

Academic Planning in the subject area of Translation Studies: update

Date: 18 December 2012

Reference: 12/03

To: Heads of Welsh Higher Education Institutions
The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Advisory Group
Welsh-medium Provision Co-ordinators in the institutions
The Association of Welsh Translators and Interpreters.

Response Due By: For information: no response required

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This Circular provides an update on discussions in relation to creating a suitable framework for the Coleg to support in relation to provision in Translation Studies.

This document is available on the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol website

ACADEMIC PLANNING IN THE SUBJECT AREA OF TRANSLATION STUDIES

Background

1. The Coleg published a circular in July 2012 (Ref: 11/26) explaining the situation in relation to academic planning in the subject area of Translation Studies. The circular invited higher education institutions to contribute to the Task and Finish Group work, to be chaired by Heini Gruffudd, to advise the Coleg on a suitable framework for a national academic plan that the Coleg could support in this subject area. Also, background information was provided in the circular regarding the circumstances that lead to establishing the Group.

2. Two meetings of the Group have been held. The Group is Chaired by Heini Gruffudd and the other members were Dr Dewi Evans (Welsh Lecturer, Dublin University), Dr Meinir Pritchard (Translation Unit, Welsh Government) and Fiona Gannon (Professional Translator)

3. In their meetings, the Group has:
 - i. Reviewed both applications for academic posts presented to the Coleg in December 2011 (please see the Coleg's circular ref. 12/16 for further background information) and supporting information presented by the relevant higher education institutions since that time.
 - ii. Considered proposals, plans and other comments presented by Bangor University, Swansea University and the University of Wales Trinity Saint David following distribution of the Coleg's circular.
 - iii. Accepted and considered offers and comments presented by the Association of Welsh Translators and Interpreters.
 - iv. Considered a possible framework to present to the Coleg as a basis for supporting developments in the subject area of Translation Studies, within the Coleg's academic strategy.

4. The Group decided, before drawing up their final report that initial recommendations should be presented to the Coleg's Board of Directors. Following a discussion in the Board's meeting on 28 November 2012, the Coleg has adopted the following main recommendations:
 - That the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol drive a process of establishing a School of Translation Studies, by holding discussions with the higher education sector.

- That academic posts funded by the Coleg are placed within the School (with flexibility regarding geographical location of posts). One of these post holders could act as the School's director.
- That the School collaborates with and through the universities leading the subject area, creating materials and providing relevant courses.
- That the provision and activities funded by the Coleg within the School respond directly to the needs of the translation industry, to include providing training and professional development for practitioners.
- That every higher education institution can join the School of Translation Studies thus co-ordinating their provision in the subject area of Translation and in the School's plans.
- That a timetable is agreed in order to establish the School, with the aim of becoming fully operational by the 2014/15 academic year.

Next Steps

5. As the Coleg is aware that the Welsh Commissioner is conducting a review of the subject area of Translation and has commissioned Wyn Mears to prepare a report by December 2012, there is an opportunity to ensure that any plans developed by the Coleg in this subject area within the higher education sector co-ordinate with the results of the review. The Coleg has conducted initial discussions with the Commissioner and her officers and that discussion will continue until January 2013.
6. By agreeing to drive a process of establishing a School of Translation Studies, the Coleg's Director has recommended that an individual competent to lead this work is appointed. The individual appointed will drive the development on behalf of the Coleg by leading and facilitating discussions with universities.
7. The Board considers that it would be essential to create a Business Plan for the School, as well as an Academic Plan in order to give the enterprise a firm basis from the start.
8. Although the Board discussed the desire of the universities to receive early decisions from the Coleg regarding funding academic posts in the subject area, following two applications presented to the Coleg in December 2011, the Director's decision is that it is premature to fund academic posts before having the strategic framework in place in order to place those posts.

9. The Coleg supports higher education institutions' plans to develop their provision in the subject area of Translation Studies, including making academic appointments. The Coleg also wishes to emphasise its understanding that the subject area of Translation Studies encompasses, in some institutions, Modern Languages departments and other departments that would not, in this context, be directly involved with the Coleg. It is anticipated that a connection could be made between the proposed School and these departments.

10. The Coleg will hold a meeting in February / March 2012 to discuss and agree on the next steps regarding establishing the Translation Studies School.