

FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions / COA - Cwestiynau a Ofynwyd yn Aml

Below are some examples, not in any order, please add more.

1. Who wrote the Duolingo Welsh course?

The Duolingo Welsh course was written by a small group of Welsh second language teacher/Welsh for adults tutors/Experienced learners working on a voluntary basis. The writing started in September 2015. The first version of the course was released in January 2016.

This original team developed and maintained the course until early 2022. In that time approximately 60,000 sentences were written/corrected and four major revisions were released.

At the end of 2022 the cumulative total of subscribers to the Welsh course on Duolingo passed 3 million with approximately 700 thousand active learners worldwide.

At the end of 2021 Duolingo started trading its shares and for legal reasons was forced to end the volunteer programme. Most Duolingo courses continued to be maintained by Duolingo employed specialists. However in Wales the National Centre for Learning Welsh decided to take on the financial burden of maintaining and developing the Welsh course on Duolingo. Two of the original volunteers were employed for a short period before being replaced by National Centre staff in March 2022.

2. Do you have to pay to use the Duolingo Welsh course?

No, but to avoid too many annoying ads try using it with an ad-blocker. The experience with the subscription is better (no ads, unlimited 'hearts') and if you can afford it (about \$£€60 a year) then your payment keeps the company alive.

3. Why is the course biased towards South/North Wales Welsh?

It isn't biased towards either of the main spoken dialects. Welsh does not have, and has never had, a standard spoken language. In the last few decades there has emerged two 'standard' spoken language dialects. The differences are not enormous. Since Duolingo only allows one course per language the Welsh course has tried to accommodate these two dialects.

4. Will I become a fluent Welsh speaker just by using the Duolingo Welsh course.

It's possible, but not easy. Studies of adult language learning have found that a sufficiently motivated learner can become a fluent speaker using any method. However most people who have made significant progress towards fluency or

have become fluent have combined the Duolingo Welsh course with other learning resources.

5. Why are there no grammar notes in the 'Guidebook' unlike courses like French, German, Spanish etc?

The qualified and experienced teachers wrote very extensive grammar notes for every unit in the course. They used to be accessible on the Web version of the course, were for a short time available on the Android app but never on the iOS app. When Duolingo changed the layout of all courses in 2021 they replaced the grammar notes on all courses. For the courses maintained by Duolingo staff they added grammar and example sentences to the 'Guidebook'. For the former volunteer courses, like Welsh, they only added the example sentences.

Subsequently some of the former volunteer courses regained grammar notes but not Welsh so far. Unfortunately the Welsh government minister for the Welsh language didn't think, or was not prompted, to raise this issue when he met a Duolingo representative in November 2023.

The notes were rescued and are available here :-

<https://welshclass.wales/nodiadau-duolingo-notes>

6. What's with Owen and the Pannas?

This is one of those existential questions. It is one of those mysteries that have many possible attempts at a solution. One of the more viable solutions might be

<https://www.facebook.com/.../posts/3107993659335235/...>

7. Why is there no speaking practice as there is with other languages?

There are over 90 language courses on the Duolingo platform. Only a small handful have ever had interactive speaking practices. These being the most widely spoken ones in the Americas such as Spanish, French, German etc.

Recently the UK based company Golvingo has made available a Welsh course with speaking exercises. Give it a go. <https://www.golvingo.co.uk/>

More to come,.....