

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Gàidhlig: Cànan agus Cultar (Advanced Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Language and Culture*)

CODE DV4E 13

COURSE Gàidhlig (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

This Unit is a mandatory Unit of the Gàidhlig (Advanced Higher) Course and may also be used as a free-standing Unit. This Unit will provide opportunity for an individual study and in-depth discussion of it.

Individual Study

The Individual Study will permit candidates to research an aspect of Gaelic which interests them. Candidates will be expected, through the study of their chosen topic, to display an informed knowledge and understanding of their chosen topic. The possible topic areas range from the historical to the contemporary and can provide opportunities to investigate the recent expansion in Gaelic media, education, careers, arts, language bodies and politics. Candidates are expected to work independently at this level and to take responsibility for their own study.

Discussion of a Gaelic-related issue

This interaction on a Gaelic-related issue will allow candidates to engage in informed discussion of a specific Gaelic topic with an individual or a group. The topics which candidates are researching for their individual study will form the basis of informed discussion.

This Unit is suitable for those who have completed the Gàidhlig (Higher) Course or Units from it. It is relevant for candidates who have a general interest in the language and for those who wish to pursue further study in Gaelic and/or a Gaelic-related career.

OUTCOMES

1. Report on the findings and conclusions of a study of an aspect of Gaelic culture.
2. Engage in an informed discussion on the study.

Administrative Information

Superclass: FK

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

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RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following, or equivalent:

- ♦ Higher Gàidhlig or its Units

It is expected that candidates will have been allocated to Gàidhlig* or Gaelic* (Learners) programmes of study in accordance with SQA's published guidelines (see document *Guidance on Allocation to Gàidhlig or Gaelic (Learners) Programmes of Study and Qualification*), available on the SQA website www.sqa.org.uk).

* **NOTE:** Gàidhlig and Gaelic refer throughout to Scottish Gaelic only.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components in this Unit.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit Specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Report on the findings and conclusions of a study of an aspect of Gaelic culture.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify clearly the aspect of the Gaelic topic studied.
- (b) Outline the main findings and conclusions of the study.
- (c) Express knowledge and considered opinion of the Gaelic topic studied with a high degree of clarity.

OUTCOME 2

Engage in an informed discussion on the study.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Explain clearly how the topic was studied.
- (b) Explain clearly why the topic was studied.
- (c) Demonstrate control of a wide range of language structures and idiom.
- (d) Provide relevant, comprehensive and detailed responses.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved both of the Outcomes and all of the Performance Criteria. Details of the evidence to be included are:

Outcome 1: Individual Study

One piece of written evidence produced on one summative assessment occasion. Candidates will produce a summary in Gaelic of the findings and conclusions of their individual study. Candidates may use notes in the assessment. Use of a dictionary is not permitted in the assessment. The maximum time allocation for the summary is 45 minutes.

Centres must be satisfied that the evidence submitted is the work of individual candidates. Although group work may be used as learning and teaching approach, any work which contributes to a candidate's evidence for assessment must be carried out on an individual basis to ensure authenticity.

Outcome 2: Discussion

One piece of spoken evidence produced on one summative assessment occasion. Candidates will deliver, in Gaelic and without prompting, a presentation of a maximum of 5-6 minutes to an individual or a group on a specific topic which they have researched. Discussion of the specific topic will follow the presentation. The maximum time allocation for the discussion is 10 minutes. Use of a dictionary is not permitted in the assessment.

The standard to be applied is exemplified in the National Assessment Bank items available for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard.

National Unit Specification: support notes

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This part of the Unit Specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

Individual Study: candidates will engage in the study of an aspect of Gaelic which interests them and write findings and conclusions. The following areas are suggested for the study:

- ◆ the historic Gaelic world
- ◆ the contemporary Gaelic world
- ◆ Gaelic literature
- ◆ Gaelic music and song
- ◆ Gaelic language issues
- ◆ Gaelic in a national/international context

The possible topic areas range from the historical to the contemporary and can provide opportunities to investigate the recent expansion in Gaelic media, education, careers, arts, language bodies and politics. Candidates are not restricted to these themes and may choose any aspect of Gaelic culture. If candidates are taking this Unit as part of the Advanced Higher Course, they may wish to select a topic which extends an aspect or theme related to the literature studied in the Unit *Gàidhlig: Sgilean Sgrìobhaidh agus Sgrùdadh Litreachais (Advanced Higher)* (*Gàidhlig: Writing and Literacy Criticism Skills*).

Discussion of a Gaelic-related issue: candidates will engage in informed discussion of a specific Gaelic topic with an individual or a group. The topics which candidates are researching for their individual study will form the basis of informed discussion.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

Individual Study

Candidates are expected to work independently at this level and to take responsibility for their own study. Candidates should make use of a variety of sources. Candidates will decide, in consultation with teachers/lecturers, which sources will be most appropriate for their purposes and will plan their research in order to make the best use of these sources.

Teachers/lecturers can allocate time at the beginning of the 40 hours to enable candidates to write a plan of action for their study.

Candidates can access suitable resources in many ways. A few examples include:

- ◆ making use of local libraries
- ◆ using material available from community resources, such as local museums
- ◆ interviewing people
- ◆ using the media - TV, radio, newspapers
- ◆ communicating with various organisations
- ◆ accessing websites

Consideration should be given to organisations that supply leaflets, statistics or other materials and requests made to them should be reasonable and not burdensome. The main criteria for source materials should be their suitability and relevance to the topic being investigated.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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The specific issue to be addressed should be negotiated between the candidate and the teacher/lecturer.

Candidates will choose a topic to investigate in detail. Teachers/lecturers will have a supporting role in guiding the choice of topic and in determining its appropriateness. Some factors which should be borne in mind when candidates are selecting a topic include:

- ◆ the candidate's own interest in the topic
- ◆ the benefit to the candidate from studying that topic
- ◆ the information, materials or support that may be available to the candidate

Candidates should make the best use of the time available to them. One reason for suggesting that the three Units in this Course be taught concurrently is that the research work for this Unit may then be spread over a longer period of time. It will also allow time for candidates to correspond with organisations and to receive correspondence from them.

While candidates are only required to report on findings and conclusions for assessment purposes, they may wish to produce a full report in preparation for future studies. This full report could take the format below.

Around 1500-2000 words would allow a suitable depth of study.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Terms of reference | (details the specific focus of the study and why it is being undertaken) |
| 2. Methodology | (describes the methods used to collect the information for the study) |
| 3. Findings | (arranges the information collected into a suitable format) |
| 4. Conclusions | (summarises what may be deduced from the Findings) |

Discussion of a Gaelic-related issue

Candidates should have flexibility to select a topic which interests them.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Individual Study

A specific issue should be identified for study within the chosen area.

Candidates will carry out this assessment under controlled conditions. It is recommended that teachers/lecturers follow a similar pattern when providing formative feedback before the summative assessment. Research has indicated that the following pattern is best practice for providing formative assessment for a written task:

1. First draft—the teacher/lecturer reads over the candidate’s work and provides verbal feedback to indicate areas for improvement. Feedback is most effective when it comprises two positive statements about the candidate’s work as well as one statement which deals with an aspect requiring improvement.
2. Second draft — the teacher/lecturer reads over the candidate’s work and provides written feedback to indicate areas for improvement. The written feedback, as indicated above, is most effective when it comprises two positive statements about the candidate’s work and one statement about an aspect requiring improvement.

The piece of writing must be produced under a system which checks and records its authenticity. This can be done by asking the candidate to submit the two drafts as suggested above with the teacher/lecturer recording that these have been seen.

Discussion of a Gaelic-related issue

Candidates should be made fully aware of the conditions under which their spoken presentation will be given, and the criteria by which their spoken presentation will be assessed. Candidates’ responses should be detailed, relevant and accurate in the ensuing discussion.

Candidates’ vocabulary, register and sentence structures should be consistently appropriate to purpose and audience and be varied effectively. Candidates should consciously vary tone, pace and modulation to suit audience needs.

The assessment will take place under controlled conditions.

Use of a dictionary is not permitted in the assessment.

The assessment requirements for this Outcome are stated in the Evidence Requirements.

ASSESSMENT IS FOR LEARNING

By active involvement in the testing process candidates can be beneficiaries rather than victims of testing because tests can help candidates improve their learning. It has become clear that no matter how great the pressure to achieve good test and examination scores, learning cannot be done **for** the candidate; it has to be done **by** the candidate.

The positive use of formative assessment can help in assisting candidates to raise their summative assessment performances. In preparing candidates for summative assessment, the following four aspects of effective formative assessment should be considered:

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- ◆ **share the success criteria** required for achieving the summative assessment — ie explain and discuss Outcomes and Performance Criteria with candidates. Discuss with candidates what is required to pass an assessment. Guidelines intended for use by teaching professionals may need to be translated into language accessible to candidates.
- ◆ **provide quality feedback from formative assessment** in the lead up to summative assessment. Feedback which gives each candidate guidance on how to improve, as well as opportunity and help to work at the improvement, is much more effective in raising standards than a mark. Feedback should be about the particular qualities of a candidate's work, with advice on what he or she can do to improve, and should avoid comparisons with other candidates.
- ◆ **use structured questioning in discussing a formative assessment** to enable candidates to understand not just what was incorrect but also how it may be improved and corrected. Dialogue between candidates and a teacher/lecturer should be thoughtful, reflective and focused to evoke and explore understanding. It should be conducted so that all candidates have an opportunity to think and express their ideas concerning their performance.
- ◆ **use self and peer assessment to discuss answers to questions and remove misunderstandings** in learning. Candidates should be able to self-assess to understand the main purposes of their learning and thereby grasp what they need to achieve.

When candidates do acquire an overview of their targets, they then become more committed and more effective as learners. Consequently, their assessments become an object of discussion with their teachers/lecturers and with one another, and this promotes even further the reflection on one's own ideas which is essential to good learning.

Where anyone is trying to learn, feedback about their efforts has three elements:

- ◆ the desired goal
- ◆ the evidence about their present position
- ◆ some understanding of the way to close the gap between the two

All three must to a degree be understood by anyone before they can take action to improve their learning.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Unit Specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, September 2004).