



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Dhún na nGall
*Donegal 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.

Donegal Education and Training Board (ETB) 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, 2003 by Donegal Education and Training Board 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 01 February 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 Donegal Education and Training Board

2.1 Mandate and Mission

Mission Statement

To promote, offer and support accessible, inclusive and holistic learning opportunities which will enable young people and adults to empower themselves to reach their full potential in society.

Donegal ETB was established under the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013. The Board's statutory remit is the provision of second level, continuing, further, adult and community education and training (and associated) services to the people of Donegal.

Geographically, the Board's remit extends from Malin in the north of the county to Bundoran in the south, the islands of Árainn Mhór and Toraigh in the northwest and An Charraig in the south-west. Donegal is unique in that it is bordered on the west by the Atlantic Ocean, to the east by counties Derry, Tyrone and Fermanagh and to the south by Co. Leitrim with a border to the State of only 20 kilometres.

The Board provides a wide range of educational and training services in these areas. The associated educational services range from providing full-time second-level education in 15 Post Primary Schools/Colleges, the Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre, 13 dedicated Adult and Further Education & Training Centres located throughout the county and provision for adults in numerous schools and community based centres.

The Board, through its Youth Services Programme, supports voluntary Youth Groups, Local Youth Projects and Youth Services to provide education, developmental and recreational programmes for young people.

Donegal ETB is committed to the provision of integrated educational and associated services of the highest quality to meet the educational needs of the communities in Donegal.

2.2 Customers and Stakeholders

The outcome of the work of the Board impacts on a wide array of people, ranging from second level students, learners with special needs, adult learners, second chance learners and local communities, especially those in rural and disadvantaged areas. Primarily, the Board's customer base and key clients are:

- Adult Learners, Trainees and Apprentices
- Board and Committees (Members)
- Communities throughout the county
- Employees of the Board
- Employee Representative Organisations
- Government Departments and Affiliates
- Local Authorities
- Social Partners, including the community and voluntary sector and employee representatives
- State Agencies
- Students and/or their parents
- The Department of Education & Skills
- The Health Services Executive (North-West)
- Voluntary, Youth and Sporting Organisations

2.3 Functional Areas of the Board

The functional areas of the Board comprise:

a) External Role

- Adult and Further Education & Training Centres
- Adult Learner Guidance Services
- Back to Education Initiative
- Basic Education Services
- Centre for Education, Letterkenny
- Community Education Services
- Contracted Training
- Donegal Music Education Partnership
- Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre
- Second-Level Schools & Colleges
- Vocational Training & Opportunities Scheme
- Youth Services
- Youthreach

b) Internal Support Units

- Corporate Services Division
- Estates Management Division
- Finance Division
- Human Resources Division
- IT Unit

Chapter 3: Languages in which Services are currently provided

This chapter sets out the position in relation to service provision by individual Schools/Colleges/Centres within Donegal Education and Training Board.

3.1 List of Board's Sectors providing services in Irish

The following Schools/Colleges/Centres under the aegis of Donegal ETB work through the Irish language and consequently provide services through the medium of Irish, and will continue to do so during the lifetime of this Scheme, except where customers/clients specifically request such a service be provided to them in the English language:-

- Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Bun Cranncha
- Coláiste Ailigh, Leitir Ceanainn
- Coláiste Pobail Cholmcille, Oileán Thoraí
- Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Béal An Átha Móir
- Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Oileán Árainn Mhóir
- Ionad Oideachais Aosaigh, Gort an Choirce

3.2 List of the Board's Sectors providing services in Irish and English

The following is a list of Centres/Colleges/Schools within Donegal Education and Training Board which currently are in a position to provide a service in the official language of the customer's choice:-

Adult Education & Training Centres

- Donegal Town
- Gaoth Dobhair
- Letterkenny
- Milford

Adult Learner Guidance Service

- Letterkenny

Basic Education Services

- In Gaeltacht areas

Community Education Support Services

- In Gaeltacht areas

Second Level Schools and Colleges

- Abbey Vocational School, Donegal Town
- Coláiste na Carraige, An Charraig
- Deelee College, Raphoe
- Errigal College, Letterkenny

Administrative Offices, Ard O'Donnell, Letterkenny

- Corporate Services
- Human Resources

3.3 List of the Board's Sectors currently providing services in the English language only

The following is a list of Schools/Colleges/Centres within the Education and Training Board, which although working to improve capacity in the Irish language among staff, are currently not in a position to provide service through the Irish language.

Adult Education & Training Centres

- Ballyshannon
- Buncrana
- Centre for Education, Letterkenny
- Letterkenny (BTEI and VTOS)
- Lifford Youthreach

Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre

Second Level Schools and Colleges

- Magh Éne College, Bundoran
- Mulroy College, Milford
- Finn Valley College, Stranorlar
- St. Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs
- Crana College, Buncrana
- Moville Community College, Moville

Administrative Offices, Ard O'Donnell, Letterkenny

- Estates Management
- Finance Division

Chapter 4: Enhancing the provision of Irish Language Services

In addition to the mandatory requirements under the Official Languages Act, 2003, this chapter sets out the commitments by Donegal ETB to enhance the provision of Irish language services and communication with the public through Irish.

Means of communication with the public

4.1 Oral Communications

Switchboard staff will give the name of the public body in Irish and in English. Customers will be greeted firstly in Irish and then in English (*subject to the status of each location as detailed in Chapter 3*). An up to date list of staff members who can provide a service through Irish will be made available.

By the end of the first year of this Scheme.

Bilingual staff will make customers aware that they are willing to conduct business in Irish, if required. Such staff will have their pre-recorded personal telephone greetings in bilingual format.

By the end of the first year of this Scheme.

20% of live announcements will be bilingual

Continuously

4.2 Written Communication

A bilingual or Irish version of the information leaflets and brochures most commonly used will be available.

By the end of the first year of this Scheme.

There will be a bilingual or Irish version of the most commonly used application forms available.

Continuously

All new application forms will be made available in Irish, or bilingually.

From commencement of the Scheme

4.3 Media

All press releases will be issued bilingually. The objective will be to issue this material simultaneously.

Continuously

An Irish speaking spokesperson(s) will be available for interviews with the Irish language media.

Continuously

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 Irish to the subject and/or the occasion in question.

Continuously

Preference that speeches pertaining to the Gaeltacht/taking place in the Gaeltacht shall be in Irish only, followed where necessary with a summary in English for on-Irish Speakers who may be in attendance.

Continuously

4.4 Information Technology

We will publish a dedicated email address for queries in Irish on the website(s) of the public body.

From commencement of the Scheme

Standard email messages such as disclaimers will be bilingual.

From commencement of the Scheme

The static material on Donegal ETB's website 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 this Scheme.

The static material on the any secondary website of Donegal ETB will be available bilingually.

By the end of this Scheme.

Any new computer system being installed will be capable of handling the Irish language, as any such computer system is installed

From commencement of the Scheme

Any online and interactive services that the public body itself develops will be made available bilingually. Every new online and interactive service will be made available on a bilingual basis.

From commencement of the Scheme

The Donegal ETB website shall include a bilingual statement from the Chief Executive affirming the Board's determination to implement the commitments entered into in the Board's language scheme.

From commencement of the Scheme

Should the Board decide on a corporate tagline at some date in the future, such a tagline shall be bilingual.

From commencement of the Scheme

4.5 Public Meetings

Donegal ETB conducts the majority of its public meetings in the English language only. However, it is the policy of the Board that any public meetings held in the Gaeltacht, or dealing with Gaeltacht issues will be either conducted through Irish or bilingually. In the case of public meetings dealing with Irish language issues generally, such meetings may be either conducted through Irish or bilingually.

Continuously

Contributions in Irish or English will be welcome at public meetings organised by or on behalf of the public body.

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.

5.1 Commitments in Gaeltacht Areas

Donegal ETB endeavours, 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. The Policy Proposals for Educational Provision in Gaeltacht Areas (published by the Department of Education and Skills in 2015) and further developments in this regard are monitored and scrutinised by the Board and the Chief Executive.

The Board is committed to doing all it can to nurture and strengthen the Gaeltacht of Co. Donegal and 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

5.2 Offices located in Gaeltacht

Irish is the working language of the majority of Donegal ETB offices located in the Gaeltacht, as referred to in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.1.

3.1 List of Board's Sectors providing services in Irish

- Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Bun Cranncha
- Coláiste Ailigh, Leitir Ceanainn
- Coláiste Pobail Cholmcille, Oileán Thoráí
- Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Béal An Átha Móir
- Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Oileán Árainn Mhóir
- Ionad Oideachais Aosaigh, Gort an Choirce

Donegal ETB will work progressively towards Irish becoming the working language of all its offices located in the Gaeltacht by the end of the Board's second Scheme.

It is the policy of Donegal Education and Training Board to appoint administrators and all other employees in its Gaeltacht Schools/Colleges/Centres 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 and the Board shall endeavour to convene all of its meetings for the Gaeltacht community through the medium of Irish.

To facilitate these endeavours and an effective service in all Schools/Colleges/Centres through the medium of the Irish language, Donegal ETB will seek sanction and funding from the Department of Education and Skills to appoint a Timire Gaeilge (Irish Language Officer) with the appropriate qualifications, knowledge and skills.

6.1 Recruitment and Selection

The recruitment of staff with the appropriate level of competence in the Irish language in each area of work of Donegal ETB 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.

From the commencement of this Scheme, 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.

Employment application forms will include a question regarding the applicant's competency in Irish.

Interviews through Irish or English will be available, subject to advance notice by the candidate of his/her language choice. Language choice will not apply in cases where Irish is an essential requirement for the post in question; the interview will be held through the medium of Irish to ensure that the candidate selected has a sufficient level of Irish.

6.2 Training and Development

Donegal ETB 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.

Appropriate continual professional development, both formal and informal will be offered to the Board's staff to encourage them to improve their Irish language capabilities.

Opportunities to develop the Irish language competence of staff will be provided. In conjunction with Irish language education providers, appropriate arrangements will be made for the provision of Irish language training and certification in order to:

- support staff in maintaining and developing their proficiency in the Irish language,
- enhance the capacity of staff to meet their Irish language obligations of their duties, and
- provide an accredited proficiency testing regime for staff.

Access to information on language resources will be facilitated. Staff will be made aware of language resources such as www.tearma.ie, www.focloir.ie, www.teanglann.ie and www.abair.ie, www.potafofocal.com, as well as WinGléacht, the electronic version of the Ó Dónaill Irish-English dictionary.

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.

Donegal ETB has a number of Training and Development Policies for various posts to facilitate and encourage staff to apply for funding of courses such as Diplomas and Degrees in Irish, 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.

Needs Analysis and Assessment

Within the first year of this Scheme, a staff survey will be conducted to determine the level of Irish language competency of the staff of Donegal ETB.

Members of staff will be asked to classify their level of spoken and written Irish, by selection from a number of options. They will also be provided with an opportunity to express their interest in future training opportunities.

6.3 Designated Irish Language Posts

Posts in the schools/colleges/centres detailed in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.1. have been designated as having an Irish language competency requirement.

It is the intention that holders of these posts will have such competency in the Irish Language that facilitates the performance of the duties of the post through the medium of Irish as required.

Such posts include:

- Administrators
- Caretakers
- Coordinators
- Deputy Principals
- Directors
- Managers
- Principals
- Teachers

When designating these posts, particular consideration is 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.

Chapter 7: Monitoring and Review

The implementation of the scheme will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis by the Chief Executive of Donegal Education and Training Board, his/her Senior Management Team and/or any other designated person(s).

The contact person for the scheme is Aidan Mc Closkey, HR Operations Officer.

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 (together with the Guidebook to the Official Languages Act) 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;
- 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 publications and materials;
- promotion of the Irish Language on the corporate website.

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.