



Home Office

Welsh Language Scheme

Version 11.0

His Majesty's Passport Office, guidance on services offered to Welsh speaking customers

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About: Welsh Language Scheme

This guidance is for His Majesty's Passport Office staff dealing with Welsh speaking customers.

Contacts

If you have any questions about the guidance and your line manager or senior caseworker cannot help you or you think that the guidance has factual errors then email the Guidance team.

If you notice any formatting errors in this guidance (broken links, spelling mistakes and so on) or have any comments about the layout or navigability of the guidance then you can email the Guidance team.

Publication

Below is information on when this version of the guidance was published:

- version **11.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **17 March 2025**

Changes from last version of this guidance

This guidance has been updated:

- with minor formatting changes.
- to include information on Welsh language applications, and communicating with customers in Welsh.
- to change the finance email address.
- to tell staff how Welsh applications are processed in DAP.
- to:
 - update processes for Welsh applications in Digital Application Processing
 - tell HM Passport Office staff how to contact customers in Welsh
 - change reference from Anywhere 365 to BT Genesys

Related content

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The Welsh Language Scheme

This section tells His Majesty's Passport Office staff what to do when customers want to use the Welsh language in their dealings with us.

According to the [Welsh Language Act 1993](#), public services in Wales must provide services in both English and Welsh.

HM Passport Office in Newport offers a Welsh speaking service at their public counter. This is only available from Monday to Friday.

If there is no Welsh speaking advisor, the customer can:

- book an appointment for a Welsh speaking advisor
- agree to receive a call back in Welsh
- continue the conversation in English

Application packs in Welsh

Application packs in both English and Welsh are available from:

- Post Office Ltd in Wales
- Adviceline
- HM Passport Office customer service centre in Newport

Examining Welsh language applications

Newport is the designated application processing centre (APC) for all Welsh applications.

When a customer chooses to complete an online application in Welsh, Digital Customer Service (DCS) will automatically detect the Welsh language and allocate it to Newport teams.

Paper applications will be identified by the code SW04 and routed to Document Handling Units to be scanned on to Digital application Processing (DAP).

If you are allocated a Welsh language application on DAP, you must examine it if you are able to.

If you do not understand something in Welsh, for example establishing parental responsibility, checking a referee, or you need to speak to the customer you must select:

1. The **Tasks** tab and '**I cannot do this**'.
2. '**Send to my OTL**' and '**Out of my remit**'.

Your operational team leader (OTL) will receive the application in their queue and reassign the application to a Welsh speaker in the team.

How examiners and operational team leaders contact customers in Welsh

For all Welsh language applications, any contact we make with the customer must be made in Welsh.

If you, the examiner do not speak Welsh, no Welsh speaker is available within 2 working days and you need to send a letter to the customer in Welsh, you must:

1. Open the **Send an email** tab.
2. Draft your letter using the Comms builder or DAP offline letters: not on Comms builder (do not send the email to the customer).
3. Request a [translation](#) of the letter, emailing the request from your team email address.
4. Put the application on hold.
5. Check the team inbox daily for a reply from The Big Word with the translation attached. Review the application every 2 days, if no reply has been received put the application back on hold so it does not go to the national queue. If The Big Word have provided a translation you must follow the steps below.

Once you have received the translation from The Big Word you must:

1. Take the application off hold.
2. Upload the translation to the customers application.
3. Open the **Send an email** tab.
4. Select the correct radio button and check boxes to answer the onscreen questions to create the email.
5. Add the title from the translated letter to the subject field in DAP.
6. Copy and paste the translated letter into the email.
7. Click **Preview** on the **Send an email** tab to view and check the message (you can edit the message by **Continue editing** if needed).
8. Click **Send**.

If you, the examiner or OTL receive correspondence from the customer in Welsh, you must email a copy to your team inbox (for the attention of a Welsh speaking examiner) and ask them to translate the communication. The Welsh speaking examiner must reply, translating the email and using the team inbox for an audit trail. You must upload the translation to DAP.

If there are no Welsh speaking examiners available within 2 working days, you must use [The Big Word translation service](#).

If you need to contact the customer by telephone, for example when time constraints mean sending a letter would take too long, you must:

1. Put the application on hold.

2. Ask a Welsh speaking examiner in person or by Teams call to make the telephone call.

If there are no Welsh speaking examiners available that day, you must call the customer and ask if they are willing to communicate in English. You must arrange a call back when a Welsh speaking examiner is available if the customer is not willing to continue the conversation in English. If the matter is very urgent or the Welsh speakers will not be available that day you must email CSMT and ask them to call the customer in Welsh using [The Big Word](#).

Welsh translation: Using The Big Word

Any customer communication received in Welsh must be replied to in Welsh. To request a written translation from Welsh to English, or English to Welsh, you must:

1. Make sure the customers full address and postcode are on the correspondence from them.
2. Send the **communication** from your team inbox by email to procurement to request a translation quote from The Big Word and include the following:
 - 'Welsh translation request' in the subject header
 - application number
 - customers full forename(s) and surname
3. Check your team inbox after 48 hours for a reply. If there is no reply check after 72 hours from when you sent the request. If there is still no reply, you must forward the original email to procurement and tell them you have had no response.
4. Continue the steps above from 'Once you have received the translation' when you receive the translation.

Welsh language on a passport

Staff must follow:

- the place and country of birth guidance when dealing with Welsh names
- the names guidance when applicants have a Welsh name that has a diacritical (mark or accent) character or have "Ap" before their surname

Related content

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How Customer service teams deal with Welsh enquiries

This section tells adviceline staff and Customer Service Management teams how to deal with enquiries about Welsh applications. It tells them how to respond to calls and written enquiries. All calls and communications must be responded to in Welsh where possible.

Telephone calls to Contact centres in Welsh

When a customer calls the Adviceline, they must press option 0 on their keypad for the call to continue in Welsh.

Customers who choose the Welsh service are transferred to a Welsh speaking advisor. If a Welsh speaking advisor is not available, the customer can:

- agree to receive a call back in Welsh
- continue the call in English

Any requests for urgent passports will be transferred to Newport counter managers.

CSMT: dealing with Welsh speaking calls

Customer contact centres sometimes need to transfer a call to the Customer Service Management team (CSMT) (for example when the customer tells us they have sent their documents and they are not showing on the system). When this happens they will tell the customer the call will be translated using The Big Word.

You, the CSMT member, must:

1. Put the customer on hold.
2. Click the Conference icon on Genesys.
3. Enter 03333449473 into the search box.
4. Add the customer to the call.
5. Enter 95000003# and wait for the prompt.
6. Enter 516 (for Welsh language).
7. Take a note of the interpreter's identity number for reference.
8. Select **conference** facility and allow the interpreter to introduce themselves.
9. Ask your questions to the customer (the interpreter will translate them into Welsh and translate the customers reply to you).
10. Thank both the customer and the interpreter at the end of the call.
11. Add a case note to the application to summarise the facts of the call.

Once the call has ended an email will automatically be generated and sent to the Finance team with the attached invoice for the interpreter's payment. A requisition will then be raised on Metis through Procurement, Purchase Requisitions, Basware and approved by the head (or deputy head) of CSMT.

Interview interpreters for Welsh speaking customers

Customers in Wales have a legal entitlement to conduct their interview in the Welsh language. Customers must tell us they need a Welsh speaking interpreter at the time they book their interview appointment.

We will arrange an interpreter for customers who tell us they need one to attend a passport interview appointment (and do not charge customers for using an interpreter). The contact centre will book official interpreters through The Big Word for:

- sign language
- Welsh interpreter

Contact centre and counter staff are not able to arrange sign language or [Welsh language for interpreters](#) for customers who attend a counter appointment.

If a customer attending a passport interview needs an interpreter, they cannot:

- have members of their family acting as an interpreter
- arrange to book their own interpreter

More information can be found in Interviews: how we manage interview appointments guidance.

Complaints in Welsh

You must refer any Welsh speaking customer who wishes to make a complaint to contact HM Passport Office advice on GOV.UK.

Contact centres will handle the initial complaint with the help of a Welsh speaking operative. If they refer it on to the Customer Services Management Team (CSMT), the complaint will be transferred in English, accompanied by the original correspondence in Welsh.

When the original correspondence is made in Welsh, our [complaints team will reply in Welsh](#).

CSMT: How to translate a response into Welsh

When you the CMST officer receive a written a response in English, you must send it to your line manager for approval. You, the line manager must follow [Welsh translation: Using The Big Word](#) for any letters or emails that must be translated.

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