



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

Good Practice Case Study: Wrexham University CYFLE Scheme

November 2025

Introduction

CYFLE is a strategy for expanding and developing the Welsh language as part of a broader plan to promote and encourage Welsh at Wrexham University. The strategy was created in 2022 with the support of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to review and increase Welsh-language provision within the university.

CYFLE is now a living strategy that has made a significant contribution to bringing Welsh to life at Wrexham University.

Background and policy context

Before 2022, there was no framework or clear plan in place to monitor the development and expansion of Welsh-medium provision in terms of academic credits or to track Welsh language developments across the curriculum.

However, significant momentum has arisen from recent developments in health programmes. It became clear, through stakeholder consultation and by observing trends in the health sector, that there was an increasing demand for more speech and language therapists who could work through the medium of Welsh. This shortage posed a major challenge for health services in Wales, particularly in providing sensitive care to Welsh-speaking patients.

With the support of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and in line with the objectives of Health Education and Improvement Wales, the University has developed specific Welsh-medium academic provision within health programmes, allocating designated places for Welsh-speaking students on courses such as Speech and Language Therapy.

This was not only a response to professional demand, but also contributed directly to the University's broader mission to serve its local and national community. The positive impact on the sector demonstrates the strategic value of Welsh as an academic medium and underlines the University's role as an institution that responds to Wales' social, linguistic, and vocational needs. This aligns with the priorities of the Government's strategy for Welsh in Health and social care, [*More than Just Words*](#). It has also shown potential for further strategic collaboration with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, to ensure that Welsh-medium provision is intentionally planned, effectively monitored, and developed in line with national priorities for Welsh-medium higher education.

CYFLE action plan

Close collaboration with external partners such as the Welsh Language Commissioner, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, the National Centre for Learning Welsh, MEDR, and the Cymraeg 2050 strategy was essential for establishing a robust strategy within a university that responds to national policy objectives.

When developing the strategy, it was necessary to acknowledge Wrexham University's unique position – a University located on the border without a long history of offering Welsh-medium academic provision. As a result, realistic objectives were set, based on the institution's needs, rather than attempting to emulate other Welsh universities with a long-standing tradition of delivering academic courses in Welsh.

Collaboration with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol was key, aligning the strategy with the Coleg's academic plan: **protect, deepen, and extend**. By operating in line with these principles, the University aims to:

- Develop sustainable Welsh-medium provision.
- Build staff capacity.
- Offer meaningful opportunities for students.
- Contribute to the goals of the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Strategy 2050.

Staff engagement

CYFLE was introduced to University staff through a variety of methods to ensure clear promotional opportunities. These included:

- Lunchtime learning sessions and presentations at staff conferences.
- Embedding the strategy within the work of the Academic Development Team.
- Establishing a specific Welsh-medium academic development pathway, which aligned with the creation of a branch of Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol within the University.

Naming the strategy 'CYFLE' (*opportunity*) symbolised the cultural shift, offering an 'opportunity' for everyone, regardless of their language background, to contribute to the Welsh language. This was particularly important in a university so close to the border, where it is necessary to reintroduce Welsh to some staff and students and create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere.

The University has also established informal 'Coffi a Chlonc' (*Coffee and Chat*) sessions for staff, providing an opportunity for any staff member to attend and take part in a conversation in Welsh, at whatever level they feel comfortable.

Highlights and impact of the plan

Since the establishment of CYFLE, the key highlights and benefits have included:

- **Strong Partnerships** – Building an excellent partnership with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and the National Centre for Learning Welsh, facilitating training opportunities for staff and students.
- **Expanding Provision** – Increasing Welsh-medium provision in priority areas of the public sector such as Speech Therapy, Allied Health, Nursing, and Football Coaching.
- **Staff Development** – Over 100 staff have enrolled on the 'Work Welsh' programme, with many reaching the highest levels of learning and fluency.

- **Opportunities for Students** – Welsh in the Workplace pathways for students in programmes such as Professional Policing, Nursing, Allied Health, and Social Care to upskill in Welsh.
- **Academic Development** – Embedding a Welsh pathway into the academic development team by bringing academic staff together monthly to discuss improvements in Welsh provision, establishing a branch of Coleg Cymraeg within the University, and appointing a branch officer.
- **Community and Culture** – Creating a Welsh-speaking community for staff through the Coffi a Chlonc sessions, celebrating staff and student achievements through awards, and maintaining a strong presence at the National Eisteddfod in 2025.
- **Funding and Development** – Securing significant funding from Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to develop Welsh-language simulation resources in the health sector.

Challenges and lessons for other organisations

There were geographical and social challenges in implementing the plan in a university so close to the border, where Welsh is less visible socially. As a result, creative and open approaches were needed to reintroduce the language without stigma.

Collaboration across faculties and efforts to embed Welsh into long-established academic curricula were also challenging, especially where departments lacked fluent Welsh-speaking staff. It was important to convince departments of the benefits of advertising vacancies with Welsh as an essential skill.

To ensure success, it is crucial to clearly identify and communicate the benefits and secure the support of the senior management team to recognise the importance of this work.

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