

National Assembly for Wales Commission

Equality Impact Assessment Template

Purpose

This template has been designed to inform discussions around equality, inclusivity and fairness and to help the Assembly to demonstrate that we pay due regard to the equality duties under the Equality Act 2010 during the design and review of projects, policies, strategies and service delivery.

The EIA should be undertaken at the formative stage of any process / policy development so that it is integral to the decisions being made. It should not be done after the decisions have been made. An EIA can be updated during the decision-making process as required.

Key Considerations

- During discussions, take account of relevance and proportionality
- Ensure that where relevant, you have used or drawn on evidence to inform your considerations. Evidence can be statistics or can be qualitative information and evidence from any source which highlights the experiences of people from protected characteristic groups and the barriers they face.
- Ensure an audit trail is available
- Ensure that you have something that could be published to demonstrate due regard has been given to equality as part of the decision-making process
- When undertaking an EIA consideration should be given to how equality interacts with other impact assessments and issues, including sustainability and Official Languages etc.
- An EIA should be conducted from a proactive stance and seen as a chance to promote issues related to people with protected characteristics and to advance equality of opportunity.

See accompanying EQIA policy for more detailed instructions.

Name of Policy - NAFW Official Language Scheme for the Fifth Assembly

Date of Impact Assessment - October 2016 (initiated)

Impact Assessment undertaken by – Craig Stephenson, Director of Commission Services and Sarah Dafydd, Official Languages Scheme Manager.



01. Introduction

Purpose of the Policy

In line with the requirements of the National Assembly for Wales Official Languages Act 2012, the Official Languages Scheme (OLS) sets out our service standards and priority areas for the delivery of services, in our official languages (Welsh and English) until the end of the Fifth Assembly in 2021. By that time, the intention is to have achieved our ambition which states:

Our ambition is to be a truly bilingual organisation where Assembly Members, the public and staff can choose to work or communicate naturally in either or both of our official languages, where the use of both languages is proactively encouraged and facilitated, and where our exemplary bilingual services are continually improving.

Who is the Policy aimed at?

Users of our services (Assembly Members and the public).

Commission staff who deliver the services.

Who has been involved/or consulted with as part of developing this impact assessment?

The Diversity and Inclusion Team

Workplace equality networks

External Equalities Organisation (Critical Friend feedback)

As part of the consultation on the draft Scheme, the following have provided comments, some of which have informed the considerations in relation to this impact assessment.

Head of Human Resources

Trade Union Side

All staff – via intranet newspaper item and drop-in sessions

External consultation responses received from the Welsh Language Commissioner, Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg and Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru

External contacts including North Wales Police and Bangor University



Additional policies and evidence used include:

Welsh Language Commissioner's report: Recruitment: Welsh Language Considerations

Welsh Language Standards

Alignment with other strategic priorities: Assembly Commission's Corporate Strategy, People Strategy, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, Public Engagement Strategy

Legislative requirements as per the Equality Act 2010

We have not been able to identify EQIAs from other organisations that may have assisted in our considerations for this impact assessment. This may be because having two official languages, set out in statute, is unique in Wales.

02. Potential equality impacts on different equality characteristics

Age (Consider younger, older people and people of working age)

Is there an adverse or the potential for an adverse impact?

Yes

No

Please give reasons/justifications

Service provision

The last ONS census in 2011 stated that around 19% of the Welsh population used Welsh across Wales. Many of those are in the education system – with whom we proactively engage in terms of our education and youth engagement programmes. As the UK's only fully bilingual legislature and the principal democratic institution in Wales, all our customers, whatever their ages, have a legal right to access our services bilingually. Therefore, having bilingual staff in the right places to enable us to provide bilingual services as a default, where people of all ages are entitled to those services, in either or both languages, is important. Multiple platforms for the provision of our information have been developed and are provided (face to face, hard copies, electronic information) to take account of the fact that different age demographics generally access information in different ways. We do not believe that there is an equality impact in relation to the OLS and age and have sought feedback from our workplace equality networks nonetheless. We will also seek an external view on this to see whether there are actions we should consider.

Recruitment and Employment

Any actions required – please list here and in the Actions Template

We will also seek an external view on this to see whether there are actions we should consider.



Disability (Consider sensory impairments, physical impairments, hidden impairments, learning disabilities, mental health issues, long-term health conditions)

Is there an adverse or the potential for an adverse impact?

Yes No

Please give reasons/justifications

Service provision

The Assembly has a range of accreditations and service accessibility standards that facilitates access to our services such as easy-read information, plain text etc.

Recruitment and Employment

Disabled staff are recruited for the skills required for their roles (for which the language needs to deliver services have been planned in advance). A number of our bilingual staff have sensory and physical impairments, mental health issues and long-term health conditions. They have access to the wide range of support services available to all Assembly Commission Staff. For example, many of our staff including some who work bilingually use voice recognition technology as a reasonable adjustment. Where a language skill is required upon recruitment, or is to be acquired during the induction or probation period, reasonable adjustments would be made in the usual way. Examples include extending the period during which a skill must be acquired, or providing BSL interpreters as required. We sought feedback from our workplace equality network, Embrace who reaffirmed the importance of reasonable adjustments for disabled staff (as outlined above).

The Assembly Commission operates the DWP's Disability Confident Employer scheme which guarantees interviews to disabled people subject to them meeting the minimum criteria for selection.

All staff, whether they are disabled or not, are supported and encouraged to take part in any of our language learning opportunities – whether in classrooms or on a one to one basis – to help us move towards our OLS ambitions. Welsh language tuition takes account of any reasonable adjustments required to enable and encourage disabled employees to participate in Welsh tuition. The Language Skills Team identify training opportunities to maintain their awareness of alternative tuition methods, and in order to ensure that



reasonable adjustments can be made for existing or prospective learners. This most recently included bespoke training for the organisation from Dyslexia Wales.

In relation to potential impact on prospective and existing employees, we will establish a working group to examine issues further working with our workplace equality networks and external interest groups where appropriate.

Any actions required – please list here and in the Actions Template

We will seek the views of our working group on this to see whether there are actions we should consider.

Gender Reassignment (Consider people who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment. Gender reassignment refers to the way in which an individual identifies with their own gender)

Is there an adverse or the potential for an adverse impact?

Yes No

Please give reasons/justifications

We do not consider that those considering or undergoing gender reassignment are adversely affected by the provisions of the Official Languages Scheme but we sought further input from OUT-NAW, our LGBT workplace equality network and the network chair did not feel that this group were impacted.

Any actions required – please list here and in the Actions Template

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Consider whether there is any disadvantage for people who are not married / in a civil partnership compared to those who are)

Is there an adverse or the potential for an adverse impact?

Yes No

Please give reasons/justifications

We do not consider that this group adversely affected by the provisions of the Official Languages Scheme.

Any actions required – please list here and in the Actions Template

Maternity and Pregnancy Consider women who are pregnant, on maternity leave or



breastfeeding

Is there an adverse or the potential for an adverse impact?

Yes

No

Please give reasons/justifications

We do not consider that this group adversely affected by the provisions of the Official Languages Scheme.

Any actions required – please list here and in the Actions Template

Race or Ethnicity (People belonging to a minority racial, ethnic or cultural group including ethnic origin, colour, nationality)

Is there an adverse or the potential for an adverse impact?

Yes

No

We sought insight from our Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage (REACH) workplace equality network which has informed this equality impact assessment and will continue an ongoing dialogue via the OLS Working Group. The following section is broken into themes, and they include some of a number of issues identified by REACH members.

Service provision

Access to information and services beyond Welsh and English

The ability to offer translation in other languages other than English or Welsh, where reasonable and practicable, is available to service users. Staff can explore the range of options available for the user, which could include but is not limited to: excerpts of the OLS or other information provided from across the Assembly, translated into a community language, or other information that the user might find useful. The intention would be to clarify with user exactly what they need to help us get information to them in the most appropriate way. When a corporate position on provision of information in community languages is established we will conform to its requirements.

Pre-arranged tours of the Senedd can be offered in a range of languages as mentioned in the OLS. Foreign dignitaries visiting the Assembly are often accompanied by interpreters but language needs are established in advance by our International Relations team.

Recruitment of prospective staff

We wish to attract people from the widest pool of talent but there is potential for an adverse impact on people who have little or no Welsh language skills and, in particular, those who not identify as being Welsh. We will cross-refer this EQIA with the EQIA of the recruitment practices.



Below we detail the type of issues that could potentially occur and identify mitigating actions to reduce the potential for disadvantage.

Impact on current staff and their advancement within the organisation

We are aware that there has been a long-standing perception through feedback from some members of the public that employees of the National Assembly for Wales have to speak Welsh. This is not the case and the majority of staff are not bilingual. As part of our monitoring and analysis of workforce and recruitment diversity data in 2014, we identified that the number of staff identifying as BME had not kept pace with the Cardiff travel to work area rates. Analysis shows that people who identified as BME were less likely to be successful at sift and interview than non-BME people. An action plan was put in place and a BME Co-ordinator was appointed on a temporary basis to put the plan into action in order to mainstream BME considerations into our recruitment procedures. The plan also identified action to explore barriers and put mechanisms in place to help overcome the occupational concentration of BME staff into lower grades. This work has been subsumed into the work of the wider HR team in relation to recruitment attraction.

The OLS covering the period 2013 – 2016 did not contain an objective to increase the number of Welsh speaking staff whereas the previous Scheme had. Instead, the focus has been on planning the provision of bilingual services to ensure that there was bilingual capacity in appropriate places. The new, currently draft, OLS now contains an objective similar to a growing number of public sector organisations in Wales stating

“in order to increase the level of basic level Welsh-language skills across the organisation over time, and to build on our existing bilingual ethos, by the end of 2017, we will adopt an approach where all posts advertised require at least a basic level of Welsh-language skills ('basic linguistic courtesy') with candidates expected to evidence those skills on appointment, or a commitment to gain those skills as part of the induction process.”

This potentially creates another perceived barrier which has been raised in the internal consultation of the OLS. We therefore need to consider actions that mitigate against this perception and will work with our workplace networks, TUS and external partners to identify these actions.

Objective Approach to Determining Necessary Language Skills for Posts

In order to comply with the requirements of the OLS, some posts are designated as “Welsh Essential” to ensure an appropriate level and quality of bilingual service provision is in place. Providing clarity on how and why posts are deemed “Welsh Essential” will demonstrate an objective approach and rationale for designation of posts in relation to linguistic requirements, both for individual posts and/or for the needs of a service area to meet the OLS requirements. This can be achieved with the design and implementation of a post-related skills assessment methodology (which, at the time of writing is in development). The Welsh Language Commissioner recommends a screening and verification process.



Defining and Acknowledging Standards of Proficiency

In terms of potential staff recruitment exercises and for the benefit of our existing workforce, further clarity as to what standards of proficiency are required in terms of Welsh Language skills would be helpful. A language proficiency framework based on language competences (skills matrix) is in development and will help to provide clarity for existing staff and potential employees regarding the required level of Welsh Language skills. This will provide all staff with a gauge by which to match and/or where they wish to, develop their skill sets with a view to applying for future job opportunities.

The provision of in-house Welsh lessons and the flexible learning opportunities to improve Welsh Language skills should be included in recruitment advertising copy and on the recruitment pages on the Assembly's website, alongside the skills matrix to provide clarity on support available and standards of required proficiency for job roles.

Setting out information on our recruitment website pages with regards to what support is available for staff should they wish to learn Welsh and what it means in practice to work in a bilingual environment e.g. machine translation, Translation Service and what standard of service customers can expect will provide insight for prospective employees. This approach increases transparency and again provides insight into working in a bilingual workplace for prospective workers i.e. what support and resources to do the job are available; what it means to work in a bilingual environment and what support is in place. Wording on job adverts should welcome people with Welsh Language skills but in a way that does not deter people without or with little Welsh Language Skills. A skills matrix would provide further clarity on expected standards.

Recruitment Attraction

In terms of recruitment attraction, a strategic approach to recruitment advertising, work placements, outreach and positive action initiatives and provision of context about the Assembly Commission as a bilingual service provider and employer via our website will improve transparency and clarity for potential employees. We have already started working with specific service areas to look at different ways of attracting potential employees. The recent recruitment campaign for Security Officers is an example of this. It included a blog on the Security Service <https://assemblyblog.wales/>

Linguistic and Cultural Diversity

There is an opportunity for the OLS to acknowledge the existence of multilingualism in the Assembly Commission's workforce and that skills in languages other than Welsh and English are an asset (which are regularly called upon when there are international visitors on the estate). Acknowledging this in both the OLS and our recruitment narrative demonstrates that the Assembly Commission values the concepts of both linguistic and cultural diversity. This at the same time complements the Assembly's Official Language status and could influence how potential employees might positively view the Assembly as an inclusive employer of choice.



Any actions required – please list here and in the Actions Template

1. Develop and implement a post-related and service area language skills assessment methodology which includes a screening and verification exercise for language skills for posts
2. Develop and implement a Language Proficiency Framework (Skills Matrix)
3. Ensure printed and online recruitment information includes skills matrix and reflects learning opportunities and support available.
4. Adopt a strategic approach to recruitment attraction, reflecting this in updated narrative on the recruitment webpages
5. Acknowledge multilingualism and cultural diversity in recruitment narrative and OLS
6. Cross refer this EQIA with EQIA of recruitment practices.
7. Monitor the impact of the policy and changes to the policy and take appropriate action. See REACH recommendation that the "effectiveness of the scheme will be monitored and the scheme and actions taken under it to progress it will be tweaked according to progress. It is our recommendation that when monitoring the Scheme that the Commission monitor the effect and impact of the Scheme, and any changes to the Scheme or how it is enacted, on BME people. "
8. When considering a revised narrative for our OLS requirements in recruitment schemes, we need to ensure that this is accompanied by standardised narrative in relation to recruiting staff that represent all parts of the community. A working group will be established to consider this and representatives will include a standing member from the Diversity and Inclusion team. Emerging actions will be considered by our REACH workplace equality network as part of the working group.
9. We should, in the meantime, consider the approach adopted by South Wales Police in its recruitment campaigns:

Police Control Room Operators required to deal with 101 and 999 calls

As an equal opportunities employer, we welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons. However, as black and minority ethnic (BME) candidates are currently under-represented within the Force, we would particularly welcome applications from BME applicants. If you identify as BME and would like to discuss this opportunity further, the support available to you and the forthcoming recruitment campaign, please email our team with your contact details by 29th August 2016 and someone will contact you.

As part of our consideration of this approach, we will liaise with other organisations to ascertain the effectiveness of such approaches.

10. The recruitment pages of our website have been updated recently to include testimonials by staff from diverse backgrounds and are due to be updated further.
<http://www.assembly.wales/en/gethome/working/recruitment/Pages/working-here.aspx>

There are plans to complete another strand of this improvement project under the "Recruitment – Diversity" tab, linking to the Diversity and Inclusion webpages of the Assembly's website

http://www.assembly.wales/en/gethome/working/recruitment/Pages/get_involved-diversity.aspx

These could be enhanced further by provision of inclusive imagery from outreach events etc. and more references to the work of the BME staff network.



11. Consideration to providing direct links from specific job adverts to our updated diversity pages merits consideration so that potential employees are encouraged to apply.
12. HR and the Diversity and Inclusion team should consider whether the BME action plan requires revision or a re-fresh.
13. All workplace equality networks should be approached for their views on making a YouTube video which could accompany recruitment campaigns and be used at induction and outreach events.
14. Diversity and Inclusion and OLS teams to collaborate on outreach work.

Religion or Belief (Consider people who have a religion or belief, including non-belief, cultural awareness)

Is there an adverse or the potential for an adverse impact?

Yes No

Please give reasons/justifications

We do not consider that this group adversely affected by the provisions of the Official Languages Scheme and we have sought further insight from our REACH workplace equality network.

Any actions required – please list here and in the Actions Template

Sex (Consider both women and men and any direct or indirect impact because of their sex)

Is there an adverse or the potential for an adverse impact?

Yes No

Please give reasons/justifications

We do not consider that this group adversely affected by the provisions of the Official Languages Scheme and we have sought further insight from our INSPIRE workplace equality network

Any actions required – please list here and in the Actions Template

Sexual Orientation (Consider people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual)

Is there an adverse or the potential for an adverse impact?

Yes No



Please give reasons/justifications

We do not consider that those considering or undergoing gender reassignment are adversely affected by the provisions of the Official Languages Scheme but we sought further input from OUT-NAW, our LGBT workplace equality network and the network chair did not feel that this group were impacted.

Any actions required – please list here and in the Actions Template

Although not covered under protected characteristics, consider people with caring responsibilities and people from low socio-economic backgrounds.

We do not consider that this group adversely affected by the provisions of the Official Languages Scheme but we sought further insight from our TEULU workplace equality network whereby no issues were raised.

03. Does this policy provide an opportunity to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups of people?

Yes, it provides assurance to service users that their rights to access services and information in either of our official languages are taken seriously. There is nothing in the Official Languages Scheme that jeopardises good relationships between different groups of people providing that we implement the actions arising from considerations in this impact assessment. As a young institution which attracts visitors from home and abroad, many of whom are interested particularly in the operation of a bilingual parliament, our approach complements the culture of our bilingual and multi-lingual country.

The actions, particularly in relation to potential, perceived barriers highlighted by our REACH network with regard to people who identify as BME, and people with little or no Welsh language skills, and prioritising the actions outlined below should help us to make progress on ensuring that the workforce reflects the diversity of Wales' people and communities.



04. Conclusion

Which option will be pursued?

Implement policy in existing form

Modify policy in some way

Abandon policy/decision

Give a brief explanation:

This EQIA will remain a live document, and as we work with different groups to identify risks and to mitigate those risks.



05. Actions / Tasks Identified through the Assessment

Issue	Action/Task	Lead Responsibility	Timescale/ Target Date	Resource Implications	Comments	<i>Date completed</i>
Identify potential for discrimination across the protected characteristics	Seek input from workplace equality networks and feedback from external interest groups.	OLS Team	Ongoing as required		Comments received, EQIA amended	
Provide clarity on decision-making for assessing Welsh Language Skills levels for job vacancies	Develop and implement a post-related and service area language skills assessment methodology which includes a screening and verification exercise for "Welsh Essential" posts. Involve REACH network in working group.					
Provide clarity on language skills levels	Develop and implement a Language Proficiency Framework (Skills Matrix)					
Provide clarity for	Ensure printed and					

potential job applicants around language skills levels and learning opportunities available	online recruitment information includes skills matrix and reflects learning opportunities and support available.					
Ensure that we attract the broadest range of talented people to apply for jobs with us	Adopt a strategic approach to recruitment attraction, reflecting this in updated narrative on the recruitment webpages					
Ensure that we attract the broadest range of talented people to apply for jobs with us	Acknowledge multilingualism and cultural diversity in recruitment narrative and OLS					
Ensure that we attract the broadest range of talented people to apply for jobs with us	Cross refer this EQIA with EQIA of recruitment practices.					
Maintain ongoing review of this EQIA	Monitor the impact of the policy and changes to the					

	<p>policy and take appropriate action. See REACH recommendation that the "effectiveness of the scheme will be monitored and the scheme and actions taken under it to progress it will be tweaked according to progress. It is our recommendation that when monitoring the Scheme that the Commission monitor the effect and impact of the Scheme, and any changes to the Scheme or how it is enacted, on BME people. "</p>					
<p>Ensure that we attract the broadest range of talented people to apply for</p>	<p>When considering a revised narrative for our OLS requirements in</p>					

jobs with us	recruitment schemes, we need to ensure that this is accompanied by standardised narrative in relation to recruiting staff that represent all parts of the community. A working group will be established to consider this and representatives will include a standing member from the Diversity and Inclusion team.					
Ensure that we attract the broadest range of talented people to apply for jobs with us	We should, in the meantime, consider the approach adopted by South Wales Police in its recruitment campaigns.: As part of our consideration of this approach, we will liaise with other organisations to					

	ascertain the effectiveness of such approaches.					
Ensure that we attract the broadest range of talented people to apply for jobs with us	<p>The recruitment pages of our website have been updated recently to include testimonials by staff from diverse backgrounds and are due to be updated further.</p> <p>http://www.assembly.wales/en/gethome/working/recruitment/Pages/working-here.aspx</p> <p>These could be enhanced further by provision of inclusive imagery from outreach events etc and more references to the work of the BME staff network.</p>					
Ensure that we attract the broadest	Consideration to providing direct links					

<p>range of talented people to apply for jobs with us</p>	<p>from specific job adverts to our updated diversity pages merits consideration so that potential employees are encouraged to apply.</p>					
<p>Ensure that we attract the broadest range of talented people to apply for jobs with us</p>	<p>HR and the Diversity and Inclusion team should consider whether the BME action plan requires revision or a re-fresh.</p>					
<p>Ensure that we attract the broadest range of talented people to apply for jobs with us</p>	<p>All workplace equality networks should be approached for their views on making a YouTube video which could accompany recruitment campaigns and be used at induction and outreach events.</p>					

Ensure that we attract the broadest range of talented people to apply for jobs with us	Diversity and Inclusion and OLS teams to collaborate on outreach work					
Potential discrimination against people who have a religion or belief, including non-belief.	Seek further insight from our REACH workplace equality network				Comments received, meeting with the network and Director of Commission Services to discuss further	

Head of Service sign-off	YES
How will these actions be monitored?	OLS Team, and via Recruitment theme working group
Review Date:	Ongoing
The default will be to publish all EQIAs. Can this EQIA be published online? If not, why not?*	

*Further information is available from the [Information Governance Manager](#) and in the [Protective Marking Scheme](#).

