

# Official Languages Scheme - Equality Impact Assessment

7 August 2017

## Request for Information.

Thank you for your request received on 14 July in which you asked:

- 1. A copy of the 'Equality Impact Assessment' undertaken in relation to proposals to introduce minimum language requirements for new staff working at the Welsh Assembly*
- 2. A copy of the 'language requirements' due to come in in 2018*
- 3. A definition of "basic linguistic courtesy"*

Please find our response to your questions below.

- 1. A copy of the 'Equality Impact Assessment' undertaken in relation to proposals to introduce minimum language requirements for new staff working at the Welsh Assembly*

A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) undertaken in relation to the Assembly Commission's Official Languages Scheme has recently been published on the Assembly Commission's [Diversity and Inclusion webpages](#). Preparing an EQIA was an integral part of the planning and development of the new Official Languages Scheme. The document sets out a number of risks and mitigations identified to ensure that the themes for improvement in the scheme do not adversely affect the wider community. It has been independently verified by an external equalities organisation.

- 2. A copy of the 'language requirements' due to come in in 2018*

We do not currently hold the information requested.

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Since the Official Languages Scheme was adopted on 12 July 2017, a working group of key stakeholders, including trade union representation, and staff equality networks has been established to look at the implementation of the actions set out in the theme for improvement on recruitment. The group has already met to agree its terms of reference and membership, and will commence work shortly on defining and agreeing the language skills levels that will be used from summer 2018. The levels will be based on the internationally acknowledged Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) model.

### *3. A definition of “basic linguistic courtesy”*

At its first meeting on 20 July, the working group referred to above agreed a working definition of basic linguistic courtesy that will be used to begin work on the actions outlined in the theme for improvement on recruitment. The working definition is as follows:

- *To pronounce Welsh names, answer the telephone, greet people or make introductions bilingually*
- *To understand and use proactively familiar, everyday, expressions*
- *To understand very short texts where people are giving basic information about themselves or others in correspondence, on forms or to interpret content using the technology available.*

Your request has been considered according to the principles set out in the Code of Practice on Public Access to Information. The code is published on our website at [http://www.assemblywales.org/abthome/about\\_us-commission\\_assembly\\_administration/abt-foi/abt-foi-cop-pub.htm](http://www.assemblywales.org/abthome/about_us-commission_assembly_administration/abt-foi/abt-foi-cop-pub.htm)

If you have any questions regarding this response please contact me. If you feel you have cause for complaint, please follow the guidance at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely

**Freedom of Information Manager  
National Assembly for Wales**

Cause for concern or complaint with your FOI response?

If you believe that I have not applied the Code correctly or have not followed the relevant laws, you may make a formal complaint to the Chief Executive and Clerk at the National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay. Details of the Assembly's complaints principles are set out in the Code of Practice on Complaints available on the Internet at <http://www.assembly.wales/en/help/contact-the-assembly/con-complaint/Pages/con-complaint-procedure.aspx>. Please advise me if you wish to receive a printed copy.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
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