

S4C's WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

25th May 2006

S4/C

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prepared in accordance with
the Welsh Language Act 1993

*[This Scheme has received the full approval of the Welsh Language Board under
Section 14 of the Act. It became effective on 26th of May 2006]*

DECLARATION

As a public body, S4C has adopted the principle that, when dealing with the public in Wales, it will treat the Welsh and English languages on the basis of equality. This Scheme sets out how S4C will give effect to that principle in its dealings with the public in Wales. The Scheme is not, however, applicable to the television services broadcast by S4C and / or any services, goods or applications which are ancillary to programmes provided by S4C.

Introduction

Under the terms of the Welsh Language Act 1993, every public body that provides services to the public in Wales must prepare a scheme which sets out how it will provide those services in Welsh.

This is S4C's scheme.

It describes how S4C will give effect to the principle established by the Welsh Language Act, namely that the Welsh and English languages should be treated on the basis of equality when providing a public service in Wales, to the extent that it is appropriate under the circumstances and reasonably practicable.

This Scheme covers the services that we provide to the public as a public body (but not as a broadcaster) in Wales. (For further clarification, please see the explanatory note at the end of the Scheme).

In this Scheme, the term public means individuals, legal entities and corporate bodies. It includes the public in general, or a section of the public, as well as individual members of the public. The term includes voluntary organisations and charities. Directors and others who represent limited companies are also included within the definition of the term 'public'. However, it does not include people who by virtue of their duties represent the Crown, the Government or the State. As a result, people who undertake official duties of a public nature, although they are legal entities, are not included within the meaning of the term *public* when they undertake those official duties.

Background of the organisation

As a public body, S4C operates under the 1990 and 1996 Broadcasting Acts and the Communications Act 2003 with the main objective of providing a television service of a high standard.

Since 1998, S4C has broadcast a digital television service in Wales, S4C Digidol, as well as S4C's analogue service which has been in existence since 1982 but which will come to an end after 2009. In the light of these statutory requirements, a substantial proportion of the programmes broadcast on S4C must be in Welsh, and, in particular, that those programmes which are broadcast on S4C during peak viewing hours are mainly in Welsh. S4C normally broadcasts Channel 4's English language programmes (either simultaneously with Channel 4 or in rescheduled slots) when it does not broadcast in Welsh. Similarly, there is a requirement that a substantial proportion of the programmes which are broadcast on S4C Digidol are in Welsh. S4C also provides the digital television service, S4C 2, through a subsidiary company (namely S4C 2 Ltd).

Amongst S4C's corporate objectives are delivering excellence and best value within S4C, and working with others to promote outstanding creativity and to develop and to strengthen the communications industries in Wales. S4C's full Corporate Plan can be seen on our website.

S4C's main office is in Llanishen, Cardiff, with a second office in Caernarfon. S4C does, however, operate in other areas of Wales, throughout the whole of Wales and beyond Wales from time to time through marketing and promotion campaigns, exhibitions, and attendance at eisteddfodau, agricultural shows and numerous other events which are relevant to the Welsh nation.

A variety of media are used for promotional campaigns such as the press, hoardings, the internet etc. S4C conducts research into viewing patterns, response to programmes, the effectiveness of marketing campaigns and the testing of some new formats. These can be in the form of focus groups, questionnaires or electronic monitors. S4C also deals with the suppliers of other services besides programmes. Amongst them are companies that provide services which are ancillary to but essential to the process of delivering our services.

As part of our promotions and marketing operations, S4C deals directly with the public by "direct mailing" and a list is maintained on a database of those who wish to receive our publications. S4C also deals with press and mass media enquiries and is responsible for providing information and press releases for them.

S4C is funded primarily by direct grant from the UK Government's Department of Culture, Media and Sport. However, some of S4C's income is derived from on-screen advertising and from companies sponsoring programmes, series and other services and

from other commercial activities. S4C has adopted a corporate target to attract a specified number of advertisers in Welsh.

An external company operates a call, email and other enquiries from the public answering service - "S4C Viewers Hotline" (Gwifren Gwylwyr S4C) on behalf of S4C. The service is open seven days a week.

The provision of TeleText, subtitling, audio descriptions and signing services is undertaken by specialist suppliers for S4C. S4C's corporate website is available in Welsh and English.

Service planning and delivery

Policies, legislation and initiatives

Our policies, activities and services shall be consistent with this Scheme. They shall support the use of Welsh and, wherever possible, will assist the public in Wales to use Welsh as part of their everyday life.

When we contribute to the work of developing or implementing new policies, initiatives, services or legislation in which other organisations take the lead, we will endeavour to do so in a way that is consistent with this Scheme.

Service delivery

Our standard practice is to ensure that our services are available to the public in Welsh.

S4C will request that other companies and organisations who deal with the public in the name of S4C comply with this Scheme.

A very high proportion of the work of producing programmes and ancillary services to S4C is undertaken by independent companies and external suppliers. The legal and contractual relationship between them and S4C is a commercial one. However, S4C will encourage them to implement their own policies or to comply with the spirit of this Scheme when providing services to S4C.

We shall also offer them the experience of our specialists in operating bilingually and share with them any information and documents which are already available.

We shall also, after a period of consultation, provide instructions and a copy of this Scheme to suppliers who, because of the nature of their work, are likely to deal directly with the public in the name of and on behalf of S4C.

Quality standards

Services provided in Welsh shall be of the same quality as those produced in English and will be delivered within the same timeframe.

Dealing with the Welsh-speaking public

Correspondence

Our standard practice is as follows:

(The following will be applicable to email correspondence as well as written correspondence.)

S4C welcomes correspondence in Welsh or in English.

When someone writes to us in Welsh, we will prepare a reply in Welsh (should a reply be necessary). Our target times for replying to letters written in Welsh are the same as for those written in English.

Standard correspondence or circulars that we send to numerous recipients in Wales will be bilingual.

As regards personal correspondence, we will establish the preferred language of the recipient and will respond accordingly.

When we initiate correspondence with an individual, group or organisation, we will do so bilingually unless we know that they would prefer to receive correspondence only in Welsh or in English.

If it is necessary to publish separate Welsh and English versions of correspondence, our standard practice is to ensure that both versions are available at the same time.

Any materials enclosed with letters written in Welsh will be either in Welsh or will be bilingual, when available.

In respect of letters only, any letter in Welsh will be signed before it is sent.

Telephone communication

Our standard practice is to ensure that the public can speak in Welsh or in English when dealing with us by telephone.

Our switchboard staff will greet callers bilingually. Our main switchboard will use a bilingual message on its answering machine. Other members of staff will answer the telephone with a bilingual greeting and will use bilingual messages on their personal answering machines.

If a caller wishes to speak Welsh, then our switchboard will try to transfer the call to a Welsh speaker who is competent to deal with the enquiry.

If there is no Welsh speaker available who is competent to deal with the call, the caller shall be given a choice, as appropriate, either to wait for a Welsh speaker to return the call as soon as possible, to continue with the call in English, or to present his or her enquiry in Welsh by letter or email.

If the caller telephones one of our direct lines and wishes to speak in Welsh, but the person who takes the call is unable to speak Welsh, they will try to transfer the call to a Welsh speaking colleague who is competent to deal with the enquiry.

When we set up helplines or similar facilities to provide information, services or assistance to the public, (but excluding helplines or similar services that are programme related,) we will provide a Welsh language service. It will be advertised alongside the English language service.

Public meetings

We will provide a simultaneous translation service from Welsh to English in our public meetings, unless we know that all the participants are likely to use the same language.

Invitations and advertisements for public meetings will be bilingual, and will either indicate that simultaneous translation facilities will be available, or will invite the public to advise us beforehand of their language preference.

We will advise those who attend public meetings when simultaneous translation facilities are available – and we will encourage contributions in Welsh.

Our standard practice is to provide papers and other information for public meetings in Welsh and in English – and that reports or papers produced following public meetings are published in Welsh and in English.

Our standard practice when selecting staff to attend public meetings is to ensure that competent bilingual staff attend, as necessary.

Other meetings with the public in Wales

When we arrange or attend face to face meetings with the public, we will ascertain their language preference at the first opportunity, and, wherever possible, we will ensure that a competent member of staff is present to meet the language requirement.

If a competent Welsh speaker is not available, then we will give them the choice of continuing the meeting in English, or to deal with the matter through correspondence in Welsh.

The above is also applicable to meetings held through video-conferencing and similar equipment.

Other contacts with the public in Wales

Our standard practice when commissioning public surveys is to ensure that every aspect of communicating with the public is bilingual.

Whenever practical, respondents will be asked whether they would prefer to respond in Welsh or in English.

Our public image

Publicity campaigns, exhibitions and Corporate advertising

All publicity material, public information, exhibitions and corporate advertising material which we use in Wales shall be produced bilingually, or as separate Welsh and English versions.

If it is necessary to publish separate Welsh and English versions, then both versions will be equal in terms of size, prominence and quality – and both versions will be available at the same time and will be equally accessible.

Any advertisements published in English language newspapers (or a similar medium) which are distributed mainly or wholly in Wales, will be bilingual, or will appear as separate Welsh and English versions. Advertisements appearing in Welsh publications will be published in Welsh only.

Response lines and other means of responding to campaigns in Wales will be bilingual or will include a separate response service in Welsh.

When staff are required to supervise stalls and exhibitions, our standard practice is to ensure that competent bilingual staff are in attendance, as appropriate.

Corporate publications

Our standard practice will be to publish corporate material that is available to the public bilingually, the Welsh and English versions alongside each other in one document.

If it is necessary to publish separate Welsh and English versions (for example, if one document is too long or voluminous), both versions will be equal in terms of size and quality – and our standard practice is to ensure that both versions are available at the same time and are equally accessible. Both versions will clearly indicate that the material is available in the other language.

If the documents are not available free of charge, the price of a bilingual document should not exceed the price of a document published in one language – and the price of separate Welsh and English documents will be the same.

The above is also applicable to corporate material available electronically on our website, on CD Rom or any other medium.

Corporate websites

Our corporate websites are bilingual. There is a selection button to enable the public access either the Welsh or the English version and a message welcoming a response in either language will be displayed.

Corporate forms and associated explanatory material

Our standard practice is to ensure that every corporate form and associated explanatory material used by the public in Wales is wholly bilingual, with the Welsh and English versions incorporated in the same document. This includes interactive forms published on our websites.

If it is necessary to publish separate Welsh and English versions (for example, if one document is too long or voluminous), both versions will be equal in terms of size and quality – and we will ensure that both versions are available at the same time and are equally accessible. Both versions will clearly indicate that the material is available in the other language.

Corporate identity

We will adopt a bilingual corporate identity in Wales. Our name, contact details, logo, slogans and other standard information will appear in Welsh or bilingually on all material which displays our corporate identity. This includes our written material – and materials such as business cards, ID badges, access cards, tickets, invitations and vehicles. All printed documentation relating to S4C's financial transactions are bilingual. These include invoices, vouchers, receipts, cheques and salary documents.

We will use Welsh only branding for some ventures.

Signs in Wales

Any signs designed by S4C will either be in Welsh only or bilingual.

If it becomes necessary to separate the two languages on any sign, both versions will be of equal form, size, quality and prominence with the Welsh first or side by side with the English version.

In permanent or temporary exhibitions, all health and safety signs will be bilingual. However, the exhibitions will either be in Welsh only or bilingual according to the requirements of the occasion.

The above will be relevant to all types of signs, including electronic signs.

Official, public and staff recruitment advertisements

Official, public and staff recruitment advertisements published in English-language newspapers (or similar medium) which are distributed primarily or wholly in Wales,

will be bilingual or will appear as separate Welsh and English versions. Advertisements in Welsh language publications will be in Welsh.

The Welsh and English versions will be equal in terms of format, size, quality and prominence – irrespective of whether they are published as one bilingual version or as separate Welsh and English advertisements.

As regards the English media, we advertise posts in Welsh where the ability to speak Welsh is essential, with a brief description in English.

Recruitment advertisements which appear in English periodicals (and other publications) that are distributed throughout the UK, can be published in English, except when it is essential for the postholder to speak Welsh, in which case, the advertisement can be wholly bilingual, or in Welsh with a brief explanation in English.

Any official, corporate public or staff recruitment advertisements which appear anywhere else in Wales will be bilingual.

Press releases and media communications

Corporate releases to the press and to the broadcasting media in Wales will be published in Welsh and in English – or in accordance with the language preference of the media organisation or publication which receive them.

We will ensure that Welsh speakers are available to hold interviews with the Welsh language press and broadcasting media.

Our practice when we put press releases on our website, is to set them out in the language of the website.

Other Corporate Activity

From time to time, S4C will hold or participate in other corporate activities to promote or to further S4C corporately and in order to engender goodwill, e.g. competitions, scholarships and the sponsoring of events or external services.

Where S4C holds any competition, or offers a scholarship, any associated published material will be either in Welsh only or bilingual (depending on the nature and the subject of the competition / scholarship).

In cases where S4C contributes to any activities or events which are organised or held by third parties, e.g. offering prizes for competitions which are held by an external organisation or sponsoring an event which is organised by an external body or organisation, any material published directly by S4C in relation to any such activity will be bilingual, and, where reasonably practical, S4C will encourage the organiser of

the activity to acknowledge S4C's contribution and the nature of its services, but S4C will not have any control over the activity itself nor will it seek to influence it.

Implementing the Scheme

Staffing

S4C will ensure that Welsh speakers with the appropriate skills will be available to communicate with the public through the medium of Welsh.

S4C will identify those posts where the ability to speak Welsh is essential or desirable and this will be stated in the relevant job advertisements.

S4C will ensure that all persons responsible for staff appointments in S4C are aware of the requirements of this Scheme and will assess the need for fluency in Welsh before appointing for any post in S4C.

Recruitment

Because of the nature of S4C and its objectives, S4C will obviously consider language ability to be one of a number of relevant skills when appointing staff. This will be stated in advertisements and in job descriptions. S4C's application forms will be bilingual and all communications with applicants thereafter will be in the language used to complete the forms.

Where S4C considers the ability to speak Welsh to be essential but has been unable to attract a qualified Welsh speaking applicant, then S4C will consider offering the post to a non-Welsh speaking applicant but on condition that he / she achieves a satisfactory level of fluency in a specified period.

S4C will adopt a recognised assessment system to measure fluency where necessary.

Language training

S4C will encourage and support its staff to learn Welsh and will ensure that Welsh lessons are available to those members of its staff who wish to start learning Welsh or to improve their grasp of the language, whether their post requires a knowledge of the Welsh language or not.

Vocational training

We will develop the ability of our Welsh speaking staff to work through the medium of Welsh by providing vocational training in Welsh, whenever that is practical.

Information and Communication Technology

The need to provide information and services through the medium of Welsh, and to operate in accordance with this Scheme, will be reflected when we develop, design and buy information and communication technology products and services.

Working in partnership

When we work in partnership, we shall try to ensure that any aspects of public service shall comply with this Scheme.

When we join a partnership which is led by another organisation, our input will comply with this Scheme and we will encourage the other partners to comply with this Scheme.

Internal arrangements

This Scheme has been approved by the S4C Authority which has given full authority to the Chief Executive and the Management Team of S4C to implement it.

The Chair and Chief Executive of S4C give their full support to the Scheme and intend to emphasise to staff that they wish to see it implemented.

S4C will ensure that all of the principles in this Scheme will be communicated to S4C staff in the same way in which all other S4C policies are communicated to them. Reference to this Scheme and instructions on how to implement it are included in the existing Departmental Plans.

Managers will have the responsibility of implementing those aspects of the Scheme which are relevant to their work.

This Scheme is published for our staff and the public in Wales. It shall be published in a prominent location on our website. The website address is: www.s4c.co.uk

We will organise briefing sessions for our staff and will notify representatives of our suppliers in order to raise awareness about this Scheme.

Any kind of dealing which we have with the public in Wales, which is not specifically described in this Scheme, will be carried out in a manner that is consistent with the general principles incorporated in this Scheme.

Services which are exempt from this Scheme – explanatory note

For the avoidance of any misunderstanding or doubt, this Scheme does not apply to or effect to the content of the television services broadcast by S4C and / or any of the services, goods or applications which are ancillary to programmes provided by S4C such as (but not limited to):-

- programme websites;
- broadband, online or wireless services;
- books, magazines and / or audio products (e.g. compact disks or audio tapes) which incorporate materials or elements from programmes or are derived from them;
- copies of programmes or programme material in the form of video tapes or dvd's; and
- interactive applications.

Monitoring

Our existing monitoring and recording procedures will include reference to progress in terms of implementing this Scheme, as appropriate.

We will send monitoring reports to the Welsh Language Board, at its request, and will report on the progress in terms of implementing this Scheme.

Reviewing and revising the Scheme

We will review this Scheme within four years of its implementation. In addition, from time to time, it may be necessary for us to review this Scheme or to propose amendments to it because of changes to our functions or to the circumstances in which we undertake those functions, or for any other reason.

No changes will be made to this Scheme without the approval of the Welsh Language Board.

Complaints and suggestions for improvement

All complaints relating to this Scheme or any suggestions as to how we can improve it should be referred to the senior member of staff responsible for the Scheme, at the following address:

Tim Hartley
Director of Corporate Affairs
Parc Tŷ Glas
Llanishen
Cardiff
CF14 5DU
029 2074 1408
Or by sending an email to: tim.hartley@s4c.co.uk