



wwetb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Phort Láirge agus Loch Garman
*Waterford and Wexford
Education and Training Board*

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board |

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

ACT 2003

LANGUAGE SCHEME

| **2017 - 2020** |

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

The Official Languages Act 2003 provides for the preparation by public bodies of a language scheme detailing the services which they will provide:

- through the medium of Irish,
- through the medium of English, and
- through the medium of Irish and English

and the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not currently provided by the body through the medium of the Irish language will be so provided within an agreed timeframe.

In accordance with section 14(3) of the Act, language schemes remain in force for a period of 3 years or until such time as a new scheme is confirmed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, whichever is the later.

1.2 Preparation and Content of the Scheme

In the preparation of this scheme, due regard has been given to the Guidelines issued by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. In addition, there has been a comprehensive process of consultation with relevant stakeholders.

The **Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board** is guided by the principle that the provision of Irish language services should be based on:

- the underlying level of demand for specific services in the Irish language,
- the importance of a proactive approach to the provision of such services, and
- the resources, including human and financial resources, and the capacity of the body concerned to develop or access the necessary language capability.

This scheme complements the principles of Quality Customer Service and Customer Charter. It has been formulated with the intention of ensuring that all relevant obligations under the Official Languages Act by the **Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board** will be fully addressed on an incremental basis, through this and future schemes.

The time and effort put in by all concerned in this process is acknowledged and appreciated.

1.3 Commencement date of the Scheme

This Scheme has been confirmed on **15th May 2017** by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. It commences with effect from this date and shall remain in force for a period of 3 years or until a new scheme has been confirmed, whichever is the later.

Chapter 2: Overview of Waterford and Wexford ETB

2.1 Mission and Objectives

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB) is a statutory body with its own corporate structure. It was established under and is governed by the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. WWETB provides a comprehensive range of education and training services throughout Waterford and Wexford and is the largest provider of second level and further education and training in counties Waterford and Wexford.

2.2 Main Functions

Waterford and Wexford ETB places learning and the learner at the heart of its educational and training provision. The provision and development of training and education opportunities for all in Waterford and Wexford is the organisational goal. This facilitates progression to employment opportunities or educational progression which supports both the individual and the greater community.

2.3 Key Services

WWETB's educational and training provision includes second-level schools, further education colleges, a range of adult and further education and training centres delivering education and training programmes. In addition WWETB provides for Outdoor Education, Youth Services and education through the medium of Irish in Gaeltacht na nDéise.

2.4 Customers and Clients

Students, learners, parents, guardians, teachers, tutors, administrative and support staff of the schools, Adult and Further Education Centres, Training Centres and other programmes provided by WWETB are customers, stakeholders and clients of WWETB. Other stakeholders include the local community, Government Departments, local authorities, Youth Work Services, voluntary agencies, Further Education and Training Services, and community groups, including Gaeltacht na nDéise.

The provision of the highest standard of service to all of our customers and stakeholders locally, regionally, and nationally is vital to WWETB. It is essential that effective communications are in place for all and should be fair, open, objective and transparent in how we work and how we engage with all stakeholders.

Chapter 3: Details of services currently being provided in English only or bilingually

Details of services currently being provided in English only or bilingually in Irish and English; **including services in Gaeltacht areas.**

Current Provision of Services		
Services (General)	In English only	Bilingually (in English and Irish) or Irish only
Post Primary Schools	All schools are administered in English except for Meánscoil San Nioclás, An Rinn	Meánscoil San Nioclás, An Rinn - Irish only
Youthreach, VTOS, Adult Education Centres, Outdoor Education Centre	All centres administered through English	
Administrative Offices	All administrative offices operate through English	
Ardcavan Wexford	All services	
Waterford	All services	
Dungarvan		Adult Education Queries
Training Centre and Training Services	All services	
Services in Gaeltacht Areas	In English only	Bilingually (in English and Irish) or Irish only
Post Primary Education, Adult Literacy and Community Education, Breacadh		Irish only

Chapter 4: Enhancing the provision of Irish Language Services

The provisions shaded in grey in the table below are mandatory requirements under the Official Languages Act 2003.

Means of communication with the public		Commitment	
Recorded Oral Announcements		<p>The following recorded oral announcements will be in Irish or bilingual:</p> <p>(a) Recorded oral announcements provided on the telephone when the offices of the public body are closed;</p> <p>(b) Recorded oral announcements transmitted by a public address system;</p> <p>(c) Recorded oral announcements created and transmitted by means of a computerised messaging system or a computerised telephone answering system. This provision relates to 'recorded' announcements rather than 'live announcements'.</p> <p>Where a Placenames Order is in force, a public body is required to use the Irish language version of the placename specified in that Order in recorded oral announcements made by it or on its behalf.</p>	Mandatory
Written Communication	Letters and Electronic Mail	All written communication will be responded to in the official language in which it was received.	Mandatory
	Stationery	Headings of stationery, including notepaper, compliment slips, fax cover sheets, file covers and other folders, labels and envelopes are provided in Irish or bilingually.	Mandatory
Signage	Signage	All signage placed by Waterford and Wexford ETB or on its behalf must be in Irish or bilingually, in accordance with the regulations (S.I. No.391/2008).	Mandatory
Publications	Publications	Documents setting out public policy proposals, audited accounts or financial statements, annual reports and strategy statements will be published simultaneously in Irish and English.	Mandatory

	Circulars/Mailshots	Where a public body communicates in writing or by electronic mail with the general public or a class of the general public for the purpose of furnishing information to the public or the class, the body shall ensure that the communication is in the Irish language or in the English and Irish languages.	Mandatory
An Ghaeltacht	Gaeltacht Placenames	The official placenames of Gaeltacht areas will be used by the public body.	Mandatory

Means of communication with the public		Commitment	Timeline By end Yr 1/ Yr 2/Yr 3
Oral Communication	<u>Reception</u>	Customers will be greeted firstly in Irish and then in English. This includes every point of entry in administrative offices, schools and centres.	In the three administrative offices in year 1, in all schools by year 2, in all centres by year 3
	<u>Face to Face/Counter Service</u>	An up to date list of staff members who can provide a service through Irish will be made available.	List will be available by year 1
	<u>Switchboard</u>	Switchboard staff will give the name of the public body in Irish and English.	In the three administrative offices in year 1, in all schools by year 2, in all centres by year 3
	<u>Telephone communications with the public</u>	Bilingual staff will make customers aware that they are willing to conduct business in Irish, if required.	In the three administrative offices in year 1, in all schools by year 2, in all centres by year 3
	<u>Recorded Oral Announcements</u>	Staff will be encouraged to have their pre-recorded personal telephone greetings in bilingual format.	In the three administrative offices in year 1, in all schools by year 2, in all centres by year 3
	<u>Live announcements</u>	Live announcements will have bilingual content.	By end of year 1
	Other		

	<u>Information Leaflets/ Brochures</u>	A bilingual or Irish version of the information leaflets and brochures most commonly used will be available. The remainder will have appropriate Irish content.	In year 1
	<u>Application Forms</u>	There will be a bilingual or Irish version of the most commonly used application forms available. Regarding other application forms, a bilingual or Irish version would be made available in two weeks.	In year 1
	Other	All new application forms will be available in Irish. In a Gaeltacht area all documentation will be available in Irish.	From commencement of scheme
Media	<u>Press Releases</u>	Press releases, in Gaeltacht areas will be exclusively in Irish (except in specific cases where the non-Irish speaking population is the target audience). In non-Gaeltacht areas press releases will be issued with Irish content.	In year 1
	<u>Media Spokespersons</u>	An Irish speaking spokesperson in accordance with WWETB policy will be available for interviews with the Irish language media.	In year 1
	<u>Speeches</u>	We will include Irish content in English speeches. Such content shall include opening and closing greetings in Irish, and references here and there in Irish to the subject matter of any such speeches and/or to the occasion in hand, as a minimum.	In year 1
	Other	All official WWETB speeches delivered in the Gaeltacht shall be in the Irish language only.	In year 1
Information Technology	<u>Email</u>	Standard email messages such as disclaimers will be bilingual.	In year 1
	<u>Websites</u>	The static material available on the home page on the website will be available bilingually with a view to developing further bilingual pages on an ongoing basis.	In year 1
	<u>Computer Systems</u>	Any new computer system being installed will be fully capable of handling the Irish language from date of installation.	In year 1
	<u>Interactive Services</u>	Any new online and interactive service that WWETB itself develops will be made available on a bilingual basis, from date of installation.	In year 1

	Other	The Board's website shall include on its homepage a bilingual welcome statement by the CE of said Board, affirming the Board's commitment to implementing the commitments promised in its agreed language scheme.	In year 1
Gaeltacht	<u>Meetings</u>	Where required, meetings held in the Gaeltacht will be conducted in Irish, with simultaneous translation to English provided, as appropriate. Contributions in Irish or English will be welcome at public meetings organised by or on behalf of the public body.	On an ongoing basis
	Other		

Chapter 5: Enhancing the Provision of Irish Language Services in Gaeltacht Areas

Enhancing the provision of Irish language services in Gaeltacht areas and ensuring that Irish becomes the working language in offices located in Gaeltacht areas by a certain date.

Commitments in Gaeltacht Areas

Description of services in Gaeltacht areas	Commitment	Timeline By end Yr 1/ Yr 2/Yr 3
All of WWETB services in the Gaeltacht region in its operational are being provided through the medium of Irish only	WWETB shall draw up an Irish language policy and a policy regarding education in the Gaeltacht. The board shall affirm its commitment to these policies at its official meeting and this commitment shall be reaffirmed by the Chief Executive in his/ her welcome address on the WWETB website.	By the end of first year of the scheme
	WWETB recognises that Gaeltacht communities have very specific linguistic requirements. The Board will make every effort to ensure that all services pertaining to the Gaeltacht shall be so delivered through the medium of Irish, commencing during the first year of its language scheme.	Continuously
	No new WWETB policies/initiatives/programmes will impact adversely on, or do damage to, the specific cultural and linguistic characteristics of the Gaeltacht. The Board shall do all it can to nurture and strengthen those characteristics.	Continuously
	With regard to Gaeltacht placenames, WWETB shall use the official version at all times.	Continuously
	Commencing during the lifetime of its first language scheme, the Board shall ensure that the Irish language shall become the working language in any of its school/centres/offices where such is not the case presently.	Continuously
	Commencing during the lifetime of its first language scheme, WWETB shall appoint secretaries and all other employees in its Gaeltacht offices (schools and other recognised centres of education) who will be capable of dealing with members of the public who wish to conduct their business with the Board through Irish.	Continuously
	All documentation pertaining to Gaeltacht regions shall be provided in Irish only, or bilingually.	Continuously

	WWETB shall convene all of its meetings for the Gaeltacht community through the medium of Irish.	Continuously
	Commencing during the lifetime of its first language scheme, WWETB shall appoint a specialised person (Timire Gaeilge) or administrative team with responsibility for the Board's Gaeltacht/Gaeloideachas provision. The appropriate upskilling shall be offered to that designated team so that it may be linguistically competent to offer an effective service through the medium of the Irish language.	Commencing during the lifetime of the first language scheme
	With regard to WWETB's schools and recognised centres of education in the Gaeltacht, the Board shall appoint teaching staff who are capable of providing the full curriculum subject choices effectively through the medium of Irish.	Continuously

[Irish as the working language in Gaeltacht offices](#)

Commitment	Timeline By end Yr 1/ Yr 2/Yr 3
WWETB is committed to ensuring that Irish will be the working language in every office situated in the Gaeltacht and will work towards achieving this objective in this and future schemes.	Continuously
Correspondence with the Gaeltacht community will be in Irish only or bilingual.	From commencement of scheme
At present Meánscoil San Nioclás is operating through the medium of the Irish language.	

Chapter 6: Improving Language Capability

6.1 Recruitment

The recruitment of staff with the appropriate level of competence in the Irish language in each area of work of Waterford and Wexford ETB will be the primary means of optimising the availability of services through Irish. Our recruitment policy, which is subject to the framework of agreed national recruitment procedures, will have regard to the need to improve Irish language capability on an incremental basis. All new staff will be provided with an induction pack containing a copy of our agreed scheme in order to ensure that they are made aware of our commitments under the legislation.

6.2 Training and Development

The Waterford and Wexford ETB, is committed to making available opportunities for staff to attend appropriately accredited Irish language training courses, as resources permit. All staff will be advised of facilities/opportunities to improve their competency in Irish.

		Commitment	Timeline By end Yr 1/ Yr 2/Yr 3
Improving Irish Language Capability	<u>Recruitment</u>	New staff will be provided with a copy of our agreed scheme with immediate effect.	From commencement of scheme
	<u>Training</u>	<p>Opportunities to develop the Irish language competence of staff will be provided.</p> <p>Appropriate arrangements will be made for the provision of Irish language training and proficiency testing certification for staff in order to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. support staff in maintaining and developing their proficiency in the Irish language, 2. enhance the capacity of staff to meet their Irish language obligations in the conduct of their duties, and 3. provide an accredited proficiency testing regime for staff. <p>Staff will be made aware of language resources such as www.focal.ie, www.focloir.ie, www.breis.focloir.ie and www.abair.ie, as well as WinGléacht, the electronic version of the Ó Dónaill Irish-English dictionary.</p>	From commencement of scheme

	<p><u>Participation in language promotion activities /Provision of resources</u></p>	<p>Staff will be aware of the concept of the proactive agreement - proactively offering services in Irish to the public. Access to information on language resources will be facilitated. Appropriate CPD will be offered to WWETB administrative staff, with the aim of enhancing their proficiency level in the Irish language. Internal libraries will ensure that books and other materials in Irish are available as a resource to staff to improve their competence in the Irish language.</p>	<p>From commencement of scheme</p>
	<p>Other</p>	<p>A language rights poster (available from the office of An Coimisinéir Teanga) will be displayed prominently in all WWETB administrative offices, all schools and all recognised centres of education and Training Centres. A survey of staff shall be undertaken to gauge their proficiency levels in the Irish language, whereby they will indicate their proficiency in the language as Fluent or Very good or Good or Fair or Weak. A question shall be asked in application forms for positions of employment with WWETB regarding the applicant's capability in the Irish language and one question at least shall be asked in Irish at interview selection where relevant to the position under consideration.</p>	<p>From commencement of scheme</p>

6.3 Designated Irish Language Posts

The posts listed below have been designated as having an Irish language competency requirement. It is the intention that holders of these posts will have achieved specified accredited standards in the Irish language, commensurate with the responsibilities of the post. When designating these posts, particular consideration has been given to posts located in Gaeltacht areas and to posts located outside Gaeltacht areas but whose customer base consists largely of Gaeltacht and/or Irish language speaking communities.

Title of Post	Location	Gaeltacht/Irish speaking community served	Indication of standard of Irish required (choose from basic, intermediate or advanced)
Principals, Deputy Principals, directors, managers, coordinators and all teaching posts:	WWETB's schools, recognised centres of education and its other services.	The Gaeltacht community of Waterford operating under the Board's remit.	Demonstrated competency in both written and spoken Irish.
Secretaries, caretakers, SNA and other administrative positions:	WWETB's schools, recognised centres of education and its other services.	The Gaeltacht community of Waterford operating under the Board's remit.	Demonstrated competency in both written and spoken Irish.

Chapter 7: Monitoring and Review

The implementation of the scheme will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis by [The Chief Executive and his Senior Management Team.] The contact person for the scheme will be [The Head of Corporate Affairs.]

A formal system for monitoring requests for services through Irish will be available and recorded in our Annual Report.

Chapter 8: Publicising of Agreed Scheme

This scheme will be publicised both internally and externally, through a press release initially. A bilingual version of the scheme will be made available on our website and circulated to all staff and appropriate agencies. Other means to publicise the scheme may also be used.

In addition, we will take every opportunity in our day to day interaction with customers to promote and publicise the services we provide in Irish through the following means:

- directly informing customers on a proactive basis of the option of conducting business with us through Irish, for example, by the display of notices at reception areas indicating the Irish language services that are available;
- prominently listing these services on our website;
- signifying on selected guidelines, leaflets and application forms that these documents are also available in Irish, unless presented bilingually;
- giving equal prominence to Irish and English language materials.

A copy of the agreed scheme will be forwarded to the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga.

The English language version of this scheme is the official version.

Appendices:

Arising from a public call for submissions from ETBI, WWETB wishes to acknowledge submissions received from the following organisations/individuals:

An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)

Foras na Gaeilge

Údarás na Gaeltachta

Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge

Gaelscoileanna Teo.

Peadar Mac Fhlannchadha, Maigh Cuilinn Branch of Conradh an Gaeilge, Maigh Cuilinn, Co. na Gaillimhe

Éamonn Ó Tuathail, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Bhaile Átha Cliath

Micheál Ó Leidhin, Co. Chiarraí