

# Using your Welsh language skills – steps to a brighter future



If you would like the opportunity to work bilingually in the future, then maintaining your Welsh language skills will be a crucial part of your learning and career development plans. If you are intending to take your GCE AS, A Levels or Access to HE Diploma, then consider taking your course or some modules through the medium of Welsh. Your Course Tutor will be able to tell you about the increasing number of modules and courses available to you through the medium of Welsh and bilingually and provide opportunities for you to maintain and develop your Welsh language skills through a range of informal activities. They will also be able to tell you about Agored Cymru's wide range of 'Welsh improvement' and 'Professional Welsh' courses to levels 3 and 4. These courses may be available to you during your course of study.

Developing your bilingual skills in Further Education would provide you with a firm foundation for progressing to HE with the confidence to take part or the whole of your course through the medium of Welsh.

## The benefits of taking your Higher Education course through the medium of Welsh

### Scholarships

If you decide to take the whole or part of your course through the medium of Welsh then specific undergraduate scholarship schemes would be available to you through the newly formed Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol:

**The Lead scholarship** – this is worth £3000 over three years if you choose to study 240 credits or more through the medium of Welsh.

**The Incentive scholarship** – this is worth £1500 over three years if you study at least 120 credits of your degree course through the medium of Welsh in the following areas:

- Environmental Sciences and Geography
- Health Science
- Social Work
- Business and Management
- Sports Sciences
- Law, Psychology, Modern Foreign European Languages
- Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry



It's possible that these areas will change or vary in the future. Details of these scholarships, together with the application forms, can be found in the Mantais section of the College's website: [www.mantais.ac.uk/arian](http://www.mantais.ac.uk/arian)

## Courses you could take through the medium of Welsh

You can study through the medium of Welsh in every University in Wales. The provision varies depending on what course you would like to take and on whether you want to do part or the whole of your studies through the medium of Welsh. Comprehensive information about what is possible and available can be found on the MANTAIS website (courses section). The courses on the searcher on the Mantais website is a convenient and quick way of finding out what type of courses are available through the medium of Welsh. This is a direct link to the website: [www.mantais.ac.uk/cyrsiau](http://www.mantais.ac.uk/cyrsiau)

### Standards of outstanding excellence in teaching and learning

- If you are uncertain about your Welsh language skills then you could start by taking a seminar in Welsh to see how it goes.
- It may be possible for you to take modules that appeal to you rather than the whole course through the medium of Welsh.
- You will be taught in smaller classes, which means that you will get personalised teaching from your lecturer.
- You will experience teaching and learning of the highest quality and standard because specialists of the highest calibre teach through the medium of Welsh.

# Extra support for developing Welsh language skills to a professional level

At university you will have the opportunity to go to Welsh improvement classes and academic writing workshops. These will help you gain confidence and competence in using your Welsh language skills both during your studies and professionally.

## Computer software

There is also support in the form of computer software that can help you to do your work.

Cysgliad is a software programme that contains two packages:

1. Cysill – identifies and corrects spelling and grammatical errors in your Welsh language documents. It also makes suggestions and explains the grammar.
2. Cysgeir – a collection of various dictionaries in electronic format for you to use on your computer.

Another useful piece of software for improving your Welsh language skills is Cymarfer.

Details of all the software can be found on the Canolfan Bedwyr website:  
[www.bangor.ac.uk/ar/cb/](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/ar/cb/)

## Welsh language services at universities

The following universities offer information to assist students wishing to do their courses through the medium of Welsh. Here are the links and contact numbers:

<a href="http://www.aber.ac.uk/cy/cgg">www.aber.ac.uk/cy/cgg</a>	01970-622045
<a href="http://www.bangor.ac.uk/ysgol">www.bangor.ac.uk/ysgol</a>	01248-388054
<a href="http://www.swansea.ac.uk/undergraduate/study/astudiotrwyrgymraeg/">www.swansea.ac.uk/undergraduate/study/astudiotrwyrgymraeg/</a>	01792-205678
<a href="http://www.ydrindoddewisant.ac.uk/cy/cyrsiau/cyfrwngcymraeg/">www.ydrindoddewisant.ac.uk/cy/cyrsiau/cyfrwngcymraeg/</a>	01267-676767
<a href="http://www.glam.ac.uk/cymraegmorgannwg">www.glam.ac.uk/cymraegmorgannwg</a>	08456-434030
<a href="http://www.uwic.ac.uk/cymraeg">www.uwic.ac.uk/cymraeg</a>	02920-416070
<a href="http://www.glyndwr.ac.uk/cy/cyrsiauisraddedig">www.glyndwr.ac.uk/cy/cyrsiauisraddedig</a>	01978-293439

## Access to a national e-learning platform

The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol has developed an e-learning platform called 'Y Porth'. The Porth is a relatively new website which includes a large store of electronic resources of the highest quality which will be helpful to you whilst at university. This is a direct link to the website: [www.porth.ac.uk/en/](http://www.porth.ac.uk/en/)

## How developing your Welsh language skills at HE could improve your employment prospects

Improving your Welsh language skills and taking your course through the medium of Welsh will give you an excellent foundation for your career. Your ability to work bilingually will give you growing economic benefits because you would be a 'premium product' in the jobs market and you will have access to a wider range and potentially better-paid jobs.

These are the key benefits you would have:

- You would have an additional advantage when applying for jobs. According to Job Trac Cymru, a recruitment agency, employers prefer applicants who have taken their HE courses through the medium of Welsh.
- You will have access to greater choices of jobs because you will be able to work in both English and Welsh.
- You will be more employable because most employers now consider Welsh to be a desirable skill in the workplace.
- You will be sought after because Welsh speakers are scarce in a large number of professions.

## Employment opportunities

All public services in Wales operate bilingual policies, as do some companies in the private sector. The range of jobs requiring the Welsh language are increasing, especially in the areas of accountancy, administration, arts, banking, creative industries, law, marketing and sales, media, health services, retail, public relations, social work, teaching, tourism, transport, translation and secretarial work. For a list of businesses which operate a bilingual policy go to the Welsh Language Board website at: [www.byig-wlb.org.uk](http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk)

In 2010 Job Trac Cymru, a recruitment agency for jobs requiring Welsh language skills, advertised 300 jobs on its website 'safleswyddi.com'.



### **This is what Tracey Williams of Job Trac Cymru says:**

“From my experience of setting up and establishing companies that encourage Welsh speakers to use their Welsh skills in the workplace, and to help employers find Welsh speakers of the appropriate standard, I found time after time that students leaving school to join the workforce or moving on to university, have very limited opportunities to use their Welsh language skills. Because of this there is a great danger that those people who have had the privilege of being educated through the medium of

Welsh will lose their language unless there are opportunities for them to use their language skills at work or at university. This is a real shame and requires enthusiasm, confidence and a Welsh improvement service to help them use their language for work that meets the required standard. Many school leavers' standard of Welsh isn't good enough for the workplace. Welsh improvement classes whilst at Higher Education would vastly improve their prospects to use their Welsh language skills in the future.

“Spoken Welsh and the Welsh used in school might be quite different to the Welsh needed for work in a formal context. For working and using Welsh in business, it is essential that written business Welsh is correct, written in the correct format and targeted to the correct audience. To create an impression and to be credible in a work environment, accuracy and understanding the right terms and vocabulary is essential. There is nothing worse than seeing language errors in a letter or a formal email – the Welsh will take notice, believe you me!”



These are the experiences of people who have benefited from their Welsh medium education:

**Angharad Jones, Social Worker**

“I did my degree and Diploma in Social Work at Bangor University. I took every opportunity possible to take the courses through the medium of Welsh, now I'm a Child Care Social Worker for West Wales Adoption Service. My Welsh language skills have made such a difference to the professional service I'm able to offer in my work. One of the main responsibilities of my job is to assess and prepare people and approve them as adoptive parents. This is an exceptionally sensitive process because the assessment involves discussing very personal and emotional matters with them. The people I assess have suffered great losses during their lives and they need to feel as comfortable as possible to discuss them. The other part of the process is to find a 'match' between children and potential adopters. The children are often from difficult backgrounds and need good homes to give them the best possible new start in life. This complex and emotional process is greatly improved if all parties are allowed to speak in Welsh if it's their preferred language. In my location over fifty per cent of the population are Welsh speakers and that is their first and most natural language. I'm one of a rare number of people who can work in the Welsh language in west Wales and there is a great need for many more social workers that can work bilingually.”



**Leanne Roberts, Coronary Care Nurse**

“I was educated through the medium of Welsh at Ysgol David Hughes, Menai Bridge, before I did my Bachelor of Nursing degree at Bangor University. My bilingual skills have been of enormous benefit to me in my work as a nurse since I graduated. At the moment I'm a Coronary Care Nurse at Ysbyty Gwynedd in Bangor. I give the patients intensive and personal care and, because of the severity of their condition, it is exceptionally important that they are comfortable in every respect. A large percentage of the patients are first language Welsh speakers. Many of these patients find it difficult to understand what is being said to them if it's in English and therefore I use my Welsh language skills to communicate with them. I feel that this is an important contribution to their recovery.”





### Aron Evans, Dinamo Productions

"I am the managing director of Dinamo Productions based in Treforest in South Wales. I was educated through the medium of Welsh and have a degree in Fine Art from Howard Gardens School of Art. My company produces high quality 2D and 3D Digital Animation and Visual Effects for TV, film and the web for a variety of clients, including S4C and the BBC. It is very beneficial for me and some of my staff to be bilingual and to have a level of competence in Welsh to enable us to communicate effectively and professionally with our clients and produce animations in both languages simultaneously. When recruiting staff I'm looking for people who have had a substantial part of their education through the medium of Welsh and who will be able to operate bilingually. For instance, my story-boarder is bilingual and she works in both English and Welsh with ease. This has been a great advantage for a show we are currently producing in Welsh and English for both S4C and the BBC. This is beneficial to Dinamo in terms of the business we generate and the competitive prices we are able to offer clients."

## Help when applying for jobs

Job Trac Cymru would help you to look for jobs where you can use your Welsh language skills. In addition it would offer you extra support when preparing for a job, assist you with developing a bilingual CV and offer you coaching in bilingual interviewing skills. This is the Job Trac Cymru website:

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

To see jobs which require the Welsh language, go to [www.safleswyddi.com](http://www.safleswyddi.com) and [www.jobs-cymraeg.com](http://www.jobs-cymraeg.com)

**If you are serious about investing in your own future and making yourself highly employable, then why not start by improving your Welsh language skills so that you can take your course through the medium of Welsh.**

**Talk to your course tutor or learner support team. They will be able to tell you about the variety of Welsh courses available to you that will give you extra support and develop your skills. They will know about courses to suit everyone at every level from first language speakers to learners. Improving your Welsh language skills during your current programme of study could be the key to you successfully using Welsh at HE and beyond.**