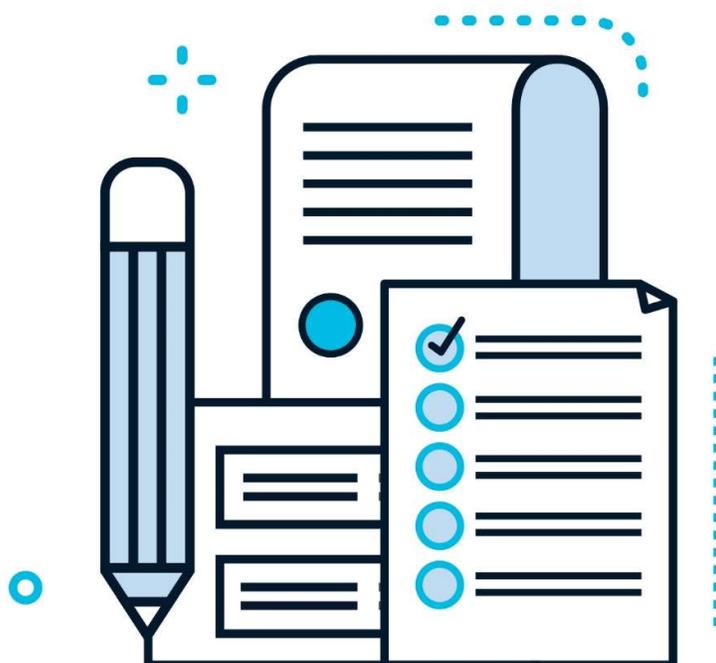




Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

Complaints about the Welsh language: Opportunities to strengthen



Contents

1	Executive Summary	1
2	Introduction	3
3	Background and context	4
4	Gathering information	6
5	Key Findings and Recommendations	7
	Visibility of the Complaints Procedure	7
	Identifying, handling, and recording complaints	9
	Number of Complaints	12
	Expressions of Dissatisfaction	14
	Staff Training	16
	Monitoring, Good Practice and Common Challenges	18
	Appendix 1	20
	Standards relating to publishing a complaints procedure	20
	Appendix 2	26
	Organisations that were part of the Line of Enquiry Sample	26

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report clearly shows that arrangements for dealing with complaints about the Welsh language vary significantly across organisations. While there are several strong examples of good practice in place, there are also gaps that affect user experience and limit organisations' ability to learn effectively from complaints.
- 1.2 In some cases, it was found that complaints about the Welsh language receive less profile than other complaints, meaning that important opportunities are being missed to collect and use valuable information that could support service improvements and, as a result, increase their use.
- 1.3 The main opportunities for improvement include:
 - **Increasing the visibility** of the complaints procedure on websites
 - Strengthening consistency in how complaints are **recorded**
 - Ensuring that complaints about the Welsh language are embedded within **corporate processes**.
- 1.4 Clear and easy-to-use complaints arrangements help build user confidence in the process. In addition, regularly collecting and analysing feedback, monitoring progress, and sharing lessons across departments helps to cultivate a culture of continuous improvement.
- 1.5 Our main recommendations are:
 - **Make information about complaints relating to the Welsh language easy to find**, placing it on general complaints pages as well as on Welsh Language Standards pages.
 - **Consider integrating complaints about the Welsh language into corporate processes** to strengthen accountability, transparency and service quality.
 - **Ensure consistent recording of all contact**, including informal statements of dissatisfaction, to identify patterns and risks at an early stage.
 - **Monitor and analyse complaint data regularly**, including process spot-checking and user satisfaction surveys relating to the complaints process.
 - **Feed lessons and findings back to management and staff regularly**, to build awareness and consistency across the organisation.
 - **Ensure visibility of complaints about the Welsh language at a strategic level**, with senior management oversight and clear ownership.

- 1.6 It is essential that organisations view complaints arrangements not only as a compliance process, but as an opportunity for continuous learning and improvement.
- 1.7 When complaints arrangements are clear, visible and accessible, they are a powerful lens for understanding user experience, driving continuous improvement, and building confidence in Welsh-language provision. By strengthening complaints processes, organisations can respond more effectively to issues that arise, improve services more quickly, and provide genuinely high-quality Welsh-language services.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 This report presents the main findings from our recent line of inquiry, which focused on organisations' procedures for dealing with complaints about the Welsh language.
- 2.2 Having robust complaint procedures is essential for maintaining service standards, building user confidence, and identifying systemic issues early. When these procedures work effectively, they can lead to improved user experience and provide valuable evidence to inform service improvements.
- 2.3 Our aim was to understand organisations' current arrangements for handling complaints about the Welsh language, and to assess how effective those arrangements are, with specific consideration of:
 - how easy it is to make a complaint
 - how organisations encourage people to complain
 - Whether complaints are recorded correctly
 - whether patterns or trends are identified and used to inform improvements.
- 2.4 Based on these findings, we have been able to share examples of good practice, highlight opportunities for improvement, and present practical recommendations to strengthen the processes further.
- 2.5 We want organisations to view the promotion, recording and analysis of complaints not merely as a compliance exercise, but as an important strategic tool that can improve services and enhance the experience of Welsh-speaking users.

3 Background and context

- 3.1 Undertaking key lines of enquiry complements our regular monitoring activity by providing a specific focus and detailed analysis, enriching our understanding of organisations' practical arrangements in terms of compliance with Welsh language requirements.
- 3.2 Under the Supplementary Standards (see **Appendix 1**), the Welsh Language Standards impose a duty on organisations to adopt a complaints procedure which states:
- how they will deal with complaints about compliance with the standards they are under a duty to comply with; and
 - how they will provide training to staff on that process¹.
- 3.3 Organisations must publish the procedure and make a copy available to the public². There is no need for a separate procedure for each class of standards – all information may be contained in a single document. Institutions can also amend an existing procedure to include the required elements set out in the standards. The relevant requirements under the different Regulations are listed in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.4 Our [draft Enforcement Policy](#) also encourages complainants to refer their complaints to the organisation concerned in the first instance, in order to give that organisation the opportunity to respond and propose an appropriate resolution. The draft Enforcement Policy states:

The quality of the service provided by organisations is highly dependent on their awareness and understanding of their own performance. Complaints are a means of learning about users' experiences. Although complaints occur when something has gone wrong, they can be seen as a positive opportunity to better understand performance, and to make improvements.

- 3.5 The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (Ombudsman) notes that complaints systems can make an important contribution to improving public services. According to the Ombudsman, complaints processes should be simple and flexible, with a clear focus on ensuring the most appropriate outcomes for individuals and for the quality of the services³ provided.
- 3.6 The Ombudsman has set out six principles that complaints processes should follow⁴:

¹ Provision of training to staff only applicable to organisations subject to Regulations No. 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6

² Ensuring that a copy is available only applicable to organisations subject to Regulations No. 1, 2, 5 and 6

³ Public Services Ombudsman for Wales - [Complaints Standards Authority – Wales: Guidance for Public Service Providers on Implementing the Concerns and Complaints Policy](#)

⁴ Public Services Ombudsman for Wales - [Complaints Standards Authority – Wales: Complaints Handling Processes - Statement of Principles](#)

- a) Complaint Focused
- b) Simple
- c) Fair and Objective
- d) Timely and Effective
- e) Accountable
- f) Committed to Continuous Improvement

3.7 In the same context, the findings of the Welsh Language Commissioner's Welsh Speakers Survey, conducted during November–December 2024, underline the importance of effective complaints arrangements. Specifically, only 44% of respondents strongly agreed, or tended to agree, with the statement:

“Organisations make it clear to me how to complain if I’m dissatisfied with their Welsh service.”

3.8 41% of respondents disagreed with the statement, suggesting a significant lack of awareness among users of how to submit complaints regarding Welsh language services — and indicating that many still lack confidence in the current processes.

3.9 In light of this, we were keen to evaluate organisations' complaints arrangements in detail, and to identify opportunities to strengthen them, to ensure that the procedures work effectively for users while also supporting organisations to learn and improve continuously.

4 Gathering information

- 4.1 As part of this work, we considered the arrangements of a sample of 30 organisations that are subject to the Welsh Language Standards (see Appendix 2).
- 4.2 The sample was a representative cross-section of organisations, including bodies from different sectors and geographical areas across Wales, as well as national organisations. The sample included organisations subject to Welsh Language Standards Regulations No. 1, No. 2, No. 4, No. 5, No. 6, No. 7 and No. 8. The organisations' arrangements were assessed by reviewing their responses to a questionnaire.
- 4.3 The questionnaire was divided into four main sections, with questions focusing on:
 - Complaints Procedures
 - Identifying and recording expressions of dissatisfaction about the Welsh language
 - Staff Training
 - Monitoring, Good Practice and Challenges
- 4.4 Responses were received from all organisations in the sample, and we are very grateful for their cooperation and contribution to the work.
- 4.5 The inquiry did not include an analysis of how individual complaints were handled, nor an assessment of organisational compliance. While the results of the questionnaires may inform our broader monitoring work, the focus was on organisational processes and arrangements, identifying general lessons and recommendations without referring to any specific organisation.

5 Key Findings and Recommendations

Visibility of the Complaints Procedure

- 5.1 Every institution in the sample had a complaints procedure. Usually, information on how to complain was available on general complaints pages on the website, or on specific pages relating to Welsh Language Standards.
- 5.2 For larger organisations offering a wide range of services, finding pages relating to the Welsh Language Standards was sometimes challenging. As a result, we found that providing clear signposting to the Welsh-language complaints procedure, or to users' rights to complain about Welsh-language services, on the main complaints pages was highly effective. Users are far more likely to find this information there, rather than on pages that relate only to the Standards.
- 5.3 Including a clear reference to complaints about the Welsh language on general complaint pages, *as well as* on pages relating to Welsh Language Standards, would make the process more accessible and easier to use. This ensures that information on how to complain about Welsh language services is close to the complaints form (where applicable), and that users do not have to search through several sections or documents to find it.
- 5.4 By ensuring that this information is available in more than one place on the website, it becomes more likely that users can find it quickly and confidently.

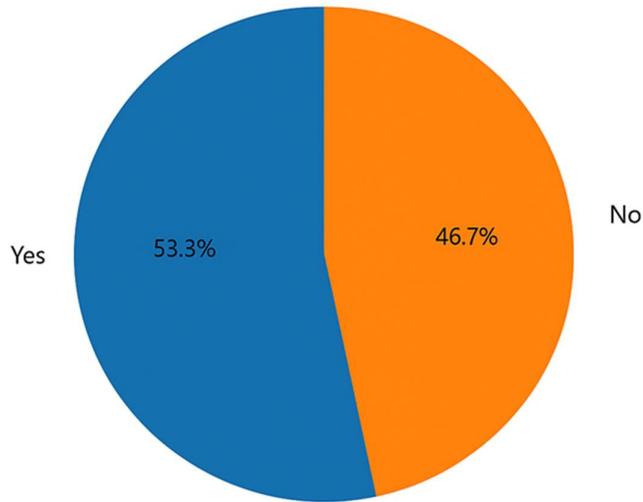
One organisation stated that it publishes its complaints procedure on several parts of its website, in order to ensure that users are aware of their right to complain and can easily find the guidance.

Some organisations included direct links between different sections of their website. For example, some had a specific sub-section on complaints relating to the Welsh Language Standards on their main complaints' pages, with a link from that page to their Welsh Language Standards pages — and then a link back to the complaints page.

This approach made it much easier for users to find all the relevant information, including the requirements relating to the Welsh Language Standards, without having to search through several different sections or documents.

- 5.5 A little over half of the organisations in the sample reported that they had a separate procedure for complaints relating to the Welsh language.

Does your organization have a dedicated complaints procedure for complaints about Welsh?



- 5.6 However, although some organisations responded that they had separate procedures for dealing with complaints in Welsh, the document on their website often referred only to a single general procedure. As a result, users were not given clear or specific information about how to complain about matters relating to the Welsh language.
- 5.7 When there was only one general complaints procedure, specific information about complaints relating to the Welsh language was often difficult to locate. In many cases, it was hidden at the bottom of long PDF documents rather than placed on prominent, interactive web pages. In some instances, there was no reference at all to complaints about the Welsh language within the general procedure.
- 5.8 Although there is no requirement under the Standards for organisations to adopt a separate procedure for the Welsh language, providing clear, specific and visible information on how to complain about Welsh language issues makes a significant practical difference. It encourages more users to submit complaints, and makes the process clearer, more direct and easier to use.
- 5.9 The Ombudsman has emphasised that complaints processes must be accessible to everyone, and that publicity is a key element in ensuring awareness³. In this context, it was encouraging to see that some organisations are going beyond simply providing information on their website, taking additional steps to raise awareness of users' ability to complain about Welsh language services.

One organisation noted that they include stories about compliance with the Welsh language in their weekly internal newsletter. Others highlighted the complaints procedure on their intranet, particularly in higher or further education institutions where staff and students make regular use of the intranet.

Another organisation stated that they were exploring further ways of promoting the complaints procedure, such as using social media, information leaflets and customer service points to raise awareness.

Opportunities to strengthen

- **Ensure that information about complaints relating to the Welsh language is easy to find and visible**, by including a clear reference to the right to complain and how to do so on general complaints pages, as well as on pages relating to the Welsh Language Standards.
- **Provide specific information for complaints about the Welsh language**, so that the process is clearer for users, and encourages more people to raise a complaint.
- **Avoid placing the only relevant information in long documents or PDF files**, ensuring that key information is available on interactive web pages with clear and accessible content.
- **Promote awareness of the complaints procedure**, so that users know where to go and how to raise concerns about Welsh language services.

Identifying, handling, and recording complaints

- 5.10 There was a variety of approaches across the sample in terms of how complaints were identified, handled and recorded within organisations.
- 5.11 In some cases, the relevant service area dealt with the complaint; in others, the department or officer responsible for Welsh language matters took on the responsibility. In several organisations, a corporate complaints team managed the process, either centrally or in collaboration with the team or officer responsible for the Welsh language.
- 5.12 It is natural that approaches vary according to the operational structure of each organisation, but even within that variation we identified clear opportunities to strengthen arrangements for recording and sharing information.
- 5.13 This is particularly important in larger organisations where specific departments handle complaints. A formal recording process ensures that information about complaints is shared appropriately between the department dealing with the issue

and the department or individual responsible for the Welsh language or for overseeing complaints corporately, supporting organisational learning and improvement.

A number of organisations recorded complaints relating to the Welsh language within their standard corporate complaints system, following the same process as any other complaint. One organisation, for example, used a specific marker within the central corporate record to identify Welsh language matters, asking the question:

"Is this complaint about the Welsh language service provided?".

The organization explained that using this marker ensured accurate reporting and monitoring.

This also ensures that every complaint received is considered appropriately, and that a clear decision can be made about whether it relates to the Welsh language or not. Recording complaints about the Welsh language alongside other corporate complaints helps to maintain the importance of these matters and ensures that they are given the same priority as other complaints relating to service quality or service provision.

- 5.14 In some cases, however, we found that complaints about the Welsh language were recorded only by the Welsh language department, with only an annual corporate report or update being provided.
- 5.15 The findings raise questions about the advantages and disadvantages of including complaints relating to the Welsh language within the general corporate complaints process. Ensuring that complaints are recorded on the central corporate record, in the same way as any other service issues, can help raise the profile of these complaints within larger organisations and support more effective organisational supervision and learning.

One organisation cited their recent process of integrating complaints about the Welsh language into the wider corporate complaints process as an example of good practice. In their view, this approach promotes consistency in how issues are resolved and ensures that every complaint is handled in line with the same standards of investigation, transparency, and resolution. They believe that this fosters fairness and strengthens users' confidence in the process.

It was also noted that monitoring and evaluation form an integral part of the annual reporting cycle, with complaints relating to the Welsh language being reviewed alongside wider complaints data.

This enables organisations to identify trends, spot recurring issues and recognise opportunities to improve services across the organisation. Regular discussions with service departments facilitate the sharing of lessons learned and the development of targeted improvement actions, helping to ensure high-quality service provision for both Welsh and English-speaking users.

- 5.16 There were also examples of organisations where complaints relating to the Welsh language were handled separately from other organisational complaints. In one case, complaints received through the Welsh Language Commissioner were recorded separately from those dealt with internally, and, as a result, were not included in the central record of complaints about the Welsh language.
- 5.17 In another case, individual departments were encouraged to take responsibility for resolving complaints as a first step. While this approach can promote a sense of ownership and responsibility for the Welsh language across the organisation, it also carries the risk of missed opportunities to identify common patterns or areas of risk at a corporate level. It is therefore important that organisations have clear recording arrangements in place to ensure that lessons can be learned, even when issues are resolved at an early stage.

Opportunities to strengthen

- **Review record processes** to ensure that information about complaints is appropriately shared between departments, so that each case is addressed by the relevant teams.
- **Avoid keeping separate records** for complaints about the Welsh language that are received by the Welsh Language Commissioner, so that they are not isolated from internal complaints. Including them in the central record will enable more consistent identification of patterns across the organisation.
- **Consider the benefits of integrating complaints about the Welsh language into the corporate complaints system**, promoting consistency, raising the profile of these complaints and ensuring that they are given the same priority and

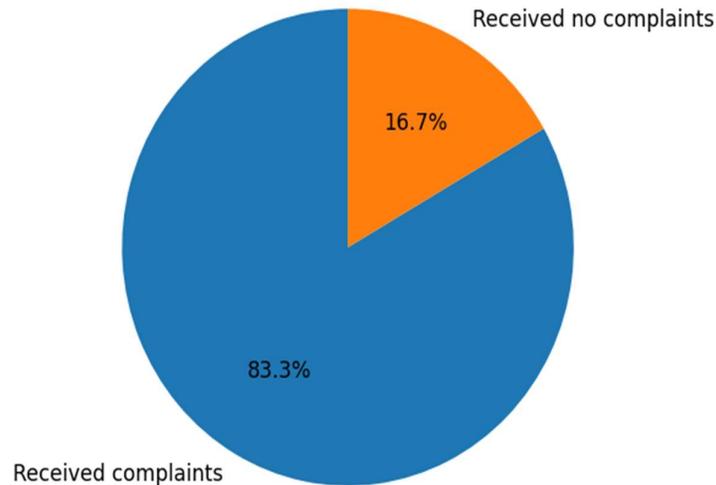
transparency as other service-related complaints. This can strengthen fairness and users' confidence in the process.

- **Use a specific marker for Welsh matters within the corporate recording system** to ensure accurate reporting and monitoring.
- **Monitor and evaluate complaints regularly**, identifying trends, risk areas, and practices that need strengthening, as well as opportunities for improvement.
- **Ensure regular discussions with service departments** to share lessons learned, reflect on experiences, and develop targeted improvement actions.

Number of Complaints

- 5.18 The questionnaire asked organisations about their target response times for providing an initial reply to a complaint and for fully resolving the complaint, as well as how long this process usually takes in practice. It also asked:
- how many complaints about the Welsh language received over the past three years were acknowledged within the time target;
 - how many of those complaints were fully resolved within the time target;
 - how many complaints about compliance with the Welsh Language Standards resulted in (1) the issue raised being corrected, and (2) actions being taken to prevent similar failures in the future.
- 5.19 Overall, organisations had clear timescales for handling complaints, with the majority succeeding in meeting their target times for both initial responses and for resolving complaints. Where targets were not met, several organisations noted that they explained the reasons to the complainant and provided regular updates.
- 5.20 In addition, organisations were confident that complaints led not only to the correction of the issues raised, but also to preventative actions to reduce the risk of similar failures occurring in the future. This suggests a commitment to learning from complaints and to continuous improvement of processes.
- 5.21 Although we did not specifically ask organisations for the number of complaints received (as these data are recorded within Annual Reports), the information gathered through the questionnaires suggests that the number of complaints about the Welsh language is generally low. Of the 30 organisations in the sample, 5 stated that they had not received any complaints about the Welsh language during the past three years.

Number of organisations that received complaints about Welsh over the last 3 years



5.22 Although this may reflect a high level of compliance with the standards, it also raises questions about the accessibility and visibility of the complaints process. A low number of complaints may be a sign of issues such as limited awareness of the procedure, a lack of confidence in the process, or situations where complaints are not formally recorded, meaning the full picture of users' experiences is not being captured.

5.23 Similarly, a high number of complaints is not necessarily an indication of problems. It can show that users are confident that their complaints will receive prompt attention and be handled fairly, and that the organisation is willing to learn from them. Often, organisations that foster an open culture towards complaints can use that information to continually improve their services.

5.24 This underlines the need to strengthen complaint-recording arrangements, and to ensure that users are confident that their complaints will be handled fairly, transparently, and effectively.

Opportunities to strengthen:

- **Fostering an open and positive culture towards complaints**, encouraging users to raise concerns and to view complaints as an opportunity to learn and continuously improve services, rather than simply as negative criticism.
- **Record complaints thoroughly**, including informal complaints, to ensure that user experiences and to avoid missing patterns or recurring issues.

- **Promote users' awareness of their rights to complain**, ensuring they know exactly how to do so and feel confident that their complaints will be handled fairly and effectively

Expressions of Dissatisfaction

- 5.25 Within the line of enquiry questionnaire, 'complaints' were defined as formal complaints regarding an organisation's failure to comply with the Welsh Language Standards. The term 'dissatisfaction' was used to describe any contact, enquiry or comment that raises a concern about a potential compliance failure, even if the matter has not been submitted formally as a complaint. Based on these definitions, specific questions were included about expressions of dissatisfaction, treating them as potential indicators of concerns about compliance.
- 5.26 A specific section on expressions of dissatisfaction was included because they can offer valuable insight into users' experiences. This enables us to better understand how, and to what extent, organisations respond to this type of feedback, and how alert they are to concerns expressed about opportunities to use Welsh or concerns that arise informally.
- 5.27 Expressions of dissatisfaction may include, for example, comments made on social media where a person does not submit a formal complaint, situations where someone asks for a Welsh-language form that is not available, or concerns raised internally by staff.
- 5.28 The Ombudsman, when considering what constitutes a complaint, notes that it is³:
- An expression of dissatisfaction or concern.
 - Written or spoken or made by any other communication method.
 - Made by one or more members of the public (someone or a group in receipt of or denied a service to which they are entitled by the service provider).
 - About a public service provider's action or lack of action or the standard of service provided.
 - Something which requires a response.
- 5.29 Expressions of dissatisfaction can provide early indications of concerns relating to the Welsh language, even when they have not been submitted formally. They also offer an opportunity for the voices of users who are less likely to make a formal complaint to be heard. This can help organisations identify patterns, tensions or areas of risk at an early stage.
- 5.30 This type of data can also provide insight into an organisation's culture in terms of how it responds to informal feedback. Through this work, we sought to gain a better understanding of how organisations handle and make use of this information, and the

extent to which they identify and record such dissatisfaction consistently and effectively.

- 5.31 It was noted that the majority of organisations in the sample did not have a specific procedure for recording expressions of dissatisfaction. Some reported that they dealt with all expressions of dissatisfaction in the same way as formal complaints. One organisation, for example, recorded expressions of dissatisfaction even when they did not come through formal complaints channels or the corporate complaints system – such as when concerns were received via the Welsh Language Policy Officer. According to that organisation, recording these concerns, even when resolved informally, enabled them to identify where similar issues were arising across different service areas.
- 5.32 Another organisation included a specific section on ‘Raising Awareness of the Concern (Informal) Process’ as part of its Welsh Language Planning Concerns and Complaints Guidance. The purpose of this approach was to give individuals who did not wish to submit a formal complaint the opportunity to make the organisation aware of a concern, so that it could be considered and resolved as quickly as possible, where appropriate.

One organisation noted that they encouraged staff to be alert to instances where Welsh was not being treated as favourably as English. The organisation reported that they had observed a positive trend, with more staff taking an active role in the process and an increasing awareness of Welsh-language compliance across the organisation.

Opportunities to strengthen:

- **Ensure clear pathways for reporting and recording dissatisfaction** that is raised informally
- **Encouraging staff to be alert to informal issues** – reminding staff across the organisation to look out for situations where Welsh is not being treated as favourably as English, even if the user is not submitting a formal complaint.
- **Provide training and practical guidance** that explains how to identify dissatisfaction, when to refer issues to the Welsh Language Compliance Team or a designated contact point, and how to respond sensitively and proactively.
- **Encourage staff to record even informal comments, including issues that are resolved immediately** to identify patterns, highlight gaps in Welsh language provision and to shape further training or resource needs.
- **Review dissatisfaction data regularly** to improve services and consider proactive steps to reduce risks or potential compliance failures in future.

Staff Training

- 5.33 Under the Supplementary Standards, organisations must state in their complaints procedure how they will provide training to staff on handling complaints¹. There were several examples of organisations within the sample, however, that did not comply with this requirement. They did not specify within their complaints procedures how they would provide training to their staff to deal with complaints about compliance with the Standards. Section 8.1.11 of the Code of Practice for the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015 sets out the types of information that organisations may include⁵.
- 5.34 The questionnaire asked what training is provided to staff on how to identify and deal with complaints and/or expressions of dissatisfaction about the Welsh language, which roles within the organisation receive that training, and how frequently it is delivered.
- 5.35 Within their responses, most organisations referred to Welsh Language Awareness training and understanding of the duty to comply with the Welsh Language Standards. This training is provided in line with the Operational Standards as mandatory training for all staff, most commonly as part of the induction period. However, this training generally focuses on compliance with the Standards and does not include specific elements on how to identify, record or deal with complaints about the Welsh language. Often, only general references to the Welsh language or the Welsh Language Standards are included, without specific content on complaint procedures.
- 5.36 In most cases, complaints training appears to be targeted only at key roles, such as Welsh Language Officers or officers who deal specifically with complaints. Handling complaints formed part of corporate training in some organisations, but this training was often only offered during the induction period. Most organisations noted that they did not have a specific process for training staff more widely on complaints about the Welsh language.
- 5.37 It was, however, positive to see that some organisations were encouraging staff to undertake training on complaints more consistently and beyond the induction period. It was also positive that some organisations had indicated that staff were able to benefit from complaints training from the Ombudsman. Less often, staff are given wider training on how to effectively identify and deal with complaints about the Welsh language. Some organisations indicated that further training was underway in the field, and that they planned to expand training on complaints in the future.

⁵ [Code of Practice for the Welsh Language Standards \(No. 1\) Regulations 2015](#)

One organisation stated that a corporate complaints e-learning module is completed by every member of staff as part of the induction process, and then every three years.

Another organisation stated that they hold refresher training on complaints to ensure that staff remain up to date with current procedures and best practice.

One organisation also noted that they share good practice guidance on how to deal with complaints internally.

One organisation provides training and guidance to staff to ensure that they can recognise and appropriately handle complaints or expressions of dissatisfaction about the Welsh language.

That organisation said training is open to any member of staff who feels it is relevant to their role. For example, frontline staff in customer services, reception or communications may choose to attend because they are more likely to receive complaints directly from the public.

Another organisation said that dealing with complaints — including complaints about the Welsh language — formed a core part of training for public-facing staff. This is delivered through Excellence in Visitor Experience training, along with follow-up and linked training throughout the year.

5.38 One organisation stated that all staff undertake mandatory training on handling complaints, or expressions of dissatisfaction, as part of their employment. However, there is no specific training in place on how to deal with such matters in relation to the Welsh language.

5.39 Overall, therefore, specific training on complaints relating to the Welsh language is limited. General training on the Standards is provided in line with requirements, but this training does not, in most cases, cover the complaints procedure.

Opportunities to strengthen:

- **Clearly state how training on dealing with complaints will be provided to staff** in the complaints procedure

- **Develop specific training on complaints relating to the Welsh language**, raising awareness of how to identify, record and handle complaints and expressions of dissatisfaction.
- **Extend training beyond the induction period** and make it more widely available to staff, including updates on best practice, ensuring that training on Welsh-language complaints forms part of ongoing professional development.
- **Improve the content of Welsh Language Awareness training** so that it also covers how to respond to users' experiences, and how to identify and respond to complaints about the Welsh language.

Monitoring, Good Practice and Common Challenges

5.40 Most of the organisations in the sample did not collect feedback on complainants' satisfaction with the complaints process or its outcome. However, there were some examples of organisations monitoring users' satisfaction with the complaints process.

One organisation noted that the Welsh Language Officer collects feedback at the end of the procedure — either through a meeting or by email — to confirm that the complainant is satisfied with the outcome. The organisation stated that this qualitative data is reviewed and analysed by the Officer and presented annually to the Welsh Language Steering Committee to ensure oversight and continuous improvement.

Another organisation sent questionnaires to complainants after dealing with the complaint, with the data being reviewed by the Quality Team.

One organisation also noted that complaints about the Welsh language are monitored through regular random sampling of responses for quality, monthly performance reporting to services, and full visibility of the data on the corporate system. Lessons learned are fed back into training for continuous improvement, and overall performance is reviewed. A number of organisations considered the way they had learned from specific complaints as examples of good practice.

Several organisations emphasised the importance of handling and recording complaints about the Welsh language at a high strategic level within the organisation, to ensure accountability, transparency and consistency.

5.41 In terms of challenges, some organisations noted that they receive complaints relating to matters beyond their control, which limits their ability to resolve them. One

organisation emphasised the challenge of ensuring that all comments relating to the Welsh language are recorded consistently, given the number of staff, volunteers and the wide range of customers involved. Some organisations also noted that a lack of Welsh-speaking staff can be a challenge when dealing with complaints about the Welsh Language.

Opportunities to strengthen:

- **Measure trust in and the effectiveness of the complaints process** through surveys or quality audits.
- **Analyse and use feedback data for continuous improvement** — present findings regularly to relevant governance bodies to ensure strategic oversight.
- **Ensure that lessons learned are fed back into staff training** and the development of procedures.
- **Monitor quality through regular random sampling** - carrying out routine sampling of responses to check the quality and consistency of the complaints process.
- **Prioritise complaints about the Welsh language at a strategic level** ensuring that complaints relating to the Welsh language receive senior management attention.
- **Plan for Welsh-language resourcing** — identifying gaps in the availability of Welsh-speaking staff and developing approaches to ensure organisations can respond effectively in Welsh.

Appendix 1

Standards relating to publishing a complaints procedure

The Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015

Safon 156

You must—

(a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—

- (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the service delivery standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
- (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints,

(b) publish a document that records that procedure on your website, and

(c) ensure that a copy of that document is available in each of your offices that are open to the public.

Safon 162

You must—

(a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—

- (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the policy making standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
- (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints,

(b) publish a document that records that procedure on your website, and

(c) ensure that a copy of that document is available in each of your offices that are open to the public.

Safon 168

You must—

(a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—

- (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the operational standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
- (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints, and

(b) publish a document that records that procedure on your intranet.

The Welsh Language Standards (No. 2) Regulations 2016

Safon 150

You must—

- (a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—
 - (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the service delivery standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
 - (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints,
- (b) publish a document that records that procedure on your website, and
- (c) ensure that a copy of that document is available in each of your offices that are open to the public.

Safon 156

You must—

- (a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—
 - (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the policy making standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
 - (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints,
- (b) publish a document that records that procedure on your website, and
- (c) ensure that a copy of that document is available in each of your offices that are open to the public.

Safon 162

You must—

- (a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—
 - (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the operational standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
 - (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints, and
- (b) publish a document that records that procedure on your intranet.

The Welsh Language Standards (No. 4) Regulations 2016

Safon 150

You must—

(a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—

- (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the service delivery standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
- (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints, and

(b) publish a document that records that procedure on your website.

Safon 156

You must—

(a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—

- (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the policy making standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
- (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints, and

(b) publish a document that records that procedure on your website.

Safon 162

You must—

(a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—

- (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the operational standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
- (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints, and

(b) publish a document that records that procedure on your intranet.

The Welsh Language Standards (No. 5) Regulations 2016

Safon 153

You must—

- (a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—
 - (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the service delivery standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
 - (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints,
- (b) publish a document that records that procedure on your website.
- (c) ensure that a copy of that document is available in each of your offices that are open to the public.

Safon 159

You must—

- (a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—
 - (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the policy making standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
 - (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints,
- (b) publish a document that records that procedure on your website, and
- (c) ensure that a copy of that document is available in each of your offices that are open to the public.

Safon 165

You must—

- (a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—
 - (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the operational standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
 - (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints, and
- (b) publish a document that records that procedure on your intranet.

The Welsh Language Standards (No. 6) Regulations 2017

Safon 164

You must—

- (a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—
 - (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the service delivery standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
 - (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints,
- (b) publish a document that records that procedure on your website, and
- (c) ensure that a copy of that document is available in each of your offices that are open to the public.

Safon 170

You must—

- (a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—
 - (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the policy making standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
 - (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints,
- (b) publish a document that records that procedure on your website, and
- (c) ensure that a copy of that document is available in each of your offices that are open to the public.

Safon 176

You must—

- (a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with the following matters—
 - (i) how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the operational standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
 - (ii) how you will provide training for your staff in relation to dealing with those complaints, and
- (b) publish a document that records that procedure on your intranet.

The Welsh Language Standards (No. 7) Regulations 2018

Safon 119

You must—

- (a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
- (b) publish a document that records that procedure on your website.

The Welsh Language Standards (No. 8) Regulations 2022

Safon 65

You must—

- (a) ensure that you have a complaints procedure that deals with how you intend to deal with complaints relating to your compliance with the standards with which you are under a duty to comply, and
- (b) publish a document that records that procedure on your website.

Appendix 2

Organisations that were part of the Line of Enquiry Sample

Organisation	Type/Sector	Regulations
Cyngor Gwynedd	Local Authority	No. 1
Conwy County Borough Council	Local Authority	No. 1
Wrexham County Borough Council	Local Authority	No. 1
Eryri National Park	National Park	No. 1
Powys County Council	Local Authority	No. 1
Carmarthenshire County Council	Local Authority	No. 1
Cardiff Council	Local Authority	No. 1
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	Local Authority	No. 1
Neath Port Talbot Council	Local Authority	No. 1
Bridgend County Borough Council	Local Authority	No. 1
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	Local Authority	No. 1
Swansea Council	Local Authority	No. 1
Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority	National Park	No. 1
Wales Millennium Centre	National Organisation	No. 2
Amgueddfa Cymru	National Organisation	No. 2
Natural Resources Wales	National Organisation	No. 2
Social Care Wales	Health Services	No. 4
The Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority	Fire and Rescue Services	No. 5
The Chief Constable of South Wales Police	Police Forces	No. 5
Coleg Cambria	Further and Higher Education	No. 6
Wrexham University	Further and Higher Education	No. 6
Aberystwyth University	Further and Higher Education	No. 6
University of South Wales	Further and Higher Education	No. 6
Cardiff University	Further and Higher Education	No. 6
Coleg Gwent	Further and Higher Education	No. 6
Coleg Sir Gâr	Further and Higher Education	No. 6
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	Health Services	No. 7
Cardiff and Value University Health Board	Health Services	No. 7
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board	Health Services	No. 7
General Medical Council	Health Professions Regulators	No. 8