



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

Social Media Monitoring surveys: The Justice Sector – Welsh Language Standards Regulations No. 5



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This year, we have reviewed our arrangements for monitoring and regulating public bodies' compliance with their language duties, to ensure they align with the goals of our Strategic Plan and the Regulatory Outcomes published for 2024–2025.
- 1.2 As part of this review, we considered what changes and alternative approaches were needed to make the best use of our resources and to promote compliance in a more proactive manner.
- 1.3 We were keen to develop monitoring and promotional methods that would give us greater assurance regarding organisations' compliance. It was decided to plan quarterly spot checks, with results reported back to individual organisations within the same quarter.
- 1.4 One of the key advantages of this approach is that organisations are informed of any compliance issues in a timely manner throughout the year, giving them the opportunity to implement appropriate solutions promptly.
- 1.5 Social media has been identified as a priority area for all organisations this year. This follows the fact that organisations' practices in this area have evolved significantly over the past four years, with increasing use of a variety of platforms.
- 1.6 This report provides an overview of the findings from the spot checks conducted with organisations in the justice sector subject to the Welsh Language Standards Regulations No. 5. It also presents recommendations for consideration, with the aim of ensuring better compliance within your organisation.
- 1.7 In addition to this report, individual findings will be discussed with each organisation to offer tailored feedback and support specific improvement actions.
- 1.8 Although the survey was carried out with a sample of organisations, the findings of this report, together with the recommendations, are relevant to all organisations subject to the Welsh Language Standards Regulations No. 5.

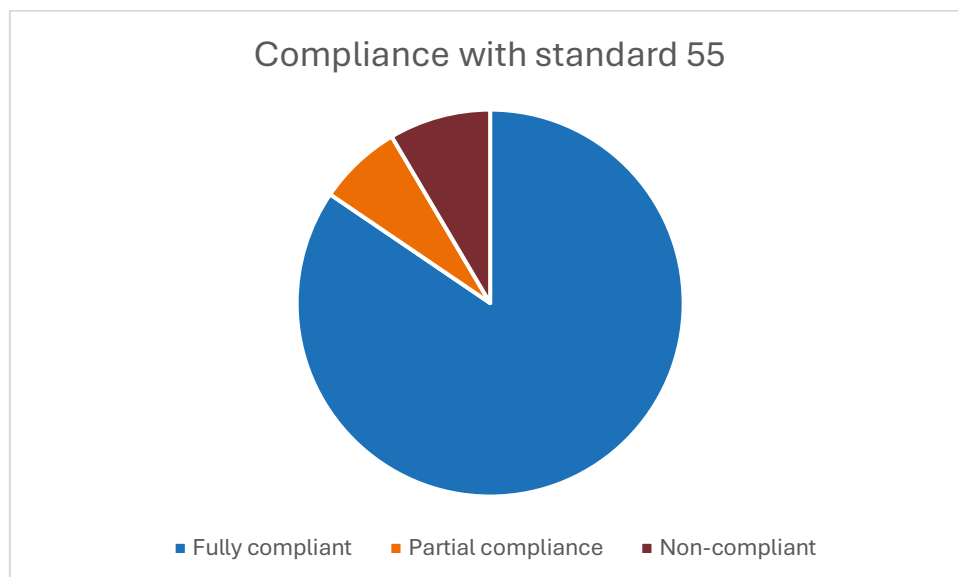
2. Methodology

- 2.1 The Welsh Language Standards Regulations No. 5 include two standards that refer to organisations' use of social media.
- 2.2 Standard 55 states: "When you use social media, you must not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language."
- 2.3 Standard 56 refers to responding to people on social media: "If a person contacts you by social media in Welsh, you must reply in Welsh (if an answer is required)."
- 2.4 These inspections focused on compliance with Standard 55.
- 2.5 During July and August 2025, five organisations subject to the Welsh Language Standards Regulations No. 5 were inspected.
- 2.6 The organisations' accounts on the platforms Facebook, X, Instagram and LinkedIn were checked. For two organisations, only Instagram and LinkedIn accounts were reviewed, as previous inspection results had shown a high level of assurance regarding compliance with the standards when using Facebook and X.
- 2.7 Up to 10 posts were checked for each of the above platforms. As part of the inspection, 142 posts were reviewed across the platforms, considering the following criteria:
 - Was the message available in Welsh?
 - Did the message comply with the requirements of standards relating to social media?
 - Was the Welsh language treated less favourably than the English language?
- 2.8 Additionally, compliance with Standard 80 relating to corporate identity was checked. Standard 80 states:

"When you create, revise or present your corporate identity, you must not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language."

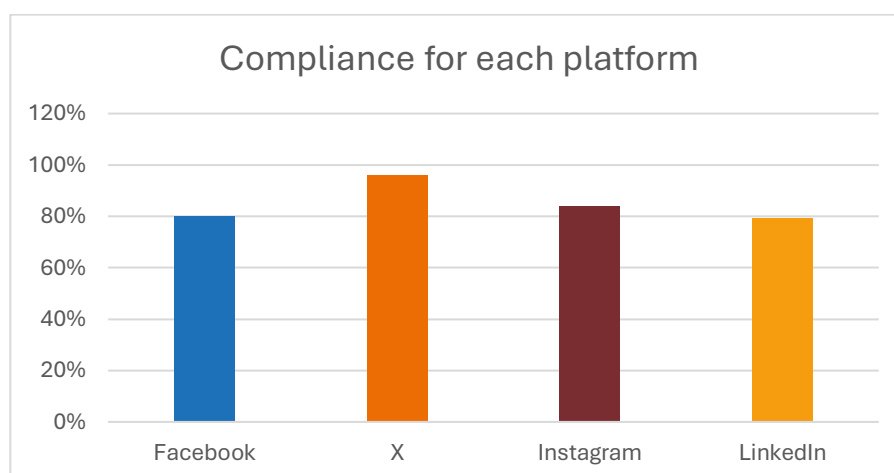
3. Findings

3.1 Here are the results of the posts reviewed as part of the monitoring work undertaken:



- Total number of posts analysed: 142
- Number of posts available in Welsh: 121 (85%)
- Number of fully compliant posts: 120 (84.5%)
- Number of partially compliant posts: 10 (7%)
- Number of non-compliant posts: 12 (8.5%)
- Number of posts treating Welsh less favourably than English: 53 (37%)

3.2 Our inspection work in 2024–25 showed an increase in compliance among organisations subject to the No. 5 Regulations, rising from 43% in 2023–24 to 72%. It is therefore encouraging to note that the level of compliance continues to improve, reaching 84.5% this year.

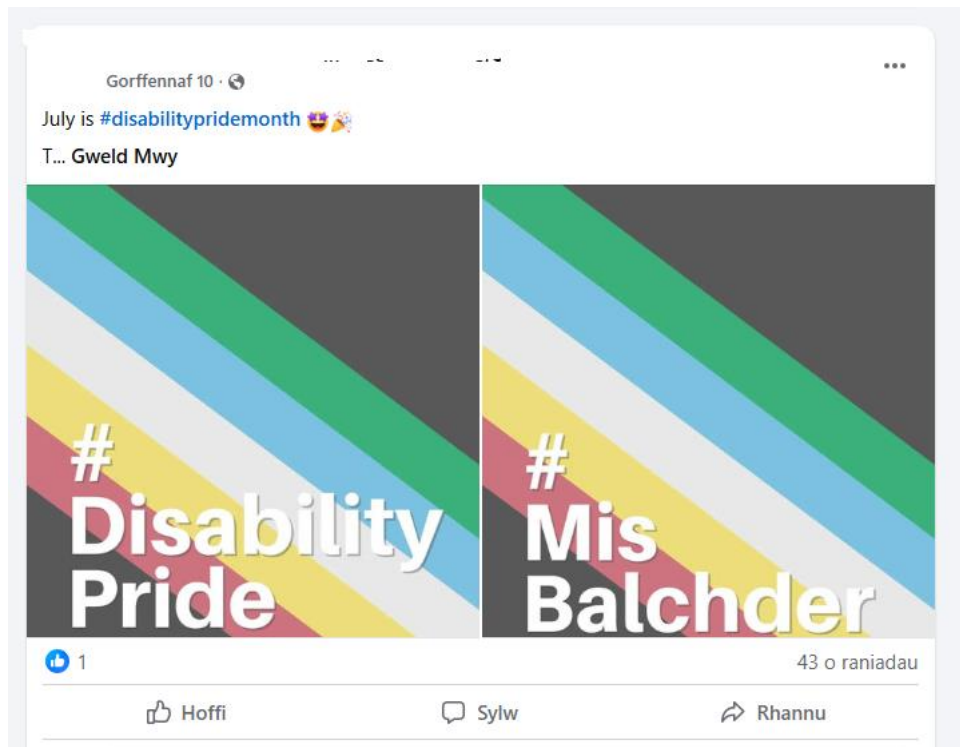


- 3.3 Looking at the platforms individually, 96% of posts on X complied with Standard 55. 84% of posts on Instagram complied, while 80% of Facebook posts and 79% of LinkedIn posts were fully compliant with the requirements of Standard 55.

Not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English language

- 3.4 Of the posts reviewed, 37% treated Welsh less favourably than English. This failure was due to a variety of factors.
- 3.5 Several organisations used hashtags as part of their posts. In some cases, hashtags were not included in the Welsh text and were available in English only. There were also examples where links to websites or external accounts were included in the English version of the message but not in the Welsh version, or where the links led to English content even though Welsh content was available. When including external links, organisations should ensure they lead to Welsh content where available, to avoid treating the Welsh content less favourably than the English.
- 3.6 Examples were seen in bilingual posts where the Welsh text was placed below the English text. On several of these platforms, this meant that the Welsh text was not equally visible or accessible in many of the bilingual posts.





3.7 8.5% of the posts reviewed failed to comply with the requirements.

Videos and Audio Clips

3.8 36 of the posts reviewed across the four platforms included videos or audio clips as part of the message.

3.9 55% of the videos and audio clips reviewed were fully available in Welsh, while 17% were English-language videos with Welsh subtitles.

Corporate Identity

3.10 The way in which the organisation presents its corporate identity varies.

3.11 60% of the accounts reviewed treated the Welsh language less favourably than English when presenting their corporate identity. None of the bilingual accounts complied with the requirements of Standard 80.

3.12 Examples were seen where the logo, name and/or account “handle” were in English only, and the profile information was either in English only or contained less information in Welsh than in the equivalent English text. We acknowledge that there are some limitations on the length of text that can be included in the profile section of these accounts. However, these examples highlight the need to fully consider the Welsh language when creating accounts and drafting profile text, to ensure all relevant information can be included in Welsh.

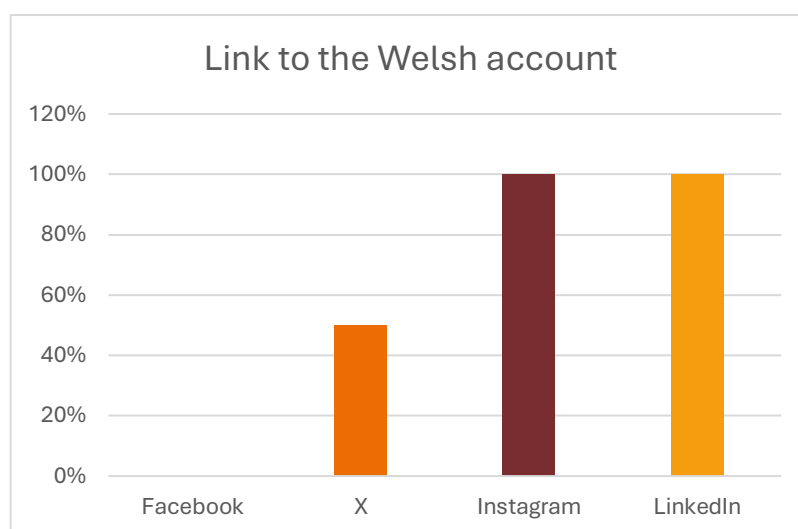
Raising Awareness of Welsh Accounts

3.13 Of the accounts reviewed, 60% were bilingual accounts while 40% were dedicated Welsh accounts (with a separate corresponding English account).

3.14 Standard 78 states:

“You must promote any Welsh language service you provide, and advertise that service in Welsh.”

3.15 Of the six dedicated Welsh accounts, only 50% included a link from the Welsh account to the corresponding English account.



3.16 All dedicated English accounts on Instagram and LinkedIn included links to the corresponding Welsh accounts. 50% of accounts on X included a link from the English account to the Welsh. None of the Facebook accounts included a link from the English account to the Welsh account.

3.17 Our Code of Practice for the Welsh Language Standards Regulations No. 1 states at 4.1.1.7:

“If a body decides to operate separate Welsh and English accounts, it must raise awareness of the Welsh language account on its corresponding English account in accordance with Standards 78 and 79. This may include a body providing a direct link to the Welsh language account from its corresponding English language account.”

3.18 These challenges raise questions about organisations' compliance with the Welsh language standards, particularly in terms of how they ensure their digital content is accessible and equal in both languages. Often, the English message is published with a Welsh translation that includes links to pages or information in English only. This suggests a lack of consideration when preparing the message as a whole, relying solely on translating the text without considering the links and supplementary content that form part of the message.

4. Trends

- 4.1 Our recent report [*Empowering the Welsh Language Through Strong Governance*](#), indicated that organisations are performing well in terms of compliance when posting on social media in general. In 2024–25, organisations subject to Regulation No 5 achieved a compliance level of 72%. As noted above, this year’s monitoring findings show an increase to 84.5%, which is encouraging.
- 4.2 Despite this progress, some challenges remain, particularly in ensuring the accessibility of the Welsh contents, producing videos in Welsh, and maintaining consistency between Welsh and English posts.

Use of social media platforms by the sector

- 4.3 The organisations in question use a variety of social media platforms, with Facebook and X (Twitter) remaining among the most popular. Instagram is growing in popularity, but monitoring trends suggest that the organisations reviewed use LinkedIn less frequently than other platforms.
- 4.4 It is clear that some organisations use different platforms for different purposes. For example, LinkedIn is specifically used by some organisations to promote job vacancies or encourage people to consider a career with the organisation.
- 4.5 Police forces tend to use Facebook and X to share updates during emergency situations, while Instagram is mainly used to promote services or events organised or attended by the organisations, e.g. Pride events or open days.
- 4.6 The use of bilingual accounts is common, although some organisations operate separate accounts for each language. While the majority of posts are bilingual, there are instances where the English post contains more information than the Welsh one. This is usually seen in bilingual posts rather than separate ones. When the same information is not available in Welsh, it is considered that Welsh is being treated less favourably than English and therefore fails to comply with the standards.

Videos

- 4.7 28% of the videos reviewed on the organisations’ social media accounts were English-only. 17% were in English with Welsh subtitles.
- 4.8 Standard 35 states:

“Any publicity or advertising material you produce must be produced in Welsh, and if you produce the material in Welsh and English, you must not treat the Welsh version less favourably than the English version.”

- 4.9 Our Code of Practice for Welsh Language Standards Regulations Number 1 notes that the use of subtitles and voiceovers over English clips can result in Welsh being treated less favourably than English.
- 4.10 We acknowledge that ensuring Welsh speakers are available on every occasion can be challenging, and in some circumstances, it may not be reasonable or practical – for example, where a specific person is needed to convey a message directly and they do not speak Welsh. Nevertheless, organisations are expected to make reasonable efforts to use Welsh speakers where possible, and to publish videos in Welsh when feasible.
- 4.11 Although some videos are highly specific and specialised in content, there were examples where organisations successfully published videos in Welsh. There were also examples of organisations publishing videos without dialogue, with Welsh (or bilingual) text as part of the video. This is considered a practical and effective way of ensuring that Welsh is visible and accessible, especially in cases where using Welsh speakers may be difficult.

Lack of links between Welsh and English accounts

- 4.12 Not all organisations ensure that there is a link from the English account to the Welsh account to promote the Welsh account. More consideration needs to be given to providing links to the equivalent Welsh page on platforms where there are two language channels, in order to promote the Welsh service in line with the requirements of Standard 80.

Linguistic errors

- 4.13 There are instances of grammatical errors or inappropriate terminology in the Welsh content when comparing the Welsh and English versions. These were exceptions but reinforce the message that these posts should be checked before publication to ensure accuracy and consistency.

Lack of bilingual visual strategy

- 4.14 Examples were seen of posts containing infographics and/or videos where the text was in English only.
- 4.15 Accounts that prioritise Welsh when posting tend to show a better understanding of the Standards' requirements, as well as the principles outlined in the Code of Practice. This linguistic prioritisation reflects a commitment to ensuring that Welsh is not treated less favourably than English in digital communication.
- 4.16 Some organisations provide bilingual posts, ensuring that content is available in both languages without compromising the quality or accuracy of the Welsh.

This approach aligns with the expectations of the Standards and facilitates equal access to information.

- 4.17 Specific use of Welsh accounts on platforms such as Facebook and X, along with appropriate links from English pages to their Welsh equivalents, demonstrates efforts to create a coherent and bilingual user experience. However, inconsistencies were noted among organisations in implementing this approach.

Treatment of the Welsh language

- 4.18 The majority of posts reviewed across platforms show a high level of compliance with the requirements. However, instances of partial compliance and non-compliance remain, particularly in relation to English-only infographics and videos.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 5.1 Based on the social media monitoring surveys, it can be concluded that the overall level of compliance is positive and has improved since the surveys conducted in 2024–25. Although a relatively small sample of organisations was surveyed, two platforms were reviewed for the first time this year. The results are encouraging but highlight areas where further improvement is needed to ensure full compliance when posting across social media.
- 5.2 While a significant number of posts fully comply with the duties, there are instances of partial compliance and non-compliance, particularly in relation to the production of English-only videos.
- 5.3 Organisations must ensure that information is accessible in both languages. They should continue to improve their communication methods to fully comply with the standards, including better forward planning to ensure content is available in Welsh and English on every occasion.
- 5.4 Based on the survey findings, we present the following recommendations to organisations subject to Welsh Language Standards Regulations Number 5:

Recommendation 1: Monitoring arrangements

Organisations should strengthen their self-regulation processes by ensuring that every social media account complies with the relevant standards. This means providing clear guidance to staff who post content, regularly monitoring content, and ensuring linguistic consistency and a high standard of translation between Welsh and English.

Recommendation 2: Consistency when posting on social media

Organisations should adopt a consistent bilingual posting policy, ensuring that every message appears in Welsh and English simultaneously, without treating Welsh less favourably than English. Organisations should include Welsh in graphics, images, and videos to ensure that Welsh is an integral part of the organisation's identity.

Recommendation 3: Videos

Organisations should explore alternative methods of publishing videos in Welsh, ensuring that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English within video content, where practically possible.

Recommendation 4: Promoting Welsh language accounts

Organisations should promote their Welsh accounts by directing users to them using prominent links on the corresponding English account.

Recommendation 5: Sharing posts from external organisations

When sharing content from other bodies, organisations should ensure they share the Welsh version where one is available.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey Data

	Facebook	X	Instagram	LinkedIn	Totals and percentages
Number of organisations using the platform	3	3	5	4	15
Number and % of organisations with a separate Welsh account	2 (66%)	2 (66%)	1 (20%)	1 (25%)	6 (40%)
Number and % of organisations with a bilingual account	1 (33%)	1 (33%)	4 (80%)	3 (75%)	9 (60%)
Number and % of organisations with an English only account	0	0	0	0	0
Number and % of organisations complying with corporate identity requirements	2 (66%)	2 (66%)	1 (20%)	1 (25%)	6 (40%)
Number of posts checked	30	28	50	34	142
Number and % of posts that were available entirely in Welsh	25 (83%)	27 (96%)	42 (84%)	27 (79%)	121 (85%)
Number and % of fully compliant posts	24 (80%)	27 (96%)	42 (84%)	27 (79%)	120 (84.5%)

Number and % of partially compliant posts	2 (7%)	0	5 (10%)	3 (9%)	10 (7%)
The number of posts treating Welsh less favourably than English	12 (40%)	1 (4%)	24 (48%)	16 (47%)	53 (37%)

Appendix 2: Videos (Guidance)

Is a video clip that contains Welsh subtitles or a voice over treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language?

This depends on the nature and content of the clip in question. Two possible examples have been noted below:

➤ Video clips which contains a voice over, where words are narrated over pictures.

In such a clip, the words are spoken by a person whilst pictures of something else can be seen (i.e. the person cannot be seen).

If the clip on the Welsh side of the website is:

- using Welsh subtitles when another person could make an equivalent contribution in Welsh
- using Welsh subtitles where it would be possible to include a Welsh voiceover
- using Welsh subtitles on an English contribution on the clip - if there is no Welsh contribution on the equivalent English clip subtitled,

it may be treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language.

➤ Video clips which show a person who can be seen speaking

In such a clip, a person can be seen speaking and expressing their thoughts/opinion on their personal experiences.

If the clip on the Welsh side of the website:

- uses Welsh subtitles rather than a Welsh voice over
- uses an English voiceover rather than a Welsh voice over,

it may be treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language.

Appendix 3

Organisation	Platforms Monitored
Chief Constable of Gwent Police	Facebook X Instagram LinkedIn
Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales	Facebook X Instagram LinkedIn
Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent	Facebook X Instagram (No LinkedIn profile available)
Chief Constable of Dyfed-Powys Police	Instagram LinkedIn
Chief Constable of North Wales Police	Instagram LinkedIn