



Welsh Language and Culture Strategy 2016-2017

Policy statement

We recognise that learners and businesses may wish to conduct their learning/business through the medium of Welsh.

It is the intention of t2 group to provide a realistic and sensible approach for our learners/businesses by offering the highest quality learning programme through the medium of Welsh. We are constantly seeking to strengthen the provision of the Welsh language as part of our services and treat the English and Welsh language on a basis of equality, wherever it is possible and practical to do so.

The policy will build on what has been achieved already and introduce initiatives to encourage and promote the use of the Welsh language. We will raise staff awareness of this policy to ensure its success and will develop partnerships and work with consultants where possible.

Context

The Welsh Government's 'Iaith Pawb – A National Action Plan for Bilingual Wales' has a key target of ensuring that 'more services, by public, private and voluntary organisations are able to be delivered through the medium of Welsh.

t2 group have a key role in delivering this target by training future Welsh-speaking post-holders who can offer services through the medium of Welsh.

We also aim to take into account the aim of the Welsh Government in its strategy 'Iaith fyw: Iaith byw (A living language: a language for living)' in our work and support the realisation of its vision over the next five years.

This strategy sets out six areas for action. They are:

- To encourage and support the use of the Welsh language within families
- To increase the provision of Welsh medium activities for children and young people and to increase their awareness of the value of the language
- To strengthen the position of the Welsh language in the community
- To increase opportunities for people to use Welsh in the workplace
- To improve Welsh language services to citizens
- To strengthen the infrastructure, including technology and media, for the language

At present work-based learners in Wales fall broadly into two main groups; learners who have attended Welsh medium or bilingual secondary education and learners who have attended English medium education. Learners who have attended Welsh medium or bilingual secondary education will have at least some, if not most, of their education delivered through the medium of Welsh and may have studied Welsh to GCSE level. Learners who have attended English medium education will have had much less contact with the language on a day to day basis. However, many of them may have studied GCSE Welsh as a second language either as a short or full course. A few learners arrive from other countries without any experience of learning Welsh.

The aim of delivering any Welsh language vocational programme in work-based learning is to extend learners' Welsh language skills to enable them to feel confident in using Welsh in their future careers and participate fully in a bilingual community.

As such we need to tailor our vocational programmes to the Welsh linguistic needs of individuals, their potential employers and the local community we serve.

All actions contained in this strategy are embedded in our self-assessment process and feed into our Quality Development Plan and our Strategic and Annual Business Plan.

Strategy

The purpose of the Welsh Language and Culture Strategy is to:

Create a Welsh ethos

- Ensure that our ethos and priorities for Welsh training are understood and committed to at all levels within t2 group
- Ensure that we deliver on our Welsh Language initiatives
- Ensure that appropriate Welsh displays are available

Promote the use of Welsh language effectively to learners

- Ensure that Welsh speaking learners are allocated to Welsh speaking tutors, where possible, to discuss the advantages and value of training through the medium of Welsh effectively with reluctant Welsh medium learners
- Ensure that learners who have studied Welsh as a second language have an opportunity to develop their Welsh skills further
- Ensure that staff with experience of working in the learners' vocational area can promote the advantages of working through the medium of Welsh and can also provide current information on opportunities for further learning and career progression

As such we will:

- Ensure that learners are motivated to learn Welsh and to develop their Welsh skills further within their vocational area
- Recruit Welsh speaking staff who are good Welsh role models in their vocational areas to encourage learners in using and developing their Welsh language skills
- Strive to ensure that we have learning programmes that match the needs of learners and employers.

Progress to date

- We have translated our website and marketing materials into Welsh
- Ensured that appropriate Welsh displays are available
- We have Welsh speaking Sales and Initial Advice and Guidance Staff
- We have a Welsh speaking account manager solely responsible for our Welsh employers
- Ensured that we have systems in place for early identification of the Welsh needs of learners
- Ensured learners are made aware of the availability of our Welsh Language and bilingual provision

- Continued to provide information on our website and at initial advice and guidance of the advantages of using Welsh in the workplace, in particular industries and related career paths
- Ensured that Welsh speaking staff are available to interview learners
- Recruited Welsh speaking Personal Development Managers and Internal Quality Assurers to deliver our programmes
- Delivered Essential Skills Wales in both English and Welsh
- We continue to deliver Higher Apprenticeships in both English, Welsh and bilingually
- Developed a 'Mentoring in the Workplace' course that has been translated into Welsh to encourage more Welsh speaking mentors.
- Ongoing development of Welsh learning resource materials
- Developed a strong partnership with Cardiff Business School Vale of Glamorgan Welsh for Adults Centre to offer free Welsh lessons to learners, employers and staff
- Further developed a partnership with Menter a Busnes to promote our services and help with translation where required
- Increased awareness of the importance of Welsh Language and Culture to learners through our learner newsletters
- Developed a Welsh Language and Culture section on the learner portal of the t2 group website
- Developed a 'Why Learn Welsh' website
- Promoted our Quick Guides to encourage learners to try using Welsh in their personal lives
- Measured our progress to the promotion of Welsh Language and Culture through our learner questionnaires
- Developed a Welsh Language and Culture section on the staff intranet
- Increased awareness of the importance of Welsh Language and Culture to staff in our staff newsletters
- Raised the profile of Welsh Language and Culture with staff at quarterly alignment and monthly performance meetings
- Developed a new jobs page on our website in Welsh to attract more Welsh speaking staff
- Developed partnerships with recruitment agencies to target suitable Welsh speaking staff. Redesigned key documents to enable PDMs to discuss Wales and its culture with learners
- Piloted the delivery of the Award in Welsh as a Second Language with all Business Development and Marketing staff in Wales

Key priorities 2016–2017

- Continue to build on existing practices to promote and embed our Welsh Language and Culture Strategy across the group
- Achieve the targets set in our Welsh Language Action Plan
- Encourage more people to join the Welsh Language & Culture committee
- Further develop relationships with employers who require Welsh speaking staff
- Continue to obtain feedback from employers as to how we can improve our Welsh Language services
- Continue to promote the importance of the Welsh Language and Culture to learners, employers and staff through our websites, newsletters and other marketing material
- Continue to prioritise the recruitment of more Welsh speaking staff to strengthen our delivery team
- Continue to offer free Welsh lessons to learners, employers and staff and develop the capacity to offer this at a Higher Level
- Develop the capacity to deliver our Apprenticeships in Health and Social Care and Business Administration to commence early in 2017
- Continue to improve our Welsh Language provision by developing the capacity to add new occupational sectors to our portfolio
- Promote our 'Give Welsh a go in 2016' campaign
- Promote the benefits of bilingualism
- Gather and analyse feedback on the impact that our Welsh provision is having on learners and employers
- Complete the 'Advance Welsh' course with Welsh Government
- Develop a forum for Welsh Language learners
- Continue our 'Welsh word of the week' promotion

This strategy is communicated via the t2 group website, staff intranet and learner and staff newsletters. Welsh Language and Culture is widely promoted to learners and staff via:

- Initial Guidance and first visit for all learners
- Learner Handbook
- Learner and Employer Involvement Strategy and associated procedures

Communication strategy

- Learner and Employer Portals of the t2 group website
- Learner newsletters 'Achievers Edge' and 'Management Acumen'
- Various t2 dedicated resource websites
- Staff Induction
- Staff one to ones
- Staff training
- Staff CPD Workshops
- Staff standardisation meetings
- t2 knowledge bank
- Staff Intranet
- Staff Handbook

Monitoring strategy

The Welsh Language and Culture Committee will review progress against the strategy quarterly. Measures include:

- Acting on suggestions made by learners, employers and staff
- Evaluation of all initiatives through verbal feedback
- Improvement of scores through learner feedback
- Improvement of scores through staff feedback
- Analysing latest research, best practice and ideas