**Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Annual Report 2023/24**

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# Part 1: Introduction

## Foreword by the Chair, Dr Aled Eirug

Since I became Chair of the Coleg’s Board in 2022, I have been impressed by the way in which the Coleg’s work in the higher education, further education and apprenticeships sectors has grown in breadth and impact. I would like to thank Board members, the Chief Executive, managers and staff for their support once again this year. In doing so, I would like to refer in particular to William Callaway, a member of the Coleg Board since 2016 and chair of the Coleg’s Audit and Risk Committee since 2017, for the support and sound advice he has given me and my predecessors. William’s term has now ended, but his quiet and consistent contribution over the years has been of great benefit to the Coleg.

The Coleg is moving into another new phase in its history, following the designation to advise Medr on matters relating to the Welsh language, and as it continues to support efforts to reach the goal of a million Welsh speakers and to double daily use of the language by 2050. I would like to thank the Welsh Government’s ministers and officers for their cooperation, with thanks in particular to the former Minister for Education and Welsh Language, Jeremy Miles, and the current Minister with responsibility for the Coleg, Mark Drakeford, and his officers, for their support for our work.

## Report of the Chief Executive, Dr Ioan Matthews

It is a pleasure to bring to your attention the annual report of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. What is striking once again this year is the wealth and variety of opportunities and experiences offered to learners through the medium of Welsh, often as a result of schemes supported in some way by the Coleg. This was highlighted at the awards night which was broadcast live from the Egin in Carmarthen on Thursday, 20 June, when a series of awards were presented to learners and practitioners from various sectors. Among the highlights was the presentation of the Gwobr Merêd to Priya Dodiya, a Psychology student at Swansea University, for her outstanding work in developing more opportunities for students from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds to use their Welsh. The William Salesbury Medicine Award was presented to Elin Bartlett and Celyn Jones-Hughes from Cardiff University, an accolade that celebrates the development of Welsh-medium provision in this subject over the last fifteen years. It was also a pleasure to see the Gareth Pierce Award for new talent being awarded to Cerys Brown from Pembrokeshire College, a healthcare apprentice with Hywel Dda Health Board who is based at Glangwili Hospital. The award recognises an apprentice who has shown exceptional talent and excelled in the workplace. The development of apprenticeships undertaken through the Welsh language was an area of particular interest to Gareth, as former Chair of the Coleg, and it is appropriate to thank his widow, Lynwen Pierce, for her generous financial contribution to establish this award in his memory.

While the regular work of the Coleg has continued to evolve over the recent period, there are a number of current developments that are likely to have a great influence on policy developments over the coming years. While this report is being prepared, the Welsh Language and Education Bill is being considered in the Senedd and is expected to pass in the summer. The Coleg Board has enthusiastically supported the Bill, while also happy to propose amendments that will strengthen it and ensure clarity about the roles and responsibilities of various organisations. As the Coleg stated in our original response to the White Paper last year, the success of the objectives and ambition contained in the Bill is dependent on coordinated action across stakeholders and government departments, as well as the commitment of future governments to maintain and support the policy commitments of the national language strategy, Cymraeg 2050.

August 2024 saw the establishment of Medr (the new Commission for Tertiary Education and Research). The Coleg was designated in 2023 to advise Medr on its statutory duties in relation to the Welsh language, and initial advice was submitted by the Coleg in September 2024. This was high-level and overarching advice, and we welcome the fact that Medr has accepted the main recommendation, relating to the need to develop an ambitious national plan for the Welsh language, which will respond directly to the challenges and ambitions of Cymraeg 2050. As Medr’s planning and regulatory responsibilities cover higher education, further education, apprenticeships, sixth form provision and community education, there are clear opportunities to strengthen and enrich what is currently available to learners. This includes expanding the opportunities at universities and colleges, and within apprenticeships, as well as promoting and protecting the place of the Welsh-medium secondary school sector within the education system. The Coleg’s aim, as always, will be to ensure that increasing numbers of learners, of all ages, have the opportunity to pursue all, or a large proportion, of their studies through the medium of Welsh.

As well as building on the work described in this annual report, the Coleg will propose and develop new ideas for the coming years. These will include ways to strengthen bilingual workforces and workplaces to respond to the Cymraeg 2050 agenda; expanding the opportunities for everyone in the tertiary sector to have the opportunity to use and develop their Welsh language skills; and protecting and developing opportunities to study Welsh as a subject.

We must acknowledge the fact that the next few years will be a challenging time in the public sector, especially in view of the pressures on the Welsh Government’s budget. At the same time, the Coleg acknowledges the support of officers from the Welsh Language Division and other departments within the Welsh Government in ensuring an appropriate budget for its work.

The Coleg’s Annual Congregation was held in Bangor in March 2024 to recognise the success of research students who have studied for doctorates with the Coleg’s support, and to inaugurate Wyn Thomas, Emeritus Professor Delyth Prys and Linda Wyn as Honorary Fellows. The Coleg also had successful visits to the Urdd Eisteddfod and the National Eisteddfod, while the Coleg’s ambassadors in the various sectors held events and activities throughout the year. The Annual Congregation in Bangor also saw the launch of Cronfa Llŷr, a fund to celebrate the multifaceted contribution of the late Dr Llŷr Roberts, with the intention of enabling students who study through the medium of Welsh to organise overseas visits linked to their studies. The first bursaries were presented at the National Eisteddfod in Pontypridd, and it was a privilege to be joined by Llŷr’s parents and other members of his family for the occasion.

During the year, the Coleg’s management team was reorganised in order to respond as effectively as possible to the Coleg’s new role in advising Medr. I would especially like to thank my fellow Executive Directors, Gwenllian Griffiths, Dylan Phillips and Dafydd Trystan, and all the Coleg’s staff for their support. I would also like to thank members of the Coleg’s Board and its committees for giving so consistently of their time to further the Coleg’s work.

# Part 2: Progress towards the delivery of our Strategic Plan

The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (the Coleg) launched its [**Strategic Plan**](https://colegcymraeg.ac.uk/en/pages-a-z-content/strategic-plan/) in February 2020. The Plan outlines the Coleg’s vision and values for the period up to 2025 and outlines the strategic priorities in order to deliver the vision. The Coleg’s Board has decided to extend the period of the Plan, and a new strategic plan will be drawn up following the next Senedd elections.

Watch a [short film](https://colegcymraeg.ac.uk/en/pages-a-z-content/strategic-plan/) introducing the Strategic Plan.

Our role as a national strategic planning body is to support and influence partners with the resources provided by the Welsh Government to promote post-statutory education through the medium of Welsh.

This annual report shows the progress made by the Coleg and its partners in 2023/24 towards the delivery of the plan’s objectives across three fields:

* Field 1: The learner experience
* Field 2: Provision
* Field 3: Employer awareness of the importance of bilingual skills

## Field 1: The learner experience

### Objective 1 – Students and learners

The Coleg aims to work with partners to ensure an increase in the number of students and/or the percentages benefitting from Welsh-medium and/or bilingual provision across the post-compulsory sector.

#### Higher education

##### Higher education data report

Since the Coleg was established, there has been an increase in the number of students who study at least part of their degree course through the medium of Welsh today compared to a decade ago. However, over the last 5 years the increase has reached a peak and started to decline slightly. The numbers who study through the medium of Welsh reflect the numbers who can speak Welsh, and between 2021/22 and 2022/23 the total number of students who follow a higher education program in Wales and that have indicated that they can speak Welsh fluently has decreased from 10,470 to 9,645. This is a matter of considerable concern and reflects wider challenges in relation to patterns of participation in higher education in Wales more generally, and the increasing tendency in recent years for more and more students from Wales to be attracted by universities in England.



When analysing student patterns between the different levels and methods of study, the Medr Statistics Bulletin, 'Welsh Language in Higher Education 2022/23' shows that the numbers of students who study part-time through the medium of Welsh have continued to decrease (a pattern that has been common across the whole sector in recent years), as well as the numbers of students who study at postgraduate level. However, a small increase from the previous year was seen in the numbers of full-time undergraduate students who study at least part of their course through the medium of Welsh.

The students' language skills are an extremely important factor when looking at the numbers studying through the medium of Welsh. In that regard, care is needed when dealing with the 2022/23 data, as new language categories have been introduced in order to differentiate between students' levels of ability in the Welsh language. It is clear that the new system has led to the return of some unreliable statistics by some institutions. But in the long term, as the new categories become established, this should enable better planning and more effective targeting of efforts. The 2022/23 statistics show once again that the students who consider themselves fluent in Welsh are the most likely to study part of their course in Welsh - with 28% of them studying at least 5 credits through the medium of Welsh, and 20% studying 40 credits or more in Welsh (an increase of 7% from the previous year).

This again underlines the importance of the Coleg's efforts to expand audiences and attract new students to the Welsh-medium provision, and to ensure that students have access to learning opportunities of substance in their chosen subjects wherever they study.

##### Case study 1: Play and Practical Learning Workshops

During the autumn term, twelve Play and Practical Learning Workshops were held. The intention was to develop the understanding of 16–18-year-old learners about the role of play in supporting a child’s holistic development, and to give a taste of Welsh-medium education at university in the fields of education and early years studies.

This was a fully collaborative project, led by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David with a contribution from every university that teaches these fields through the medium of Welsh.

In total, 130 learners from further education colleges such as Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, Coleg Sir Gâr, Coleg Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire College took part in the workshops, as well as pupils from Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bro Edern and Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur. There was also some effective collaboration with Mudiad Meithrin.

The feedback forms make clear that the learners enjoyed the interactive aspect, and got a real taste of the importance of Welsh language and bilingual skills in the world of education and early years studies.

One of those who took part said the workshops were “Incredible, I understood and learned a lot but more than anything I had fun while learning – that’s what I need to take with me back to class”.

##### Case study 2: Returning to Wales to train as a teacher

Originally from Port Talbot, Mollie McLaughlin went to Bristol University to do her degree. In her third year, Mollie heard about the Coleg’s [Keeping in Touch](https://colegcymraeg.ac.uk/en/students/university/keeping-in-touch-leaving-wales-to-study/) scheme which provides Welsh speakers studying outside Wales with information about relevant opportunities in Wales.

“Coming from a home where English is the main language, I was concerned that I would lose my Welsh while studying in England. So, the Keeping in Touch scheme was a kind of community blanket for me.”

During her final year, Mollie decided to apply for a PGCE course, even though she had little relevant experience. While writing the application form, she received an email from the Coleg promoting the [Dysgu’r Dyfodol](https://colegcymraeg.ac.uk/en/students/postgraduate-studies/dysgur-dyfodol-scheme/) scheme that provides a taste of the profession through mentoring opportunities and work experience. She decided to give it a go. Mollie said:

“It was absolutely fantastic, and I’d recommend it to anyone. The scheme increased my confidence considerably. Being able to ask a teacher about the structure of the PGCE course, the induction year and the teaching subject itself was an incredible opportunity.”

Mollie has now returned to Wales and is enjoying the experience of doing a Welsh-medium PGCE History course at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Case study 3: The Coleg’s Sbarduno Scheme

The Sbarduno Scheme is a mentoring scheme for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young people. The scheme aims to build the confidence of young people to use their Welsh language skills, and to inspire them to consider Welsh-medium education or a Welsh language career in the future.

For the pilot year, eight young people received six online mentoring sessions through the medium of Welsh with a mentor from a Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority background. Where possible, young people and their mentors were paired based on areas or subjects where they had common interests. Topics such as university choices, confidence in the Welsh language and a career through the Welsh language were discussed.

The Coleg received positive feedback at the end of the scheme, and in 2024/25 the Sbarduno Scheme will expand to include young people from further education colleges.

##### Case study 4: Award for developing opportunities for students from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds

A special celebration at Canolfan S4C yr Egin in June announced the winners of the Coleg Cymraeg’s awards for students, apprentices and staff from the higher education, further education and apprenticeships sector who have made a significant contribution to Welsh-medium and bilingual education.

Among the award winners was Priya Dodiya, a Psychology student at Swansea University who won the Gwobr Merêd for her contribution to Welsh-language life and culture at the University. Priya was rewarded for her exceptional work developing more opportunities for students from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority backgrounds to use their Welsh language. Through her work with Discovery (the University’s student volunteering charity), the University’s Learn Welsh unit and the Students’ Union, Priya organised inclusive social events called #BringYourWenglish, and succeeded in reaching out to Welsh speakers from minority communities.

Priya said:

“Winning the Gwobr Merêd means so much to me because as a Welsh speaker of Indian heritage, I have faced discrimination within the community. But, through my efforts promoting the language within diverse communities, I hope to create a more inclusive environment for everyone.”

The Awards Night can be viewed on the Coleg’s [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/live/ceOj6xyWHJA?feature=shared) channel and more information about all the winners can be read on the [Coleg’s website](https://colegcymraeg.ac.uk/en/news/news/winners-of-coleg-cymraeg-awards-revealed/).

#### Further education and apprenticeships

##### Further education and apprenticeships data report

Data from the Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) for 2023/24 shows that the Coleg Cymraeg’s initial investment in the further education and apprenticeships sector continues to bear fruit. The Coleg’s analysis shows that the progress so far has been made at the bottom of the linguistic pyramid, that is, courses that include an element of bilingual provision.

Investment in the areas of Health and Care, Childcare, Public Services, Sports and Land-based Studies continues, and there was new investment in the areas of Business and the Creative Industries during the year.

Table 1: Teaching activities with at least an element in Welsh

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | Further education | Work-based learning |
| 2017/18 | 9.6% | 13.4% |
| 2018/19 | 11.9% | 15.4% |
| 2019/20 | 11.8% | 14.6% |
| **2020/21** | 14.7% | 20.8% |
| **2021/22** | 18.2% | 25.3% |
| **2022/23** | 20.6% | 32.7% |

**Data source**: <https://www.gov.wales/cymraeg-2050-annual-reports>

*\*The figures have been adjusted compared to the Coleg’s previous annual reports in order to ensure consistency with the Welsh Government’s reporting methods.*

##### Case study: Megan Jones from Coleg Glynllifon, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai

Megan Jones is studying Agriculture Level 3 at Coleg Glynllifon, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai. Megan is one of the Coleg Cymraeg’s ambassadors, and benefits from the bilingual Agriculture provision which has recently been extended as a result of a development grant from the Coleg. She has been encouraging her peers to study and live through the medium of Welsh, whatever their linguistic skills.

Leusa Jones, Branch Officer at Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, said:

“Megan has been a practical, confident and active ambassador for us in the Grŵp, turning her hand to supporting celebrations and activities to promote the Welsh language and Welshness across the campuses. She would always make the activities fun and managed to get everyone involved and to feel that they belong.”

Megan has received an unconditional offer to study Agriculture and Animal Science at Aberystwyth University, and her intention is to undertake most of the course through the medium of Welsh.

### Objective 2 – Quality of provision

The Coleg aims to work with partners to ensure high-quality Welsh-medium and bilingual provision.

#### Higher education

##### Higher education data report

It is important to be able to measure and evaluate the quality of the Welsh-medium provision offered to students, and universities do this by collecting student feedback at module and degree scheme level. The annual NSS survey is also an opportunity for students to give their views on the quality of the provision and the learning experiences they receive.

Unfortunately, at present there is no single sector-wide method in use across Welsh institutions that allows for the performance of students who have studied through the medium of Welsh to be measured and compared with that of their peers who have not studied through the medium of Welsh. The Coleg is keen to see the introduction of a consistent and reliable method of measuring the outcomes of students who study through the medium of Welsh.

However, a relevant study led by Dr Rebecca Ward from the University of South Wales was carried out recently with the support of a Small Grant from the Coleg. The study investigated the results of studying through the medium of Welsh in higher education, by analysing degree and module results, and speaking directly to students and graduates about their experiences. The study looked at a sample of 32,388 university students studying in Wales between 2019 and 2022. Some of the results are summarised in the following graphs.



Graph 1: The proportion of graduates who received a first-class degree depending on the language of study. Welsh-medium study = 5cr or more through the medium of Welsh.



Graph 2: Average marks depending on the language of study. Comparisons were made between the average mark of students studying a Welsh-medium module and the average mark of those studying the corresponding module in English.

The statistics are impressive and suggest that the standard of Welsh-medium education at university can offer significant academic advantages. Of course, other factors can also influence academic performance, e.g. economic background, and it would be useful to consider this in a further study.

##### Case study: Working across borders to ensure high-quality Welsh-medium education

Since the Coleg was established, it has continued to collaborate, learn and share good practice with partners outside Wales in relation to teaching through the medium of minoritised languages.

Following the support of an Innovation Grant from the Coleg, Dr Siôn Llewelyn Jones from Cardiff University published a pack that presents [Good Practice in Developing Educational Provision and Teaching in a Minoritised Language in Universities](https://www.porth.ac.uk/en/collection/arferion-da). He shared his experiences in a staff development workshop that was held online during the summer term, presenting ideas on the recruitment and retention of students with regard to provision delivered in a minoritised language.

Siôn said:

“The Innovation Grant was very useful in enabling us to share good practice between two languages facing similar situations. I’ve incorporated several examples of good practice into my lectures and seminars and the response has been great.”

Siôn’s work was based on the experiences of lecturers at two universities in Wales and two in Ireland teaching in a minoritised language, as well as the response from students.

The relationship with Ireland developed further as the University of Galway invited the Coleg’s Director of Higher Education and Secretary, Dr Dylan Phillips, to a national workshop on teaching through the medium of Irish in university education in June 2024. They were keen to understand the Coleg’s model in the context of providing and developing higher education in their mother tongue.

#### Further education and apprenticeships

##### Further education and apprenticeships data report

Learning resources for the further education and apprenticeships sector received over 39,000 hits on the Coleg’s [Porth Adnoddau](https://www.porth.ac.uk/?_locale=en) portal this year. A considerable number of those were for the [Prentis-iaith resources](https://www.porth.ac.uk/en/group-collection/prentis-iaith).

As well as hits for resources commissioned for the further education and apprenticeships sector, it is encouraging to see the success of a resource commissioned via the Coleg’s Small Grant for all sectors (higher education, further education, apprenticeships and schools), [Sbia ar Hwn](https://www.porth.ac.uk/en/collection/sbia-ar-hwn), which also received a substantial number of hits. This digital course has been designed to help prepare students and learners for work in social media. It covers how to grab and keep people’s attention, how to create engaging content, how to present news stories, and how to use the Welsh language effectively to communicate with various audiences. This is particularly encouraging considering the fact that the Coleg started funding Creative Industries provision at the further education colleges for the first time this year.

The Porth’s Most Popular Resources

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Most Popular Resources** | **Number of** **Hits** |
|  | Prentis-iaith Awareness Level | 25,132 |
|  | Prentis-iaith Understanding Level | 7,309 |
|  | Prentis-iaith: Level Identification Quiz | 1,862 |
|  | Prentis-iaith Fluency Level | 941 |
|  | Prentis-iaith Confidence Level | 612 |
|  | Resources for learning and teaching Welsh as a second language (formerly the Cynllun Colegau Cymru) | 208 |
|  | Teclyn Iaith (Welsh Toolkit) | 208 |
|  | Business Case Studies | 178 |
|  | Sbia ar Hwn | 172 |
|  | BTEC Level 3 Sports Resources | 113 |

Although most hits were, as expected, for cross-curricular resources such as Prentis-iaith and the Teclyn Iaith, there were a number of hits for curricular resources within the Coleg’s priority areas for this year, with over 1,000 hits for Health and Care resources.

|  |
| --- |
| **Resources by Priority Subject** |
| **Subject Area** | **Number of** **Hits** | **Most Popular Resource** **within the Field** |
| **Health and Care** | 1,237 | [Health and Social Care Bilingual Vocabulary Posters](https://www.flipsnack.com/colegcymraeg/posteri-iechyd-a-gofal-unedau-1-7/full-view.html) |
| **Childcare** | 795 | [Learning Body Parts: Activity](https://adnoddau.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/Rhannau%27r%2BCorff_Parts%2Bof%2Bthe%2Bbody/story.html) |
| **Business** | 754 | [Business Case Studies: Portmeirion – Good Customer Service](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLGA-GjZ2It0g4zHjQOAQPKTftnbaC3N8O) |
| **Creative Industries** | 535 | [Sbia ar Hwn](https://xerte.cardiff.ac.uk/play_19179#page1) |
| **Agriculture** | 533 | [Agriculture Resource Pack](https://agrilevel2.co.uk/index-en.html) |
| **Sport** | 365 | [BTEC Level 3 Sports Resources](https://adnoddau.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/BLC_Chwaraeon/Adolygu%2Bar%2Bgyfer%2Byr%2BArholiad%2B1/story_html5.html) |
| **Public Services** | 271 | [Sgiliaith: Bilingual Learning Posters](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Rfox1BRgMkq294lX8rCtI1004_J6bBD9) |
| **Construction** | 166 | [Construction Terminology](https://colegcymraeg.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/adnoddaucyhoeddus/EZTO0sVeICpOrdu08uCklg8BmBm2850U-ZplsTxh_DnboA?e=dHwRDs) |
|  |  |  |

The data shows not only that the resources commissioned for the sector meet their requirements, but that work to promote them also has an impact.

##### Case study: Technology and Bilingualism Conference

The Coleg’s first Technology and Bilingualism Conference, in conjunction with JISC, was held at Merthyr College in June for the further education, higher education and apprenticeships sectors under the banner of the [Gwreiddio Scheme](https://colegcymraeg.ac.uk/en/staff/college-staff/the-gwreiddio-scheme/).

The event was an opportunity for staff to learn and share good practice in using technology to offer provision in Welsh and bilingually. The conference heard from Dr Indeg Marshall, a Welsh Government Language Technology Specialist, and a number of leading experts and academics. More information about the speakers can be read [here](https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn%3Aaaid%3Asc%3AEU%3Ad019dafc-7045-4e59-a267-913e2b1f41cc/?x_api_client_id=shared_recipient&x_api_client_location=discover_panel&annonBboxWorkflow=false&filetype=application%2Fpdf&viewer%21megaVerb=group-discover).

There was an opportunity in the morning to discuss the development of technology in education since the pandemic, and a focus on how the pandemic had changed teaching. Good practice was shared by four members of staff from the sectors who are still benefitting from the technological changes made during this period to provide education and support staff bilingually.

Throughout the day, there was an opportunity to hear about innovative developments in the field of technology, and to have discussions about artificial intelligence and the Welsh language. There was also an opportunity to share new resources, as well as successful opportunities for networking, discussing and learning across sectors and interactively.

#### Resources

##### Higher education case study 1: Supporting and publishing cross-border research

In January 2024, a [special edition of *Gwerddon*](https://colegcymraeg.ac.uk/media/qhmjex0u/gwerddon-36.pdf) was published that contains five articles on the history of the Wladfa, the Welsh settlement in Patagonia, from new perspectives. *Gwerddon* is an interdisciplinary Welsh-language academic e-journal that is funded and published by the Coleg.

The articles in the special edition are the culmination of years of collaboration and discussion between scholars from Wales and Argentina, and include new contributions translated from Spanish into Welsh. This is the first time that *Gwerddon* has published translations.

The special edition is an opportunity for readers to hear a variety of contemporary voices from both sides of the Atlantic, and according to the guest coordinator, Dr Iwan Wyn Rees from Cardiff University, will also serve to “convince educators, museums, broadcasters and others in Wales of the importance of studies on the Wladfa with respect to their potential to bring to light a uniquely Welsh view of colonisation”.

##### Higher education case study 2: *Introduction to Criminology* e-handbook

The Coleg was proud to mark an important milestone in publishing the first undergraduate academic volume in Welsh in the field of Criminology. The e-book’s authors are Dr Lowri Cunnington Wynn from Aberystwyth University and Dr Gwenda Rhian Jones from Bangor University.

The [*Introduction to Criminology* e-book](https://www.porth.ac.uk/en/collection/cyflwyniad-i-droseddeg) is a free, open-access textbook for first-year students studying for a degree in Criminology.

There are 17 chapters within this substantial e-handbook, on topics from ‘Stress, Subculture and Crime by Young People’ to ‘Green Criminology’. As well as introducing concepts, the book suggests example activities that require students to respond to a specific situation or question.

According to Demi John, lecturer in Criminology at Aberystwyth University:

“The publication of such a comprehensive and useful e-book is a great help to the students and to me as a lecturer. It is useful that the e-handbook presents a uniquely Welsh context together with British and American examples.”

##### Case study 3: A new Creative Industries resource

The Coleg has identified the creative sector as a priority area for the development of Welsh-medium and bilingual vocational provision, and has introduced new resources to support learners, including Creative Industries units which were published before the summer.

The resource includes presentations from contemporary artists to inspire future artists. As well as packs on specific areas within the Creative Industries, the resource includes packs on business and career paths within the creative industries as a whole in order to encourage students and to give them confidence to follow their own path within this field in the future.

The resource is available on the [Coleg’s Porth Adnoddau](https://www.porth.ac.uk/en/collection/unedau-diwydiannau-creadigol), and includes a summary in English to enable non-Welsh-speaking staff in the further education colleges to support their students to use it.

Partners came together at the National Eisteddfod in Ynysangharad Park to raise awareness about how collaboration across the further education sector helps to improve the provision of Welsh-medium and bilingual vocational qualifications, with a specific focus on creative subjects.

## Field 2: Provision

### Objective 1 – Depth of provision

Working with partners, the Coleg aims to make Welsh-medium and/or bilingual provision available in as many subject areas as possible for higher education, and available in the areas identified in the [Action Plan](https://colegcymraeg.ac.uk/media/yhlnlwwv/towardscymraeg2050.pdf) for further education and apprenticeships.

#### Higher education

##### Higher education data report

There has been a significant increase in the number of subjects that can be studied through the medium of Welsh since the Coleg was established. There is some provision in Welsh in each of the 36 ‘main subject groups’ listed in the Coleg’s Higher Education Academic Plan, compared to 12 in 2011.

Within the 36 ‘main subject groups’, there are 80 academic subjects. It is now possible to study at least 5 credits through the medium of Welsh in at least one institution in 76 of these subjects.



It is also possible to study extensively (i.e. at least 40 credits a year) in 68 of these academic subjects in at least one institution.

The Coleg continues to seek opportunities to support new provision through the medium of Welsh, and it provides Catalyst Grants and Interdisciplinary Grants in several places in order to stimulate these developments, such as **Chemistry** (Cardiff University), **Veterinary Medicine** (Aberystwyth University), **Paramedic Sciences** (Swansea University), **Speech and Language Therapy** (Wrexham University) and **Economics** (Cardiff University). Bangor University is the latest institution to receive a Catalyst Grant, which was given to support Welsh-medium provision in **Medicine**.

Table 2: Higher education subjects offering Welsh-medium learning experiences for students

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Main subjects | Constituent subjects |
| Arts and Humanities | 7/7 | 17/17 |
| Education | 2/2 | 3/3 |
| Social Sciences | 8/8 | 18/19 |
| Health Sciences | 8/8 | 19/21 |
| Sciences | 9/9 | 17/17 |
| Personal development and others | 2/2 | 2/3 |

##### Case study 1: Welsh language skills for the world of work – for everyone

The University of South Wales Employability Scheme, supported by the Coleg, is an experimental scheme that creates Welsh-medium provision for students across fields of study by focusing on a theme that is relevant to everyone: employability.

In the first phase of the scheme (2020–2023), a 5-credit module, ‘Your Career and Welsh’, was developed for fluent students, at levels 4–6, with the Level 5 module helping to prepare them to gain the Language Skills Certificate.

By the second phase of the scheme (2023–2026), the University was keen that employability should form a central part of modules rather than being a supplementary provision. At the same time, the Coleg’s new Academic Plan focused on more substantial provision, and reaching wider audiences, including less fluent students.

The scheme was modified and there was further experimentation, incorporating provision within modules across degree schemes. The provision was expanded from 5 to 20 credits, with provision developed that was specifically tailored to students who are not fluent.

The scheme now targets courses such as Nursing, Midwifery, Childhood Development, and Criminology and Policing, with the intention of supplying bilingual workers for these essential public workforces.

A growing number of students take pride in the opportunity they have to study in Welsh, to feel part of a community, and to gain confidence to use their Welsh language skills in a work context.

##### Case study 2: Chemistry through the medium of Welsh

One of the principles of the Coleg’s Academic Plan (2022) is to protect the right of students to study through the medium of Welsh. This, of course, needs to be done in as wide a range of subject areas and disciplines as possible.

The period of the Catalyst Grant for Cardiff University’s School of Chemistry was extended to enable it to build on what had been developed during the first period of the grant. This is the only institution in Wales that offers Chemistry provision through the medium of Welsh.

According to Dr Heulyn Jones:

“Over the next period, we will build on the sustainability of our staffing, making the most of different specialties within our teaching team. This will enable us to deepen the experiences we can offer our students.”

The Coleg also supports two research scholarship holders in Chemistry, which will enable the School to build on its staffing capacity in the future.

#### Further education and apprenticeships

##### Further education and apprenticeships data report

Further education colleges were provided with £2,300,000 to develop Welsh-medium and bilingual provision. Development grants were awarded to 12 colleges as follows:

Table 3: Development grants

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject area** | **Institution** |
| Skills | Adult Learning Wales |
| ChildcareHealth and CarePublic ServicesSportBusinessCreative IndustriesLearning support | Cardiff and Vale College |
| ChildcareHealth and CarePublic ServicesSport Land-based StudiesBusinessCreative Industries | Coleg Cambria  |
| ChildcareHealth and CarePublic ServicesSportLand-based StudiesBusinessCreative Industries | Coleg Gwent |
| ChildcareHealth and CarePublic ServicesSportBusinessCreative IndustriesLearning support | Gower College Swansea |
| ChildcareHealth and CarePublic ServicesSportBusinessCreative Industries | Merthyr College |
| Health and CarePublic ServicesSportBusinessCreative Industries | Bridgend College |
| ChildcareHealth and CarePublic ServicesSportLand-based StudiesBusinessCreative Industries | Pembrokeshire College |
| ChildcareHealth and CarePublic ServicesSportLand-based StudiesBusinessCreative Industries | Coleg Sir Gâr / Coleg Ceredigion |
| ChildcareHealth and CarePublic ServicesSportBusinessCreative Industries | Coleg y Cymoedd |
| ChildcareHealth and CarePublic ServicesSportLand-based StudiesBusinessCreative Industries | NPTC Group of Colleges |
| Health and CareSport and Public ServicesLand-based StudiesBusinessCreative Industries | Grŵp Llandrillo Menai |

In the apprenticeships sector, £300,000 was allocated to four apprenticeship providers to develop Welsh-medium and bilingual provision in the priority areas.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject area** | **Institution** |
| Health and CareLearning support | ACT |
| HospitalityHealth and Care | Cambrian Training |
| ChildcareHealth and Care | Educ8 |
| ChildcareHealth and Care | ITEC |

**Data source:** Development grant data 2024

##### Case study: Innovation in the Creative Industries

Lowri Bugg is a course coordinator in the Creative Industries at Coleg Sir Gâr who works with learners from a wide range of backgrounds as part of her role. Many of these learners have faced obstacles in accessing learning and education, and Lowri has helped them overcome these challenges to ensure they reach their potential.

In order to develop her skills, Lowri studied an MA module in bilingual education. She is passionate about ensuring that her learners have every opportunity to access a highly competitive industry and she believes that Welsh language skills are crucial in that regard.

Lowri won the Coleg’s Innovative Educator Award in 2023 for her work at Coleg Sir Gâr. The work includes conducting research on how to create favourable conditions for learners studying courses within the creative industries to use and develop their Welsh language skills. The result of the research was an increase in the number of learners who wished to develop their Welsh language skills, from 40% to 89%.

As well as inspiring her learners, she has been instrumental in inspiring staff in the department by providing them with training sessions.

Lowri said:

“I feel so lucky to have the opportunity to develop my students’ Welsh language skills but also to be able to develop myself in the role. I’m so proud of the supportive community at Coleg Sir Gâr and Coleg Ceredigion that enables me to develop and maintain the Welsh language skills of our students. The creative industries are an extremely competitive sector, so any Welsh language skills our students have when they leave college are going to help them, and I’m so proud to be able to be part of the work of supporting those students on their journey.”

### Objective 2 – Staffing

By working with partners, the Coleg aims to ensure the availability of the necessary number of staff to maintain Welsh-medium and/or bilingual provision.

#### Higher education

##### Higher education data report

Over the last five years, the reported number of university staff teaching through the medium of Welsh has fallen. Certainly, this reflects the very challenging times facing the higher education sector recently – a situation that is likely to continue for some time yet. Restructures currently being undertaking at several universities, where plans include redundancy schemes in an attempt to reduce institutional costs, will almost certainly include some staff who teach through the medium of Welsh. The official data will very probably show a further fall in numbers when the bulletins for 2024/25 and 2025/26 are published.

Because of the severe challenges currently facing the sector, the numbers of staff able to and actively engaging in Welsh-medium teaching is being closely monitored by the Coleg. Any reduction in the number of staff teaching through the medium of Welsh will adversely affect the amount of provision available to students. The Coleg will continue to advise Medr on the importance of maintaining, protecting and increasing staffing resources.

The Coleg continues to support many academic departments at the universities and colleges via schemes such as the Subject Grants, the Catalyst Grants and the Interdisciplinary Grants. Since its launch in 2018, the Coleg’s Associate Lecturers scheme has gone from strength to strength and now has over 600 members.

As well as supporting provision and the staffing community, the Coleg also continues to invest in the development of the next generation of university lecturers and researchers. In 2025, the Coleg will celebrate 20 years since the launch of the Research Scholarships scheme, which funds PhD students who carry out their research through the medium of Welsh. Since its launch, the scheme has supported approximately 180 postgraduate students studying for a PhD. Several of them have gone on to be appointed to lecturing positions at universities and now teach through the medium of Welsh.

Table 4: Staff who teach in Welsh

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Teaching in Welsh (full-person equivalent) |
| 2014/15 | 625 |
| 2015/16 | 590 |
| 2016/17 | 630 |
| 2017/18 | 485 |
| 2018/19 | 600 |
| 2019/20 | 595 |
| 2020/21 | 580 |
| 2021/22 | 555 |
| 2022/23 | 565 |

**Source:** StatsWales: [‘Higher Education teaching staff in Wales by ability to teach through the medium of Welsh and whether contracted to teach through the medium of Welsh’](https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Post-16-Education-and-Training/Higher-Education/Staff-and-Finance/heteachingstaffwales-by-welshability-teachinginwelsh)

##### Case study 1: Astrophysics through the medium of Welsh

It is a pleasure to note examples of brilliant lecturers returning to Wales to work. One example is Dr Gwenllian Williams, who is now a lecturer in Astrophysics at Aberystwyth University, following a period working at the University of St Andrews in Scotland and the University of Leeds.

Gwenllian, who is originally from the Gwendraeth Valley, is an expert on the formation of massive stars that are ten times larger than the sun.

Gwenllian said:

“While working outside Wales, I followed the developments of the Coleg carefully and presented a paper in Welsh at one of its research conferences. When I noticed that the Physics Department, which receives a Subject Grant from the Coleg to deliver provision in Welsh, was advertising for a lecturer, I took the opportunity to submit an application.”

Gwenllian is passionate about being a role model for young women in Physics, a field where women are underrepresented. She has appeared on several documentaries on S4C, such as *Gwylio Sêr y Nos*, and was recently featured in a full-page article in the BBC magazine *Sky at Night*.

##### Case study 2: Seren Evans, Welsh-medium Sports lecturer, Bangor University

Dr Seren Evans, Sports lecturer in the School of Psychology and Sport Science at Bangor University, is one of the latest generation of Welsh-medium lecturers.

Seren is a former Coleg scholarship holder, whose doctoral thesis subject was ‘A multifactorial approach to injury risk in Rugby Union: surveying training loads and analysing injury risk’.

During her time completing her doctorate, she had the opportunity to contribute to teaching in the department, and to take part in the Coleg’s Research Skills Training Programme which provided an opportunity to refine her research and presentation skills.

Seren said:

“During the Covid period, I contributed to Training and Health and Wellbeing units in Sport as part of the Coleg’s Digital Learning Materials project which was supported by HEFCW’s Higher Education Investment and Recovery Fund. These materials are open for use nationally, either synchronously or asynchronously, to support learning.”

##### Case study 3: Dr Victoria Wright, Senior Lecturer, Department of Psychology, Aberystwyth University

Dr Victoria Wright grew up near Cardiff. No one in her family speaks Welsh, and she went to an English-medium school where she learned a little Welsh.

She decided to start developing her Welsh language skills using Duolingo, and watching S4C programmes with subtitles. In 2021, she started the Cymraeg Gwaith (Work Welsh) scheme at Aberystwyth University at Entry 2 level. She has since passed her Intermediate exam, and is now at Advanced 1 level.

These days, Victoria makes extensive use of her Welsh at work, including emailing and talking to her students and colleagues. She has also given a bilingual introduction to her modules during the University’s Open Days. She said:

“The course has helped me to be more confident. I now enjoy reading in Welsh – short stories and news articles – which has helped me with vocabulary and grammar.

“In the future, I want to continue to learn and use more of the language in my everyday life and at work. I also hope to help my daughter with her Welsh homework.”

#### Further education and apprenticeships

##### Further education and apprenticeships data report

Data about the staffing position in the further education and apprenticeships sector is published each year by the Education Workforce Council, and the data for 2024 shows a further increase in the number of further education and apprenticeships staff who speak and use the Welsh language at work.

Table 5: Staff who can speak and are teaching through the medium of Welsh

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
| Staff who speak Welsh (further education) | 1,095 | 1,083 | 1,120 | 1,160 | 1,204 |
| Staff who speak Welsh (apprenticeships) | 456 | 435 | 432 | 476 | 558 |
| Staff who teach in Welsh (further education) | 764 | 771 | 789 | 814 | 860 |
| Staff who teach in Welsh (apprenticeships) | 314 | 313 | 321 | 355 | 425 |

**Data source:** [Education Workforce Statistics](https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/about-us/policy-and-research/workforce-statistics), Education Workforce Council (p. 36 further education, p. 53 work-based learning)

##### Case study 1: Developing good practice in Childcare

In order to respond to the challenge of appointing Welsh-speaking staff in Childcare, Coleg Gwent has been thinking creatively with a view to developing its own talent. Bethan Thomas is an example of this. She was appointed as a Welsh language facilitator in the Childcare Department in 2022 due to her relevant subject knowledge, having graduated from Aberystwyth University with a Childhood Studies degree. Following her appointment, Coleg Gwent sponsored her to complete a PGCE course and she now teaches and supports the department’s learners bilingually.

Rhian Evans, another lecturer supported by the Coleg Cymraeg, this time at Gower College Swansea, won the Teacher of the Year award at the Professional Teaching Awards Cymru 2024. Rhian was one of the first lecturers appointed to increase the Welsh-medium and bilingual provision at the college’s Care Department. Rhian had a positive impact on staff and learners, and she is determined that all learners should have the opportunity to develop their Welsh since this is so important for their future in the care sector.

##### Case study 2: Developments in the Creative Industries

Claire Tranmer has brought her passion and expertise from theatre to influence the next generation by developing their Welsh language skills. After graduating, she worked with professional theatre companies, and during the 90s she founded an arts academy that still runs to this day. She is now a Performing Arts tutor at Coleg Cambria.

Claire said:

“I have always spoken Welsh in my classes, and that has a natural effect on the learners. It’s second nature for them to use Welsh now.”

Claire introduces key terminology in Welsh and uses the tone of her voice when giving directions in class, which has been very effective in introducing the language to some learners. Claire also supports learners with their written Welsh language skills. Many of her learners now evaluate their performances by completing their performance logs in Welsh.

Her appointment has increased the Welsh-medium provision available in the Creative Industries Department at Coleg Cambria.

##### Case study 3: Cymraeg Gwaith at Coleg Gwent

Carly Williams is a lecturer in Independent Living Skills at Coleg Gwent and recently went on a residential trip with the Cymraeg Gwaith (Work Welsh) programme, along with staff from other colleges across Wales.

The three-day trip was held at the Urdd Activity Centre in Glan-llyn. The group had the opportunity to take part in hiking, canoeing, rope climbing and archery, as well as cultural experiences including a historical tour around the local village and a performance by a Welsh-language singer.

Carly said:

“I was a bit nervous at first as I’m not fluent, but the trip had a mix of people at different levels, and everyone supported each other. Being out in the real world around other Welsh speakers made me realise how much I had learned on the course. It’s really boosted my confidence.”

As well as the outdoor activities, workshops were held on how to embed the Welsh language in teaching. The group looked at how to do this in a natural way that does not add to lecturers’ workloads. She said:

“It was an amazing experience which has given me so many great techniques to use back in the classroom. I would recommend this to anyone learning Welsh. I can’t wait to share what I’ve learned with my team!”

## Field 3: Employer awareness

The Coleg aims to work with others to increase awareness among employers of the importance of bilingual skills and Welsh language skills.

##### Case study 1: The Welsh Government encouraging staff to apply for the Language Skills Certificate

Rhian Williams is a Communications Officer in the Welsh Treasury Department within the Welsh Government. Rhian was keen to do the Welsh Language Skills Certificate in order to obtain a higher qualification than her GCSE Welsh Language and Literature. A big incentive for her was the opportunity to go on a residential course to Nant Gwrtheyrn to focus completely on developing her language skills.

She enjoyed the virtual preparation sessions that had a supportive and inclusive feel, and where useful resources and apps were shared. She said:

“I downloaded Peniarth’s ‘Ap Cywirdeb Iaith’ and played its language games regularly. I learned how to add a circumflex above the vowels in Word – something that I used to struggle with. I now use the Cysill spellchecker regularly.”

The experience of studying at Nant Gwrtheyrn was incredibly valuable to her and inspired her to do more reading. She bought novels from one of Caernarfon’s Welsh-language bookshops while on a walk around the town with archaeologist Rhys Mwyn.

Receiving a Distinction in the Certificate has given her the confidence to continue helping her colleagues. By now, she is one of the social media ‘Criw Cymraeg’ on her workplace’s Teams channel, checking or suggesting improvements to snippets that are published on Government platforms. In addition, she translates and creates Welsh-language text in her role as communications officer for the Welsh Treasury. She said:

“Thank you to the tutors for the particularly entertaining and useful sessions. Back home, I’ve framed the certificate and I’m proudly displaying it on top of the piano!”

##### Case study 2: Employer panel discuss the importance of Welsh-language and bilingual apprenticeships

A panel discussion on Apprenticeships and the Cymraeg 2050 strategy was held in the Societies Tent at the Rhondda Cynon Taf National Eisteddfod in August 2024. The panel discussed the importance of Welsh-language and bilingual apprenticeships in reaching the goals of Cymraeg 2050, the Welsh Government’s national strategy to create a million Welsh speakers.

Panel members provided diverse perspectives and a wealth of experience, leading to a lively discussion about activities on the ground.

Panel member Dr Richard Lewis, Chief Constable of Dyfed-Powys Police, noted:

“There are very good business reasons for providing Welsh-language and bilingual apprenticeships but there are also moral reasons. It is our duty to create opportunities for people to stay local and to use their Welsh.”

Speaking from personal experience, Elliot Wigfall, an electrician in the Pontypridd area, praised his time as an apprentice and emphasised:

“We need to get rid of the stigma about doing an apprenticeship. It’s a great opportunity to develop a successful career and also to continue using the Welsh language, which is very important.”

Underlining the importance of the provision in order to create a bilingual workforce, Dr Lowri Morgans, Senior Manager for Further Education and Apprenticeships at the Coleg, said:

“The number of apprentices following a bilingual course has more than doubled since the Coleg Cymraeg started working in the sector five years ago.”

##### Case study 3: Supporting the early years sector to develop bilingual staff

One area where there is a very clear need to grow the bilingual workforce is Childcare, and developments sponsored by the Coleg support the early years sector as a whole, and specifically the important work of Mudiad Meithrin.

Erin Williams completed a Level 3 and an extended Level 3 qualification in Childcare at Coleg Cambria. After gaining her qualifications at the college, she went on to study for a degree in Childcare at Aberystwyth University. While studying there as a part-time student, Erin also works as a Childcare Assistant at Cylch Meithrin Bro Alun, Wrexham.

Childcare is one of the Coleg’s priority sectors and there is a focus on encouraging all learners to study part of their course in Welsh. The aim is that these skills will cascade into the workplace, and Erin’s case is a great example of this in action.

In her work, Erin provides the children with new experiences every day. She encourages them to be independent and guides them with positive words. Her passion for the language is clear and it is not just the children who benefit. She goes beyond the requirements of the role by giving additional support to parents who are learning Welsh and encourages the staff to use their Welsh at every opportunity, especially outside the life of the Cylch, organising extracurricular activities that support Welsh culture.

Erin was the deserving winner of the Assistant award at the Mudiad Meithrin Awards 2024. She is a very hard-working individual who has shown a commitment to raising the awareness of employers of the importance of bilingual skills.

Thank you for your interest in the Coleg’s work.