from Welsh Government.

In 2017/18 the grant was allocated to seven institutions to support 16 subjects.

Ensuring that there are enough Welsh speaking teachers is crucial to meeting *Cymraeg 2050*.

There have been a significant increase in the number of students studying a proportion of their courses through Welsh medium since the establishment of Y Coleg in 2011.\*

## Y Coleg's Language Competency Certificate for Teachers

The Language Competency Certificate for Teachers provided by Y Coleg has positively influenced the number of students enrolling on Welsh medium initial teacher education (ITE) programmes.

Most recently, Y Coleg has been asked to work with providers to ensure that Welsh medium language skills are incorporated into ITE provision, with an overall increase in the number of qualified teacher statuses awarded since the certificate was introduced.

Year	ITE – all Students	Welsh Medium ITE Entrants	Welsh Medium ITE Students – QTS Awarded
2014	725	445	475
2015	1,160	765	695
2016	1,155	790	720
2017	1,075	755	665

## Number of students taking part of their course through Welsh medium

Between 2011/12 and 2016/17 the number of students studying part of their course through the medium of Welsh increased. We are working with higher education providers to continue this trend.

Mode of study	Level of study	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Full time	Post graduate	365	475	510	575	740	810	705
Full time	Under graduate	2,705	3,380	3,590	3,465	4,610	4,350	4,420
Part time	Post graduate	130	195	220	890	395	745	230
Part time	Under graduate	1,500	1,415	855	1,430	1,960	880	700

\*Stats Wales Figures

The figures in the table above do not include the Open University in Wales, nor HEFCW's regulated or funded further education institutions.

## Degree Apprenticeships

From 2017 we have been working with higher education providers to develop degree level apprenticeships. These employer-led qualifications are becoming available in priority subjects set by Welsh Government:

- Digital
- Engineering
- Advanced manufacturing.

Proposals for funding degree apprenticeships in 2019/20 had to include information about how any employment, courses or parts of courses could be delivered in Welsh.

## GO Wales: Achieve through Work Experience

GO Wales: Achieve through Work Experience helps students with particular needs to develop their employability skills.

The programme receives ESF funding until January 2022, is delivered by all universities and is managed by us.

At the end of August 2018, 1165 students had undertaken work experience with 497 employers.

GO Wales advisers work with identified local Welsh-speaking employers to arrange work experience in Welsh where requested.

All Degree Apprenticeship proposals submitted by HEFCW-funded institutions needed to show how they would deliver against a set of criteria that also addressed arrangements for delivering in Welsh.



**Cronfa Gymdeithasol Ewrop**  
**European Social Fund**

# GO Wales

GO Wales advisers, based in the universities, support eligible students into bespoke work experience with local employers. The host employers receive the benefit of the perspective of a young student and the opportunity to show that they are a socially responsible organisation, and the students increase their chances of obtaining graduate level employment upon leaving university.

GO Wales advisers met Sara\*, a Social Sciences student in her final year of study at Bangor University. A first language Welsh speaker, Sara wanted to pursue a career in social work, and needed to gain enough work experience to enable her to apply for a bursary for a Master's Course. She felt that her hearing loss held her back in terms of presenting herself confidently, and had no relevant work experience.

“ I contacted GO Wales as I wanted support from an organisation that could help me undertake work experience and would take my disability into consideration. ”

The adviser worked with Sara to source a placement with Drws Y Nant, a Council-run social care centre whose staff and service users predominantly use Welsh. The Centre promotes contact time between parents and children who have been taken into care, and organises respite for parents, including arranging social activities for families.

With Drws y Nant's manager guiding and supporting her along the way, the placement provided Sara with relevant work experience and improved her confidence. Working alongside social workers gave her an insight into the reality of the role, as she shadowed social workers while they dealt with challenging and sometimes upsetting situations. She thoroughly enjoyed the placement and helping families and children in a rewarding way.

Sara also felt that the placement had developed her communication skills. She was able to communicate better with other people and professionals, both in person and on the phone, which surprised her as she had always had difficulties with this due to her hearing loss.

“ Go ahead and do it. Think about what you need to achieve and what kind of direction you would like to follow; what kind of skills you need to develop or improve; and what kind of placement would help you achieve this. You are in the very good hands of the supportive GO Wales team who will do their best to help you achieve your desired direction. ”

Following her work experience, Sara was offered paid employment with Drws y Nant as a family support worker, further boosting her confidence – and helping her to meet the criteria for the bursary that she will receive for her Masters in Social Work from September 2019.

[www.gowales.co.uk](http://www.gowales.co.uk)

\*Name has been changed.



## Estyn

We have regular liaison meetings with Estyn in areas of common interest. In relation to the Welsh language, this includes Welsh medium initial teacher education, and Welsh for Adults provision. Estyn holds a joint Memorandum for higher education of Understanding with us and the Quality Assurance Agency, providing the framework for engagement between all three organisations.

Estyn inspects the National Centre for Learning Welsh and Welsh for Adults centres on a cycle of three years. The outcomes of these inspections are considered by our Quality Assessment Committee. We will continue to engage with Estyn on findings from their inspections.

## Fee and Access Plans

Higher education providers include targets for 5+ and 40+ Welsh medium credits in their Fee and Access Plans. Fee and Access plans are a monitoring tool that must be signed off by HEFCW to enable students at higher education providers to access student financial support for full time undergraduate provision.

Credits are a way of measuring what percentage of a course has been studied through the medium of Welsh. One year of study on a full time course equates to 120 credits.

We have always shared proposed Welsh medium targets from Fee and Access plans with Y Coleg to ensure that they represent an appropriate level of activity, and we have requested that institutions increase their level of ambition where targets appear to be low.

From the 2020/21 Fee and Access Plan process onwards, institutions are expected to agree their targets with Y Coleg before submitting their Fee and Access Plans. We will then verify the submitted targets with Y Coleg, which allows us to identify any discrepancies.

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Estyn is led by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales and inspects quality and standards in a range of providers, including some regulated higher education providers.

Our areas of interest in Estyn's remit include inspecting:

- teacher education and training, which incorporates Welsh medium initial teacher education
- further education providers, which includes some regulated providers; and
- Welsh for Adults.

Any institution that wants its full-time undergraduate courses to be automatically designated to allow its students to apply for support must submit a Fee and Access Plan to us.

Setting Welsh medium targets for individual institutions was identified by Welsh Government as an "essential element to ensure contribution from the Welsh medium higher education sector and its development of Welsh language provision". The government will agree Welsh medium targets in partnership with Y Coleg.

# Routes into Languages Cymru

► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9...

Our regular liaison with the National Centre for Learning Welsh helps us to share information about the approach to Welsh language learning in our regulated and funded providers.

— We regulate areas including: the student fees for full time undergraduate provision received by institutions providing higher education; and the quality of education provided by, and on behalf, of those institutions.

Institutions receive a portion of their income from public funds. HEFCW distributes some of these funds from the Welsh Government.

— We responded to a number of consultations and white papers about Welsh, most recently the consultation on Adult Learning, and the inquiry into the legislative, policy and wider context of the Welsh language. Our Chief Executive and Director of Strategic Development appeared before the Assembly's Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee to discuss our response to the latter.

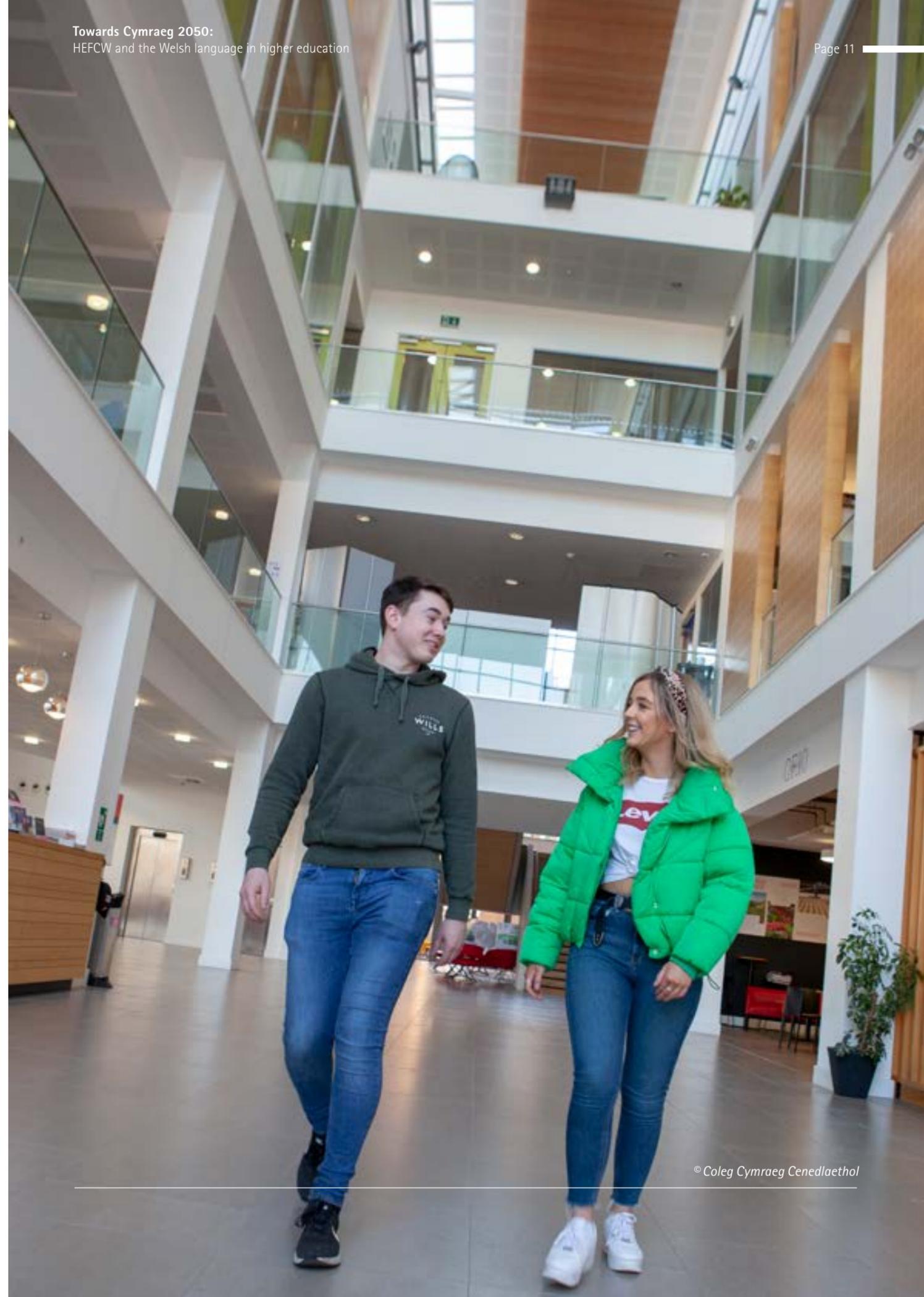
**Routes into Languages Cymru** (Routes Cymru) is a collaborative outreach project that aims to increase the number of pupils choosing modern languages. Established in 2009, we originally funded the project, which was a partnership of all Welsh universities and the National Centre for Languages in Wales.

The project promotes the visibility, uptake and profile of modern languages, and includes Welsh as a second language.

Routes Cymru is now funded by five universities, all four regional education consortia, British Council Wales and the European Commission Wales. The project has developed across two hubs at Cardiff and Bangor Universities.

The project provides a further foundation for the higher education sector's contribution to *Cymraeg 2050*. There is a strong focus on the Welsh language and on ensuring that there is a place for modern foreign languages (MFL) alongside Welsh, and the group has strongly advocated that MFL should be taught alongside Welsh and not an alternative. Its 'bilingual + 1' language philosophy is evident in its approach towards activities, such as its spelling bee for Welsh as a second language. The group has also been vocal in supporting Welsh speakers as language ambassadors and exploring opportunities to visit Patagonia to hone their trilingual language skills in consideration of *Cymraeg 2050*. We continue to engage with Routes Cymru through its termly meetings and events.

- The programme provides support to students who wish to study a modern foreign language at university, including through the medium of Welsh.
- Students at higher education institutions in Wales act as Routes Language Ambassadors to encourage learning Welsh and modern foreign languages.



# Research and Innovation

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the UK-wide system for assessing research in higher education institutions.

As a member of the REF2021 Steering group, we have ensured that the UK guidelines for submissions to REF clearly state that research outputs in both Welsh and English can be submitted for assessment.

The [REF2021 Guidance on Submissions](#) recognises the particular legal status of the Welsh language. In terms of eligibility of research outputs, institutions that wish to submit outputs produced in the medium of Welsh are welcome to do so. The guidance describes how such outputs will be assessed equitably:

- For research outputs in a language other than English (including outputs submitted in the medium of Welsh), a short abstract in English should be provided to describe the content and nature of the work (maximum 100 words). A separate field for each output in REF2 will be available for this. Subject panels will use this abstract to identify appropriate assessment, including (where required) external specialist advisers to whom the work may be referred. The abstracts themselves will not form the basis for assessment. Work may be referred to external specialist advisers only where panel members and assessors are unable to assess an output in the language in which it is submitted.
- In the case of research outputs in the medium of Welsh, the specialist adviser(s) will normally be paired with a designated panel member with whom they will discuss the advice provided. If a sub-panel receives a substantial volume of research outputs in the medium of Welsh, the specialist adviser(s) will be invited to attend one or more of the panel meetings during the assessment phase. These provisions are made in recognition of the particular legal status of the Welsh language in Wales.

The Guidance also describes how multiple submissions to Sub-panel 26 (Modern Languages and Linguistics) will be permitted where one submission is in Celtic Studies and the other in Modern Languages and Linguistics. This has been agreed in recognition of the special cultural significance of Celtic Studies in parts of the UK, and the particular legal status of the Welsh language in Wales.

The REF provides the basis for the allocation of our Quality Research (QR) funding. Since 2012/13 QR funding includes a ring-fenced allocation that supports scholarly publications and related activities in the fields of Welsh culture, history and literature.

We will reinstate funding for innovation and engagement activities in 2020/21 through our Research Wales Innovation Fund (RWIF). Institutional RWIF strategies will outline innovative developments and opportunities, some of which will have a strong Welsh component. The emphasis on developments in relation to 'place', and the civic role of institutions within their communities, will be a key area of focus. Deeper engagement with industry, SMEs, community groups and regional bodies will require sensitivity to language and culture within the local context. Approved RWIF strategies will need to underpin the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, working to the goal of 'A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language'.

# Working with students

## Student Charters

Student charters are documents aimed at the diverse student body. They provide signposts and links to more detailed information about regulations, student support, and courses.

Since 2012/13 all our regulated and funded higher education providers have been required to publish a student charter. Revised guidance on student charters was published in 2019 and is under continual review. The guidance expects providers to:

- Include a high level statement on its Welsh language responsibilities, in light of the new requirements on institutions under the Welsh language standards. This can include information about providing opportunities where appropriate for assessing student performance, regardless of the language of tuition.
- Signpost to where students can find information on opportunities to study in Welsh.
- Provide a statement on the institution's engagement with Y Coleg.

We continually monitor and advise on student charters, which we expect to be published bilingually.

## Student partnerships

We are a founding member of [Wise Wales](#), a collaboration of higher and further education sector organisations that work together to create a culture of meaningful partnership between educators, students' unions and students. The initiative encouraged bilingual partnership work to allow all groups of students and educators to engage with each other.

We have commissioned work on partnership working to identify:

- good and innovative practice
- the needs of students' unions' regarding partnership, and
- any gaps in delivery.

The research will include a focus on how learners engage with the Welsh language in further and higher education when working in partnership with institutions. This research will inform practice from 2019/20.



# Funding Welsh medium provision

**'Premium' – supplementary – funding contributes towards the cost of part-time courses. It recognises providers' successes in recruiting and retaining students from disadvantaged areas, disabled students and students receiving their tuition in Welsh.**

The Welsh medium premium is calculated using the number of part time credits taught through the medium of Welsh. Modules studied by students where at least two credits of the module are studied in Welsh are included, averaged over two years.

Welsh language or literature modules are not eligible for premium funding.

# Wales studies

**Wales studies (formerly known as Welsh studies) includes the study of Welsh history and literature, culture, society and politics in both languages – Welsh and English – among other subjects of specific importance.**

In 2012 we were remitted by the Welsh Government to "focus on the delivery of subjects of specific importance, which included the delivery of Welsh medium learning and the disciplines of what might be called Welsh studies".

In 2013 we held a seminar with the higher education sector to determine our shared understanding of Wales studies, how it could be further developed and the next steps to be taken, including promoting the significant amount of work being conducted by higher education institutions. The outcomes from the event and data from institutions were shared with the Learned Society of Wales. In 2018, we asked institutions for more data to provide us with a picture of current Wales studies provision, and we updated the Wales Studies survey. The data collected will form part of a publication on Welsh language and culture, to be launched by the Learned Society in Autumn 2019.