

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Policy outlines Blake Morgan's commitment to our Welsh heritage and the ways we support our clients and colleagues who wish to communicate using the Welsh language.
- 1.2 Blake Morgan acknowledges that the Welsh language has official status in Wales and should be treated no less favourably than the English language.
- 1.3 We recognise the importance of the Welsh language and encourage those that speak Welsh to use it in their day-to-day dealings with both colleagues and clients who prefer to converse in Welsh. We believe that it is good business practise to provide services in the language of choice of our clients. We also believe that it shows respect to our workforce to encourage and facilitate the use of their chosen language in the workplace. We are also keen to promote the use of Welsh in the community.
- 1.4 We will ensure that we make constant progress towards achieving this ambition, and this Policy outlines the practical steps we have already taken and the improvements we are moving towards to help us develop our use of Welsh.
- 1.5 The scope of our commitments in this policy should be interpreted reasonably - they mainly relate to activities and services in Wales or which are delivered to people living in Wales (although employees and clients from outside of Wales are encouraged to use the Welsh language) and are also limited to activities and services which we are able to control or influence.
- 1.6 This Policy is available to every member of staff on the Firm's intranet regardless of their contractual location.

2 WELSH LANGUAGE CHAMPION AND SUPPORT

- 2.1 The Firm has appointed (and will endeavour to continue to appoint) a Partner as a Welsh Language Champion. The Welsh Language Champion shall report to the Firm's Operations Board and shall be responsible for:
 - 2.1.1 reviewing this Policy and the Firm's use of the Welsh language;
 - 2.1.2 monitoring the implementation of this Policy by the Firm and preparing an annual report to the Operations Board;
 - 2.1.3 promoting and increasing the availability of Welsh language services offered by the Firm;
 - 2.1.4 increasing the opportunities to use the Welsh language in the workplace; and
 - 2.1.5 championing the use of the Welsh language both internally within the Firm and externally to its clients and other contacts.

2.2 The current Welsh Language Champion is:

Tomos Lewis – Partner

tomos.lewis@blakemorgan.co.uk

029 2068 6145

07990 030 728

2.3 This policy is supported at the highest level in the Firm and has been approved by the Firm's Operations Board and endorsed by the Strategy Board (which includes Welsh language speakers).

2.4 The Firm will work towards achieving the Welsh Language Commissioner's "Cynnig Cymraeg" (the "Welsh Language Offering") as soon as possible.

3 COMMUNICATING WITH OUR CLIENTS AND COLLEAGUES AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

3.1 We recognise that our clients and each one of our colleagues have the freedom to use the Welsh language should they wish to do so. We expect staff to respect the linguistic preferences of our clients and their colleagues.

3.2 We will support and facilitate the use of Welsh and English by our clients and by our colleagues in the workplace by creating opportunities for clients and staff to use Welsh regularly should they wish.

3.3 The Firm has a number of employees across most practice areas who are fluent in Welsh and are able to deliver services to clients to the same standard in English or Welsh.

3.4 Our clients can request to speak to a Welsh speaker and we will always do our best to accommodate their needs. If no Welsh speaker who is qualified to deal with the query is available straightaway, we will arrange for a Welsh speaker to contact the client as soon as possible.

3.5 Our clients are welcome to write to us in Welsh and, when they do, our response will also be in Welsh. Our response will not be delayed as a result.

3.6 We are keen to support events in our communities which encourage the use of the Welsh language.

4 IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING OUR WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLSET

4.1 We welcome and encourage the use of the Welsh language by our colleagues who are fluent in both languages or are Welsh learners.

- 4.2 We keep a record of employees who speak Welsh and their fluency so that we can offer legal advice to those who prefer to converse or receive written advice in Welsh.
- 4.3 We share information about each employees' Welsh language skills within the workplace, so that we can direct Welsh language enquiries to the appropriate person as well as externally (including publishing such details on the Firm's website at www.blakemorgan.co.uk).
- 4.4 We offer the opportunity for all employees to learn Welsh, regardless of their main office location. Our Welsh Lessons are taught using video conferencing software and we provide for all levels of fluency, allowing anyone to take part.
- 4.5 We welcome applications in Welsh and we encourage Welsh speaking colleagues to join us. Where possible, we will also conduct interviews for our vacancies in Welsh if requested.
- 4.6 To help colleagues and clients identify employees who speak Welsh, the Firm encourage Welsh speaking staff (including those who are learning Welsh) to make use of the Welsh Language Commissioner's "Iaith Gwaith" ("Working Welsh") scheme and its orange speech bubble badge to show that they are Welsh speakers. This will help show where the Welsh language can be used in day-to-day contexts, encouraging speakers and learners alike to use their Welsh more often. This may include wearing a Iaith Gwaith lanyard holder in the workplace, including the Iaith Gwaith logo on the individual's website profile or including either of the following pieces of text in the individual's e-mail signature:

Hapus i ymateb yn y Gymraeg neu yn Saesneg
Happy to respond in Welsh or English

or

Rwyf yn dysgu Cymraeg. Ysgrifennwch ataf yn Gymraeg neu yn Saesneg.
I am learning Welsh. Please write to me in Welsh or in English.

5 WEBSITE, IT AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- 5.1 Our website already contains some pages in Welsh and we intend to increase the number of pages we have in Welsh by introducing a Welsh language page which details our Welsh language offering
- 5.2 We allow our staff to install a Welsh language interface for software they use which has a recognised Welsh language interface (such as Microsoft Office).
- 5.3 We will use more Welsh in our social media, where appropriate.



6 DOCUMENTATION AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

- 6.1 The Firm will seek to produce Welsh language versions of relevant documents and information where appropriate. For example, the Firm will seek to ensure that letters of engagement and terms of business are available in Welsh if requested by clients.
- 6.2 Promotional material and press releases will be produced bilingually where appropriate.

7 DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

- 7.1 Subject to compliance with the Firm's Social Media Policy, the Firm will, where appropriate to the subject matter, release press releases and/or statements for print and/or broadcast in both Welsh and English as well as, where available, make available a Welsh speaker for TV and/or radio interviews.

8 ADVERTISING AND SIGNAGE

- 8.1 Where new signage is installed (or old signage replaced) in our Cardiff office, we will seek to ensure that such signs are fully bilingual where appropriate and subject to compliance with any legal or regulatory requirements for such signs.

9 MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 9.1 The Firm reserves the right to vary the terms and conditions set out in this Policy.
- 9.2 This policy will be kept under review and will be monitored by the HR Team at regular intervals to ensure its fairness and effectiveness.
- 9.3 Any queries in respect of interpretation of this policy or suggestions for improvement should be directed to the Welsh Language Champion or a member of the Cardiff Office Group in the first instance.