



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Evidence Review: The Second Language Provision Needed for Learners to Reach Different Levels of Linguistic Proficiency

Summary

This is an exciting opportunity to do a work placement on a project for the Welsh Government. The Welsh Government wishes to offer an opportunity for an internship that will involve conducting an evidence review to help us understand what type and amount of second language education is needed for learners to reach different levels of linguistic proficiency. The internship will provide the student with an opportunity to produce a research output that could inform policy development.

The student will have the chance to apply research skills in a policy environment, further develop their general skills (such as report writing and presenting), and enrich their understanding of research beyond the academic world.

The organisation

The Welsh Government is the devolved Government for Wales with responsibility for the economy, education, health and the Welsh NHS, business, public services and the environment of Wales.

Specifically, the internship will be based within Knowledge and Analytic services (KAS). KAS collects, analyses and presents research and data for policymakers and the general public in keeping with professional standards. They offer independent evidence to understand, develop, implement, monitor and evaluate government policies. KAS also supports policy colleagues with policy development, implementation and delivery.

The internship

The intern will be part of the Welsh Language Research Branch, which supports the Cymraeg 2050 Division – the division within Welsh Government responsible for implementing the Welsh language strategy, [*Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers*](#).

The internship will provide an exciting opportunity to work at the heart of Welsh Government. The intern will work closely with policy officials and researchers. The aim of this collaboration is to develop the student's understanding of the relationship between research, decision-making and policy implementation.

The successful candidate will benefit from development opportunities offered centrally by the Welsh Government, potentially including mentoring, shadowing, peer support and training.

The student is expected to benefit from the experience in the following ways:

- Develop a better understanding of work outside the academic world and enhance their employability;
- Use their knowledge and skills to contribute to the work of the Welsh Government;
- Provide an opportunity for Welsh Government colleagues to gain insight into the student's PhD project, thereby contributing to the success of the thesis;
- Access networking opportunities within the policy field related to their research area;
- Gain transferable skills and knowledge (including time management and report writing).

The project

Title: Evidence Review: The Second Language Provision Needed for Learners to Reach Different Levels of Linguistic Proficiency

The [Welsh Language and Education \(Wales\) Act 2025](#) received Royal Assent on 7 July 2025. The Act establishes a mechanism to ensure that, over time, all pupils in Wales receive Welsh language education that enables them to become independent Welsh language speakers by the time they reach the end of compulsory school age. To achieve this goal, the Act introduces an ambitious programme of change that requires action at multiple levels.

The aim of this project is to understand the evidence base for a key element of the Act. This will be achieved by reviewing existing evidence in the field. The work is expected to help inform policy decisions as the Act is implemented over the coming years.

Project objectives

- Review international evidence on second language education, with a specific focus on socio-linguistic contexts relevant to Welsh language education in English-medium schools in Wales. The main interest is in contexts where the language being learned is different from the language of the school and the language spoken at home (by most pupils).
- Explore what the evidence says about the type and amount of second language provision needed to reach different levels of linguistic proficiency in these contexts. There is particular interest in evidence that expresses proficiency levels in terms of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), as this forms the basis of our standard method for describing Welsh language ability.
- Identify evidence on the factors that influence the type and amount of provision needed to reach specific levels, including (but not limited to):
 - Learner age
 - Teacher characteristics (e.g. experience, expertise in language pedagogy, confidence in the language)
 - School/classroom characteristics (e.g. school size and location, socio-demographic profile and attainment)
 - Linguistic context in the home, school, and community
- Summarise and analyse the existing evidence base, including an assessment of its strength and quality.
- Draw conclusions based on the evidence.
- Identify further research questions or avenues for exploration.

Note: This list may evolve as the research progresses.

Expected outcomes

- The project will lead to conclusions about what can be learned from the evidence to support policy officials in making decisions about implementing the provisions of the Act over the coming years.
- The student will be expected to prepare a paper and present it to policy colleagues, and possibly other stakeholders. A summary of the paper may also need to be prepared for publication on the Welsh Government website.

Internship responsibilities and requirements

The internship will last for a maximum of 3 months. Full time students are expected to step back from their PhD to focus on the placement for its duration in line with ESRC guidelines ([ESRC Postgraduate Funding Guide](#) p. 27).

Applications from part-time students are encouraged. The internship will last for three months full-time or the equivalent on a part-time basis. For students registered part-time, the internship can be undertaken on a part-time basis over a longer period (no less than three working days per week), to be agreed between the student and the Welsh Government. If you wish to be considered on a part-time basis, please indicate your preferred working hours on the application form.

It is anticipated that the successful candidate will work flexibly, both from home and from a Welsh Government office, during the internship. This may be subject to change depending on Welsh Government policy. Any changes to working arrangements will be discussed with the student.

In addition to annual leave, the intern will be able to arrange time for existing PhD commitments (e.g. research group meetings and conference presentations) through discussion with the line manager.

Student specification

The student must possess the following:

- Strong literature review skills, including the ability to synthesise a wide range of evidence and present it in a way that is accessible to non-expert readers;
- An understanding of how different sources and types of evidence can contribute to an evidence base;
- The ability to assess the strength and potential limitations of evidence;
- The ability to produce concise, well-written documents that present technical material in an accessible format.

Start date of internship

January/February 2026 (exact date to be negotiated). There may be some flexibility dependent on individual circumstances.

Funding and costs

Reasonable travel costs for students not normally based in Cardiff can be met. Requests should be consistent with Wales Graduate School for the Social Sciences (WGSSS) guidelines. Applications from students requiring additional funding for travel and accommodation will not be treated less favourably. For any queries on this, please contact Katy Marrin Katy.Marrin001@gov.wales and Jo Coates Joanne.Coates@gov.wales.

Security

The Welsh Government's vetting procedures (which apply to temporary as well as permanent staff) involve the completion of a Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) application form and a Security Questionnaire for the purpose of security vetting.

This process requires the applicant to produce in person three original forms of identification documents. One of these should be photographic (passport, new driving license), one document should show their current address, and the third could be a utility bill, birth certificate, P45 or P60.

Nationality requirements

Eligibility for taking up an internship on this scheme is dependent on meeting the [Civil Service Nationality rules](#). Please check that you are eligible before applying. Those who do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be able to take up an internship.

Queries

Any queries relating to the post or application process should be directed to laurabeth.davies@gov.wales.

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