

Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board



etb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Mhaigh Eo, Shligigh agus Liatroma
Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim
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 Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB) 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 our Customer Charter. It has been formulated with the intention of ensuring that all relevant obligations under the Official Languages Act by the MSLETB 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 by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. It commences with effect from 10 April 2017 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 Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB)

2.1 Mission and Objectives

It is the mission of Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB), in conjunction with other education and training agencies and community development bodies, to create and promote the development of learning neighbourhoods in Counties Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim, so that all who live in Counties Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim may have access to the education and training required by their personal, social, cultural, economic and civic needs.

2.2 Main Functions

MSLETB is a statutory body with extensive responsibilities for the delivery of education and training in second-level schools, further education colleges, recognised centres of education (literacy and adult education schemes) in Counties Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim, and will, in the future, play a role in primary education (Community National Schools). MSLETB is now the state agency with responsibility for administering SOLAS (previously FÁS) Training Centres in Sligo and Ballina.

2.3 Key Services

MSLETB establishes and maintains schools and recognised centres of education and plans, provides, coordinates and reviews the provision of education and training within its service areas. MSLETB is also required (under direction from the Minister for Education and Skills) to provide support services to other education and training providers. Such supports may be in the context of capital projects and land, human resources, financial services, legal services, ICT and corporate governance.

2.4 Customers and Clients

All of the communities of Counties Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim;

Students, parents/guardians who constitute the learning communities/neighbourhoods of all of our second level schools, recognised centres of education and all other services provided by MSLETB, including further education and training services, community education services and youth work services; State departments/semi-state agencies, voluntary agencies, community groups and individuals; and MSLETB's own employees.

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
Post-primary schools	All schools are administered in English, except Gaelcholáiste Chomáin in Ros Dumhach	
Adult and Further Education Centres	Youthreach Centres, VTOS Centres, Further Education Centres (BTEI and Adult Literacy), PLC and Community Education.	Adult Guidance Service; Skills for Work, Youth Officer, Adult Literacy Centres (Belmullet) and VTOS Belmullet
MSLETB's Administrative HQ in Newtown Castlebar. Co. Mayo	Finance Department Buildings Department Corporate Services; Human Resources; ICT; Support Services to the Board;	
MSLETB Further Education and Training Centre, Sligo/ Ballina	All services in English	
MSLETB's sub-office in Sligo/Leitrim	All services in English	
Services in Gaeltacht Areas		
Through Irish only: Colaiste Chómáin, Ros Dumhach. Further Education Education Centre, Béal an Mhuirthead. MSL ETB is represented on the Board of Breacadh.		

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: (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 Place Names Order is in force, a public body is required to use the Irish language version of the Place Name 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 Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB) or on its behalf must be in Irish or bilingually, in accordance	Mandatory

		with the regulations (S.I. No.391/2008).	
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 Place names	The official place names of Gaeltacht areas will be used in accordance with the legislation.	Mandatory

Means of communication with the public		Commitment	Timeline By end Yr 1/ Yr 2 / Yr 3
Oral Communications	Reception	Oral Communication: Reception Customers will be greeted firstly in Irish and then in English. A service through the medium of Irish will be available from the following sections: All sections at MSLETB HQ, Newtown Castlebar; MSLETB Quay Street. Sligo. MSLETB St George's Terrace. Carrick-on-Shannon Co. Leitrim. MSLETB Training Centre. Ballytivnan. Sligo MSLETB Training Centre. Riverside. Church Road Ballina Co. Mayo	By the end of the first year of the scheme
	Face to Face/Counter Service	An up to date list of staff members who can provide a service	During the first year of the scheme

		through Irish will be made available.	
	Switchboard	Switchboard staff will give the name of the public body in Irish and English.	Continuously
	Telephone communications with the public	Bilingual staff will make customers aware that they are willing to conduct business in Irish, if required.	Continuously
	Recorded Oral Announcements	Staff will have their pre-recorded personal telephone greetings in bilingual format.	By the end of the first year of the scheme
	Live announcements	20 % of live announcements will be bilingual.	Continuously
Written Communication	Information Leaflets/	A bilingual or Irish version of the information leaflets and brochures most commonly used	By the end of the first year
	Brochures	will be available	of the scheme
	Application Forms	There will be a bilingual or Irish version of the most commonly used application forms available	Continuously
	Other	All new application forms will be made available in Irish, or bilingually	From date of publication
Media	Press Releases	All press releases will be issued bilingually. The objective will be to issue this material simultaneously.	Continuously
	Media Spokespersons	An Irish speaking spokesperson/s will be available for interviews with the Irish language media.	Continuously
	Speeches	We will include 10% of Irish content in English speeches. It is expected that this will at least include greetings at the beginning and end of speeches in addition to occasional references in	Continuously

		Irish to the subject and/or the occasion in question.	
	Other	All speeches pertaining to the Gaeltacht/taking place in the Gaeltacht shall be in Irish only.	Continuously
Information Technology	Email	We will publish a dedicated email address for queries in Irish on the website(s) of the public body. Standard email messages such as disclaimers will be bilingual.	By the end of the first year of the scheme
	Websites	The static material on the website and any other secondary website of the public body will be available bilingually. There will be a navigational link from a page in the English version of the website to the relevant page in the Irish version. An Irish language page will be developed on the intranet and will include basic guidance regarding the provision of Irish language services and the availability of Irish language resources.	By the end of the first year of the scheme.
	Computer Systems	Any new computer system being installed will be fully capable of handling the Irish language.	From the beginning, as new systems are being installed
	Interactive Services	Any online and interactive services that the public body itself develops will be from the beginning, made available bilingually. Every new online and interactive service will be made available on a bilingual basis.	new systems are being installed
	Other	The MSLETB website shall include a bilingual	From commencement of scheme

		statement from the Chief Executive affirming the Board's determination to implement the commitments entered into in the Board's language scheme. Were the Board to decide on a corporate tagline at some date in the future, such tagline shall be bilingual.	
Gaeltacht	Meetings	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. Meetings organised by the public body that deal with Irish language issues will be held in Irish or bilingually, as appropriate.	Continuously

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. The Gaeltacht areas of Acail, Iorras and Tuar Mhic Éadaigh fall within the functional area of Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim

Education and Training Board. The ETB recognises the special needs that the Gaeltacht areas have as centres of our linguistic heritage and culture.

Commitments in Gaeltacht Areas

Description of services in Gaeltacht areas	Commitment	Timeline By end Yr 1/ Yr 2 / Yr 3
MSLETB has no permanent base in the Gaeltacht at present		
MSLETB provides an Adult Basic Education services in Béal an Mhuirthead and Acaill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Back to Education Initiative ▪ Numerous Community Education Courses ▪ Literacy Courses are provided in Irish and English 	Ongoing
	MSLETB 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 MSLETB 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, MSLETB 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.	Commencing during the lifetime of the first language scheme.
	Commencing during the lifetime of its first language scheme, MSLETB shall endeavour to appoint secretaries and all other	Continuously

	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.	
	All documentation pertaining to Gaeltacht regions shall be provided in Irish only, or bilingually.	Continuously
	MSLETB shall endeavour to convene all of its meetings for the Gaeltacht community through the medium of Irish.	Continuously
	Commencing during the lifetime of its first language scheme, MSLETB shall endeavour to appoint a specialised 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 MSLETB's schools and recognised centres of education in the Gaeltacht, the Board shall endeavour, in every way that it can, to 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
MSLETB has no permanent base in the Gaeltacht at present. Should one be established the working language of the office will be Irish	Subject to Department of Education and Skills approval.
Correspondence with the Gaeltacht will be in Irish only or bilingually.	From the commencement of this scheme.
Courses are being provided in the Gaeltacht at present through the medium of English and	

<p>Irish. The ETB recognises that there is an opportunity to meet the demand for further education courses through Irish and is committed to researching areas of interest for people who live in the Gaeltacht and identifying suitable tutors in those areas.</p>	
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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 Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB) 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 Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB), 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	Recruitment	New staff will be provided with an induction pack containing a copy of our agreed scheme.	By the end of the first year of the scheme
	Training	<p>Opportunities to develop the Irish language competence of staff will be provided. Appropriate arrangements will be made for the provision of Irish language training and proficiency testing certification for staff in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support staff in maintaining and developing their proficiency in the Irish language, • enhance the capacity of staff to meet their Irish language obligations in the conduct of their duties, and • provide an accredited proficiency testing regime for staff. Staff will be made aware of language resources such as www.tearma.ie, www.focloir.ie, www.breis.focloir.ie and www.abair.ie, as well as 	Continuously

		WinGléacht, the electronic version of the Ó Dónaill IrishEnglish dictionary.	
	Participation in language promotion activities /Provision of resources	Our internal library will ensure that books and other materials in Irish are available as a resource to staff to improve their competence in the Irish language. Staff will be encouraged to participate in cultural language activities. Staff will be aware of the concept of the proactive agreement - proactively offering services in Irish to the public. Appropriate continual professional development will be offered to the Board's administrative staff to encourage them to improve their ability in Irish. Access to information on language resources will be facilitated.	Continuously
	Other	The support previously forthcoming (from certain ETB's) shall continue to be provided to improve the Irish language capability of staff, this by way of funding for recognised Irish language courses at certificate, diploma and degree levels, with the aim of further developing the standard, range and frequency of the Irish language services we offer to the public. Such courses shall include translation courses, courses in spoken and written Irish, and others not specified, which would impact positively on the general management and administrative staff capability to offer a high level of service in the Irish language. Language Rights posters (from the Coimisinéir Teanga's office) will be displayed in prominent locations in every administrative office and every recognised educational centre	Continuously

		<p>of MSLETB. A staff survey will be conducted to determine their level of Irish language competency, in which they will be allowed to classify themselves as Fluent> Very Good>Good> Reasonable> Poor> As Standard. Employment application forms will include a question regarding the applicant's competency in Irish. At least one question in Irish will be asked at the selection interview.</p>	
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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, Co-Ordinators and all Teaching Posts	MSLETB's schools, recognised centres of education and its other services.	The Gaeltacht community of Mayo and the communities of all gaelcholáistí operating under the Board's remit (ie. Coláiste Ros Dumhach)	Advanced desirable
Secretaries, caretakers and other administrative positions	MSLETB's schools, recognised centres of education and its other services.	The Gaeltacht community of Mayo and the communities of all gaelcholáistí operating under the Board's remit	Advanced desirable

Chapter 7: Monitoring and Review

The implementation of the scheme will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis by the Chief Executive of MSLETB and his/her Senior Management Team. The contact person for the scheme will be the Chief Executive of MSLETB.

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 Irish language version of this scheme is the official version.