

# Welsh language report 2025-26

September 2026

This annual report has been prepared in accordance with Welsh Language Standards 152, 158 and 164, and highlights how the Auditor General for Wales and the Wales Audit Office have complied with the Welsh Language Standards which were imposed on them by the Welsh Language Commissioner, set out in the appropriate Compliance Notices.

- Auditor General for Wales Compliance Notice
- Wales Audit Office Compliance Notice

This document has been prepared as part of work performed in accordance with statutory functions. As well as outlining general compliance, this report also contains the specific information required by the Standards to be published annually. This includes data on the number of complaints we have received, the Welsh language levels of our staff, the training we offer through the medium of Welsh, and the level of Welsh we require on all vacant and new posts we have advertised during the financial year.

In the event of receiving a request for information to which this document may be relevant, attention is drawn to the Code of Practice issued under section 45 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The section 45 code sets out the practice in the handling of requests that is expected of public authorities, including consultation with relevant third parties.

In relation to this document, the Auditor General for Wales and Audit Wales are relevant third parties.

Any enquiries regarding disclosure or re-use of this document should be sent to Audit Wales at [infoofficer@audit.wales](mailto:infoofficer@audit.wales).

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi. Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh

# Contents

|               |    |
|---------------|----|
| Introduction  | 4  |
| Governance    | 5  |
| Culture       | 8  |
| Delivery      | 10 |
| Looking ahead | 14 |

# Introduction

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- 1 This annual report on the Welsh language outlines the work undertaken during 2025-26 to comply with the Welsh Language Standards and to promote the use of Welsh across Audit Wales. It provides an overview of how the organisation continues to meet its statutory duties while embedding the Welsh language more fully within day-to-day operations.
- 2 While the primary purpose of this report is to assess compliance, it also provides an opportunity to reflect on progress in delivering our Welsh Language Strategy, which is now in its final year. The report therefore considers both performance against the Standards and the wider impact of our strategic approach.
- 3 Our overall compliance with the standards has remained high with our self-assessment identifying areas requiring improvement including staff training, data quality, and correspondence. Activities to address these areas have formed part of our work programme during 2025-26. The strategy guides our approach through three core pillars – governance, culture and delivery – and is underpinned by our responsibilities under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.
- 4 These pillars are supported by established governance arrangements, workforce planning, and targeted initiatives to build skills and confidence. Together, these enable us to strengthen our ability to provide bilingual services, create a culture where the language is seen, heard and used and to ensure that Welsh is treated no less favourably than English.
- 5 Audit Wales continues to invest in the Welsh language to support compliance, develop workforce capability, and strengthen engagement with audited bodies and stakeholders.
- 6 During the year, we have made progress in areas such as recruitment, training, data quality and internal promotion of the language. At the same time, the report recognises that improvement is an ongoing process.
- 7 In this context, a complaint originally received in 2024-25 was re-opened and subsequently upheld by the Welsh Language Commissioner during 2025-26. While this highlights an area where our arrangements did not meet the required standard, we have taken steps to address the issues identified and to reinforce our processes and guidance.

# Governance

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- 8 Our ambition is to develop a robust governance model, underpinned by our use of data and key performance indicators to monitor progress of the strategy, identify areas for improvement and provide regular assurance to Executive Leadership Team, the Board, and the Welsh Language Commissioner.

## Activities in 2025-26

- 9 Oversight and guidance on delivering our strategic ambitions and complying with Welsh Language Standards continues to be provided by the Welsh Language Strategy Group. The group includes representatives from all directorates, meets monthly, and is chaired by the Executive Director for Audit Modernisation and Impact.
- 10 Progress against our Welsh language objectives is reported bi-annually to the Executive Leadership Team and annually to the Board, ensuring regular scrutiny and accountability at senior levels.
- 11 Our three strategic goals are set out under each heading of this report:
- Governance – how well we monitor and measure our performance, the actions we take to meet our goals and the leadership of our Welsh language ambitions.
  - Culture – how we create a supportive environment where our staff can ‘see, hear and use’ Welsh and people of all abilities are encouraged to use the language and develop their skills and confidence.
  - Delivery – how effectively we meet the Welsh language needs of audited bodies and other stakeholders and comply with our standards.
- 12 Our compliance arrangements for the Welsh Language Standards are published on our website. Day-to-day responsibility for implementation sits with the Welsh Language Officer, who also promotes the use of Welsh across the organisation.

- 13 Our Using Welsh Internally policy provides staff with guidance on using the language in the workplace. This policy, alongside supporting resources, is available on our intranet, the Hwb in a dedicated Welsh language area. The Welsh Language Officer works with colleagues across the organisation to ensure Welsh language considerations are consistently reflected in staff guidance.
- 14 During the year, impact assessments have been undertaken for key projects and policies to ensure compliance with Welsh Language Standards, including:
  - Audit Wales Code of Conduct
  - Smarter Working Policy
  - E-learning platform
  - 360 feedback processes
  - Disability Leave Policy
  - Maternity Coaching – Parent and Professional
- 15 These assessments are required for all new and revised policies to ensure they support opportunities to use Welsh and that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than English.
- 16 Welsh language considerations now form part of the remit of the Strategic Workforce Planning Group, ensuring that workforce planning, recruitment, learning and development, and staff wellbeing initiatives actively support the use and development of Welsh language skills across the organisation. This provides a structured forum for monitoring progress, identifying gaps in capability, and embedding Welsh language objectives within wider people and organisational development priorities.
- 17 The Welsh language has been incorporated into the organisation's strategic and operational risk registers, recognising the potential risks associated with non-compliance with Welsh Language Standards and the impact this could have on service delivery, reputation, and stakeholder confidence.
- 18 This ensures that Welsh language risks are formally monitored, regularly reviewed, and subject to appropriate mitigation actions as part of the organisation's overall governance and risk management arrangements, which are essential to supporting the delivery of strategic objectives.

- 19 Our Welsh language commitments are aligned with our new Strategic Equality Plan 2026-30, supporting our wider responsibilities under equality legislation to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and foster inclusive working practices.
- 20 This alignment ensures that the Welsh language is treated as an integral part of our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, and is embedded in how we design policies, deliver services, and engage with staff and stakeholders.

## Complaints

- 21 During 2025-26, a service delivery complaint originally received in 2024-25 was re-opened by the Welsh Language Commissioner following the submission of additional information. The complaint related to emails that had been sent to a community council clerk in English, after the clerk had asked to be communicated with in Welsh.
- 22 Having considered the additional evidence, the Welsh Language Commissioner upheld the complaint against Audit Wales.
- 23 In response, we have taken the following actions to strengthen our arrangements and reduce the risk of recurrence:
  - Reinforced the need to comply with Welsh language standards within our staff induction process.
  - Updated training for staff involved in town and community council audits to include coverage of Welsh Language Standards, awareness of language preferences, and guidance on accessing relevant information systems, alongside reinforcing the importance of compliance.
  - Carried out an internal review of Welsh language compliance in relation to our correspondence with town and community councils
  - Issued organisation-wide reminders to staff on meeting language preference requirements when communicating with individuals and audited bodies.
  - There were no further complaints received during 2025-26.

## Culture

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- 24 Our ambition is to develop a culture where people are proud of our status as the national audit body of Wales and recognise the importance of the language and Welsh culture. This includes activities to promote awareness of Welsh language history and culture, our statutory obligations and recognise its importance to colleagues, audited bodies, and stakeholders.

### Activities during 2025-26

- 25 We relaunched Grŵp Cymraeg Rhwydiaith, a staff forum for Welsh speakers and learners, to support our aim of ensuring Welsh can be 'seen, heard and used' across the workplace. The group focuses on:
- creating safe spaces for learners to use and develop their skills; and
  - identifying practical ways to support staff to use and develop their Welsh language skills.
- 26 We completed the roll-out of our Welsh Language Awareness training. This includes a video and quiz that has been delivered to all staff through team meetings. The training provides an overview of the history and culture of the language and highlights our statutory obligations.
- 27 We continued to promote and support Welsh language awareness and cultural events across the organisation, including through:
- Shw'mae Day;
  - the Welsh Language Commissioner's Defnyddia dy Gymraeg campaign; and
  - cultural events such as Dydd Miwsig Cymru (Welsh Language Music Day), as well as the Urdd and National Eisteddfods.

## Communicating bilingually

- 28 We continue to promote a culture where the Welsh language is visible, accessible and routinely used across the organisation. A key part of this is our approach to communications, where we ensure that our outputs are available bilingually, including our website, social media channels, podcasts, videos and all published audit reports.
- 29 We have also significantly expanded the volume of Welsh content and resources on the Hwb. This helps to normalise the use of Welsh and supports staff and stakeholders to engage in the language of their choice. Underpinning this is a well-established and resourced translation process, with around one million words translated each year, ensuring that our communications are both accessible and of a consistent standard.
- 30 Together, these arrangements reinforce our wider commitment to treating Welsh no less favourably than English and embedding the language across all aspects of our work.

# Delivery

31 Through delivery, we look at how effectively we meet the Welsh language needs of audited bodies and other stakeholders and comply with standards. We ensure that our Welsh language capacity meets the needs of our audited bodies and stakeholders. However, a key focus here is on our ability to build our capacity through recruitment and training.

## Activities during 2025-26

### Recruitment

- 32 Our approach to Welsh language governance places a strong emphasis on integrating language considerations into core organisational processes. This is reflected in our recruitment arrangements, where the Welsh Language Officer is involved in all recruitment request proposals.
- 33 Each requisition is assessed by the recruiting manager using a flowchart to determine the appropriate Welsh language requirements for the role. The outcome of this assessment is checked by the Welsh Language Officer.
- 34 During 2025-26 we recruited to 19 posts across Audit Wales, excluding trainee and apprentice recruitment. All these roles were advertised as Welsh desirable. None were deemed as Welsh essential.

### Trainee and apprentice recruitment

35 Within our apprentice and graduate recruitment campaigns, we have an aim that at least 20% of our posts will be Welsh speakers. The data for 2025-26 shows that 6 of the 17 posts recruited to (35%) were Welsh speakers.

|             | Welsh Speaking | Non-Welsh speaking | Total |
|-------------|----------------|--------------------|-------|
| Trainees    | 5              | 7                  | 12    |
| Apprentices | 1              | 4                  | 5     |
| Total       | 6              | 11                 | 17    |

## Welsh language skills and training

- 36 The Welsh-language skills of our staff are self-assessed and recorded through the Employee Self-Service portal, providing an organisational baseline for monitoring capability and informing workforce planning.
- 37 Building on previous reporting, where data gaps were identified, we have taken steps to increase completion rates. This has resulted in a more comprehensive and reliable dataset for 2025-26, strengthening our ability to track progress and target further improvement.
- 38 To support a consistent and structured approach, our Welsh Language Skills Matrix is aligned to the ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe) Framework.
- 39 This framework measures language ability across speaking, listening, reading and writing, based on the types of communication tasks individuals can undertake.
- 40 The ALTE framework is widely used and adapted across the Welsh public sector and aligns with the requirements of Welsh Language Standards.
- 41 The following data provides an overview of Welsh-language skills across the organisation and within directorates.
- 42 It demonstrates progress in improving both the completeness of our data and the distribution of skills across different proficiency levels, supporting our ongoing efforts to strengthen Welsh language capacity.
- 43 While ALTE data is not directly comparable with national data sets such as Census reports (which do not assess skills levels) it does indicate a similar pattern, with a large proportion of staff at awareness level and progressively fewer at higher levels of proficiency.
- 44 However, the proportion of staff operating at higher levels (advanced and proficiency), particularly within Audit Delivery, appears stronger than might be expected in the general population.
- 45 All corporate training and that listed within our Compliance Notice were available through the medium of Welsh. We continue to source bilingual training providers when required.

### Welsh-language skills of all Audit Wales staff 2025-26 (2024-25)

| Awareness      | Listening | Reading   | Speaking  | Writing   |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 0 Awareness    | 122 (108) | 125 (110) | 129 (112) | 128 (111) |
| 1 Entry        | 29 (15)   | 26 (14)   | 28 (15)   | 28 (14)   |
| 2 Foundation   | 36 (9)    | 15 (6)    | 13 (3)    | 12 (5)    |
| 3 Intermediate | 10 (7)    | 12 (8)    | 14 (11)   | 13 (10)   |
| 4 Advanced     | 11 (8)    | 16 (12)   | 5 (2)     | 10 (6)    |
| 5 Proficiency  | 33 (19)   | 28 (16)   | 35 (21)   | 30 (20)   |
| Total          | 241 (166) | 222 (166) | 218 (164) | 221 (166) |

### Welsh-language skills within Audit Delivery 2025-26 (2024-25)

|                | Listening | Reading   | Speaking  | Writing   |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 0 Awareness    | 97 (92)   | 100 (93)  | 104 (92)  | 103 (92)  |
| 1 Entry        | 26 (8)    | 23 (7)    | 24 (6)    | 21 (7)    |
| 2 Foundation   | 13 (4)    | 12 (2)    | 11 (2)    | 12 (3)    |
| 3 Intermediate | 7 (5)     | 8 (5)     | 11 (7)    | 9 (6)     |
| 4 Advanced     | 11 (5)    | 16 (9)    | 4 (2)     | 10 (5)    |
| 5 Proficiency  | 29 (14)   | 23 (11)   | 30 (16)   | 25 (15)   |
| Total          | 183 (128) | 182 (127) | 184 (125) | 180 (128) |

## Welsh-language skills within Audit Modernisation and Impact and Corporate Services 2025-26 (2024-25)

|                | Listening | Reading | Speaking | Writing |
|----------------|-----------|---------|----------|---------|
| 0 Awareness    | 25 (20)   | 25 (20) | 25 (20)  | 25 (20) |
| 1 Entry        | 3 (3)     | 3 (3)   | 4 (3)    | 7 (6)   |
| 2 Foundation   | 5 (3)     | 3 (2)   | 2 (1)    | 2 (2)   |
| 3 Intermediate | 3 (0)     | 4 (2)   | 3 (2)    | 4 (2)   |
| 4 Advanced     | 0(1)      | (0)     | 1 (1)    | (0)     |
| 5 Proficiency  | 4 (5)     | 5 (5)   | 5 (5)    | 5 (5)   |
| Total          | 40 (31)   | 40 (32) | 38 (32)  | 41 (35) |

## Welsh language skills training

46 During 2025-26, staff took part in the following courses:

| Course                                            | Delegates | Completed | In Progress |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Work Welsh Online<br>'Croeso' course –<br>Rhan 1  | 20        | 17        | 3           |
| Work Welsh Online<br>'Croeso' courses –<br>Rhan 2 | 20        | 13        | 7           |
| Cwrs Gwella<br>Cymraeg – Rhan 1                   | 1         | 1         | 1           |



## Looking ahead

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47 Actions for 2026-27 will include, but not be limited to:

- continuing delivery of the Welsh Language Strategy through its action plan, alongside a review of the 2023-2027 Strategy to inform the development of the next strategy and implementation timeline;
- enhancing our internal resources by reviewing and developing the Welsh language pages on Hwb, including content for Welsh-speaking staff such as guidance on IT packages, learning Welsh, writing style, and consistent terminology;
- strengthening workforce capability by developing and embedding a Welsh Language Skills Policy within HR policies and procedures, and ensuring training can be delivered through the medium of Welsh where required, including support for audit work;
- supporting staff to develop and use Welsh by creating safe spaces for learners and expanding opportunities for practical language use, with input from Grŵp Cymraeg;
- further developing Grŵp Cymraeg to ensure Welsh speakers and learners feel supported, and that their views inform ongoing improvements; and
- continuing to refine governance and engagement arrangements, including input from the Welsh Language Strategy Group, to support ongoing improvement and delivery of our ambition to be a fully bilingual organisation where staff can 'see, hear and use' Welsh.



# About us

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The Auditor General for Wales is independent of the Welsh Government and the Senedd. The Auditor General's role is to examine and report on the accounts of the Welsh Government, the NHS in Wales and other related public bodies, together with those of councils and other local government bodies. The Auditor General also reports on these organisations' use of resources and suggests ways they can improve.

The Auditor General carries out their work with the help of staff and other resources from the Wales Audit Office, which is a body set up to support, advise and monitor the Auditor General's work.

Audit Wales is the umbrella term used for both the Auditor General for Wales and the Wales Audit Office. These are separate legal entities with the distinct roles outlined above. Audit Wales itself is not a legal entity.



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Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a  
galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.