



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

Procedure for dealing with complaints relating to the Welsh language

**Prepared in accordance with the
requirements of the Welsh Language
(Wales) Measure 2011**

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1. Introduction

This procedure has been created in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards placed on Swansea University, which came into effect on 1 April 2018, under Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

The procedure sets out how the University will receive and deal with complaints about compliance with the Welsh Standards. They also explain how the University will train its staff to deal with complaints of this kind, and how it will promote the different ways of making a complaint.

The relevant Standards for these procedures are the **Service Delivery Standards**, the **Policy Making Standards** and the **Operational Standards**, which were placed on the University under Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

This procedure is for dealing with complaints relating to the Welsh language only. They should not be used to deal with academic matters, nor complaints about a department's service, if they are not related specifically to the Welsh Language Standards or to the Welsh language. Other procedures are in place to deal with complaints of these kinds (see the Academic Guide and complaints procedures of individual departments).

2. Swansea University's commitment

Swansea University is a bilingual institution. We support the right of our students, staff and the public to use Welsh and we promote opportunities to use the language in academic study, in work, and socially.

Swansea University is committed to fully complying with the Welsh Language Standards and to dealing effectively with any complaints about our failure to meet the Standards, or any other complaint concerning the Welsh language within the University.

We welcome comments of all kinds, whether they are complaints or compliments, so that we can learn from our mistakes and to ensure that we recognise and share good practice.

The University will give serious consideration to every complaint we receive, and treat the complaint in an open manner and thoroughly investigate the causes of the complaint.

3. How to complain

All complaints or other comments about the Welsh language should be referred to the University's Welsh Language Policy and Promotion Officers. They can be contacted by:

email: welshlanguageoffice@swansea.ac.uk

phone: 01792 606743

letter: Welsh Language Policy and Promotion Officer
Compliance Department
Singleton Abbey
Singleton Park
Swansea SA2 8PP

Complaints about the University can also be made to the **Welsh Language Commissioner**. There is a [complaints form](#) available on the Welsh Language Commissioner's website.

4. Written complaints

University departments should refer all complaints about compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, or complaints concerning the Welsh language to the Welsh Language Policy and Promotion Officers whenever possible. This way, the University can ensure that a record is kept of all the complaints that we receive which relate to the Welsh language.

When a written complaint (sent by email, letter or social media addressed to the University specifically) is received by the University's Welsh Language Policy and Promotion Officers we will send an acknowledgement of its receipt within five working days. Our response will confirm that we will investigate the matter and aim to provide a full response to the complaint within 20 working days. In rare, more complicated, cases where further time is needed, the Welsh Language Policy and Promotion Officers will agree a response deadline with the complainant.

5. Complaints over the phone or in person

If a complaint is made over the phone, or in person, our aim is to try and resolve matters there and then.

Whenever possible, University departments are asked to refer every complaint about compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, or the Welsh language, to the Welsh Language Policy and Promotion Officers. This way, the University can ensure that a record is kept of all the complaints received concerning the Welsh language.

If the Officers are not available at the time, or if this is not practical in the circumstances, then the member of staff who received the complaint will record all the details of the complaint in an email, and send it to the Welsh Language Policy and Promotion Officers as soon as possible.

In dealing with a complaint made over the phone or in person, if it is not possible to resolve the complaint there and then, or if it is necessary for the Welsh Language Policy and Promotion Officers to further investigate the issue, we will make a note of the complainant's email or postal address in order to report back to them, and we will follow the same procedures used for written complaints.

We will write to the person within five working days to acknowledge the complaint. Our response will confirm our intention to investigate the issue with the aim of providing a full response to the complaint within 20 working days.

6. Investigating complaints

We will thoroughly investigate every complaint, and aim to provide a full written response within working 20 days of receiving the complaint. If we need more time to investigate the issue and establish all the facts, we will inform the complainant of this within 20 working days. For example, if a key member of staff is away on annual leave or out of contact for a long period, or if getting to the crux of the matter is exceptionally complex. We will keep in touch with the complainant until the matter is resolved.

The Welsh Language Policy and Promotion Officers will be responsible for investigating the complaint, by contacting the relevant staff to gather further information and establishing the facts relating to the circumstances which have led to the complaint.

The Officers will assess whether there are any grounds for complaint e.g. has the University failed to comply with the Welsh Language Standards.

At the end of the investigation, and usually within 20 working days from receiving the complaint, we will write a fully reply to the person who had made the complaint summarising the main facts and the conclusions of our investigation. We will apologise if we find that we are in the wrong, and we will explain how we will make improvements or changes to put things right.

7. Resolving and learning

We will consider every complaint or comment as an opportunity to learn and to ensure that we recognise and share good practice.

In investigating complaints, we will try and establish whether procedures were followed correctly, and if not, we will take steps to ensure that these procedures are revised or strengthened and that key staff receive training, to avoid repeating the same error in the future.

If a complaint highlights a more serious failure in compliance then the matter will be brought to the attention of the Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for the Welsh language. It will also be presented to the University's Welsh Language Strategy Committee. If the issue has not been resolved within the specified time, it will also be recorded on the University's Risk Register, for the attention of the University's senior management.

Any complaint received about a member of staff's conduct will be referred to the Human Resources department, and the relevant procedures for dealing with complaints of this nature will be followed.

8. Further steps

If, after the University has investigated the complaint and provided a full response, the person who made the complaint remains unsatisfied they can also take the matter further by lodging a complaint about the University with the **Welsh Language Commissioner**. There is a [complaints form](#) available on the Welsh Language Commissioner's website.

9. Keeping a record of complaints

The University will monitor every complaint we receive concerning the Welsh language.

We will record the number of complaints we receive about compliance with the Welsh Language Standards in our annual report to the Welsh Language Commissioner. We will also keep copies of each written complaint we receive concerning the Welsh language. We will not share any personal information with external bodies without consent.

The University's Welsh Language Strategy Committee receives regular reports about complaints and an annual complaints report is submitted to the University Council.

10. Staff awareness of this procedure

The University will make its current members of staff aware of this complaints procedure by circulating a copy in its e-newsletter and through any other relevant forum.

Welsh Language Standards awareness sessions (available to all staff) will also include information about dealing with complaints relating to the Welsh language.

11. Promoting the complaints procedure

A summary of this complaints procedure, and a link to a full version, can be seen on the University website.

A copy of this procedure is also available in all University offices which are open to the public.