

Official Language Certifications and the Celtic Languages: An Overview of Relevant Offerings

Antony HOYTE-WEST
Independent scholar, United Kingdom

Abstract: *The six extant members of the Celtic family of languages (Breton, Cornish, Irish, Manx, Scottish Gaelic, and Welsh) can be found in the British Isles and the north-western coast of France. Once widely spoken, centuries of marginalisation and minoritisation have meant that these languages presently enjoy varying degrees of linguistic vitality. Of the modern Celtic languages, only Irish is an official language of an independent nation-state and since 2007 it has also received supranational recognition as an official language of the European Union. In developing the researcher's previous work on qualifications available for minority and minoritized languages, the main focus of this contribution is on analysing the official language certifications available for the six Celtic languages, centring on those qualifications targeted at adult candidates. Initially, after briefly defining the historical and sociocultural context relating to each of the six languages, this exploratory literature-based study highlights current certifications by detailing the awarding body and organisational structure for each qualification, before presenting information about accreditation and recognition. Lastly, the scope and availability of each language certification at the national and international level will be discussed, before the findings will be analysed to explore any similarities and differences between the various qualifications on offer.*

Keywords: *language testing; minority languages; Breton; Irish; Welsh; Cornish; Manx; Scottish Gaelic;*