

Advanced Higher Gaelic Draft Course/Unit Support Notes



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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this document for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the Advanced Higher Gaelic (Learners) Course. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering the Course and its Units. They should be read in conjunction with the *Course Specification*, the *Course Assessment Specification* and the *Unit Specifications* for the Units in the Course.

These support notes cover both the Advanced Higher Course and the Units in it.

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General guidance on the Course/Units

Aims

The main purpose of the Course is to develop the skills of listening and talking, reading and writing in order to understand and use Gaelic.

The Course offers learners opportunities to develop and extend a wide range of skills. In particular, the Course aims to enable learners to develop the ability to:

- ◆ read, listen, talk and write in a Gaelic with greater sophistication and as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ understand and use Gaelic
- ◆ apply advanced language skills of translation
- ◆ apply knowledge and understanding of a Gaelic to a range of contexts
- ◆ understand, analyse and evaluate complex Gaelic literacy and/or media texts
- ◆ apply research skills to engage in an independent individual study of a historical or cultural nature
- ◆ appreciate the advantages of bilingualism educationally, socially and professionally
- ◆ apply transferable skills which are useful elsewhere in the curriculum and in other contexts, including employment
- ◆ further develop the ability to understand and use Gaelic in a range of contexts
- ◆ deepen their awareness of language and how it works, taking into account grammar, structure and style
- ◆ develop the ability to plan and research, integrating and applying language skills, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ develop independent learning and higher-order language skills

The Course contributes towards the development of literacy skills by providing learners with opportunities to listen, talk, read and write in a Gaelic, and to reflect on how this relates to English. The texts for this Course are in Gaelic; however, learners will show their understanding and demonstrate their skills in English.

In a broader context, the study of the Advanced Higher Gaelic (Learners) Course presents students with opportunities for personal and social development, individual and group learning, and the development of communication and research skills provides candidates with competences which are valuable in contemporary society. The Gaelic (Learners) Course allows candidates to develop a greater understanding of Gaelic history and culture and of how Gaelic has affected and continues to affect the society in which they participate.

Progression

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills and knowledge required by one or more of the following or by equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ Higher Gaelic (Learners) or relevant component Units
- ◆ Gaelic for Work Purposes Units (SCQF levels 6 or 7)
- ◆ prior learning

Learners who have achieved this Advanced Higher Course may progress to further study, employment and/or training. Opportunities for progression include:

- ◆ Progression to other SQA qualifications:
 - Progression to other qualifications at the same level of the Course, for example Professional Development Awards (PDAs), Higher National Certificates (HNCs).
- ◆ Progression to further/higher education:
 - For many learners a key transition point will be to further or higher education, for example to Higher National Certificates (HNCs)/Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) or degree programmes. Examples of further and higher education programmes that learners doing the Course might progress to include Gaelic and other modern languages, literature, journalism and media studies, history, archaeology, law, politics or education.
 - Advanced Higher Courses provide good preparation for learners progressing to further and higher education as learners doing Advanced Higher Courses must be able to work with more independence and less supervision. This eases their transition to further/higher education. Advanced Higher Courses may also allow 'advanced standing' or partial credit towards the first year of study of a degree programme.
 - Advanced Higher Courses are challenging and testing qualifications: learners who have achieved multiple Advanced Higher Courses are regarded as having a proven level of ability which attests to their readiness for higher education in HEIs in other parts of the UK as well as in Scotland.
- ◆ Progression to employment:
 - For many learners, progression will be directly to employment or work-based training programmes. Examples of employment opportunities and training programmes are a range of modern language-related careers, including law, government and politics jobs, the EU, Scottish history positions such as museum curation or teaching.

This Advanced Higher is part of the Scottish Baccalaureate in Languages. The Scottish Baccalaureates in Expressive Arts, Languages, Science, and Social Sciences consist of coherent groups of subjects at Higher and Advanced Higher

level. Each award consists of two Advanced Highers, one Higher and an Interdisciplinary Project which adds breadth and value and helps learners to develop generic skills, attitudes and confidence that will help them make the transition into higher education or employment.

Hierarchies

Hierarchy is the term used to describe Courses and Units which form a structured progression involving two or more SCQF levels.

It is important that any content in a Course and/or Unit at one particular SCQF level is not repeated if a learner progresses to the next level of the hierarchy. The skills and knowledge should be able to be applied to new content and contexts to enrich the learning experience. This is for centres to manage.

- ◆ Gaelic (Learners) Courses from National 3 to Advanced Higher are hierarchical.
- ◆ Courses from National 3 to National 5 have Units with the same structure and titles.

This Course is designed in hierarchy with the corresponding Course at Higher and has the same Course structure and the same or similar Unit titles as the Higher Course. A hierarchical arrangement enables learners to work at different levels carrying out similar activities, with their work being differentiated and benchmarked against the Assessment Standards and Evidence Requirements at different SCQF levels.

Centres should be aware that although the mandatory knowledge and skillset may be similar across the hierarchical Units in Higher and Advanced Higher Courses, there may be differences in the:

- ◆ depth of underpinning knowledge and understanding
- ◆ complexity and sophistication of the applied skills
- ◆ ways in which learners will learn; namely, they will take more responsibility for their learning at Advanced Higher and work more autonomously

Centres should take care to ensure that learners progressing from Higher to Advanced Higher are exposed to different contexts for learning and assessment to avoid repetition.

This may be achieved through the planned use of appropriately differentiated activities and contexts within Units. The level of learner support and the sophistication of responses expected would also be a useful factor in ensuring progression rather than repetition.

In Advanced Higher Courses, learners will be expected to demonstrate a greater degree of autonomy with less support offered by the teacher/lecturer. This should increase the sense of ownership the learners have over their work and ensure

that, even if they have previously completed the Course at a lower level, their interest in the subject is kept alive.

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Course

This section provides further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding that could be included in the Course.

Teachers and lecturers should refer to the *Course Assessment Specification* for mandatory information about the skills, knowledge and understanding to be covered in this Course.

The development of subject-specific and generic skills is central to the Course. Learners should be made aware of the skills they are developing and of the transferability of them. It is the transferability that will help learners with further study and enhance their personal effectiveness.

The list below shows where there are likely to be opportunities to develop mandatory skills in or across the Units. However, the delivery mode adopted and the approaches to learning and teaching will determine how and where the opportunities arise.

- ◆ Advanced listening and talking, reading, and writing skills in Gaelic, as appropriate to purpose and audience, in the contexts of society, learning, employability, and culture.
- ◆ Advanced knowledge and understanding required to understand and use Gaelic, as appropriate to purpose and audience, in the contexts of society, learning, employability, and culture.
- ◆ Understanding an advanced range of grammatical knowledge when using Gaelic.
- ◆ Advanced knowledge and understanding required to apply the language skills of translation.
- ◆ Advanced knowledge and appreciation of literary and/or media texts in Gaelic.

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level (www.sqa.org.uk/scqf).

Approaches to learning and teaching

Advanced Higher Courses place more demands on learners as there will be a higher proportion of independent study and less direct supervision. Some of the approaches to learning and teaching suggested for other levels (in particular, Higher) may also apply at Advanced Higher level but there will be a stronger emphasis on independent learning.

As with the Higher Gaelic (Learners) Course, learning at Advanced Higher level is still expected to be experiential, active, challenging and enjoyable, and include appropriate practical experiments/activities, and could be learner-led. The use of a variety of active learning approaches is encouraged, including peer teaching and assessment, individual and group presentations, game-based learning with learner-generated questions.

For Advanced Higher Courses, a significant amount of learning may be self-directed and require learners to demonstrate a more mature approach to learning and the ability to work on their own initiative. This can be very challenging for some learners, who may feel isolated at times, and teachers and lecturers should have strategies for addressing this. These could include, for example, planning time for regular feedback sessions/discussions on a one-to-one basis and on a group basis led by the teacher or lecturer (where appropriate).

All learning and teaching should offer opportunities for learners to work collaboratively. Learners should engage with Gaelic on a larger scale in order to develop a greater sophistication of language skills by accessing Gaelic resources and speaking to fluent speakers or other learners of the language. Learners should be encouraged to choose literary themes that interest them.

Learners, especially at Advanced Higher, would be expected to contribute a significant portion of their own time in addition to programmed learning time.

Effective partnership working can enhance the language learning experience. Where feasible, locally relevant contexts should be studied, with visits where this is possible. Guest speakers from industry, further and higher education could be used to bring the world of Gaelic into the classroom.

An independent approach to learning is important for those studying Advanced Higher modern languages. Learners should develop independent research skills, including the use of dictionaries and glossaries to increase their vocabulary and understand the meaning and stems of words; thus deepening the sophistication and complexity of their abilities in Gaelic. A holistic approach should be adopted to encourage simultaneous development of learners' conceptual understanding and skills.

Teachers and lecturers should encourage learners to use an enquiring, critical and problem-solving approach to their learning. Learners should also be given the opportunity to practise and develop research and investigation skills and higher-order evaluation and analytical skills. The use of information and communications technology (ICT) can make a significant contribution to the development of these higher-order skills as research and investigation activities become more sophisticated.

ICT can make a significant contribution to Advanced Higher modern languages as a learning tool. Computer equipment can be used to record speech and play tracks of text for speaking and listening activities. Voice recognition software is available to assist the learners with pronunciation and grammar and there are many programmes offering translation and online dictionaries on the internet.

Learners will learn about the culture, customs, practices and beliefs in another country and can develop all four language skills and knowledge in another language. The contexts of society, learning, employability, or culture within the Course will develop learners' understanding of citizenship issues in another country as well as encouraging understanding of their own culture and community.

Wherever possible, learners should be given the opportunity to apply the skills, knowledge and understanding they have developed to new topics and contexts. Learners will use what they know already, for example when they use a familiar structure for writing but use different content. Learners will also develop the ability to plan, organise and complete tasks when they undertake language activities, for example designing a web page in Gaelic.

Learners will engage in a variety of learning activities as appropriate to the subject, for example:

- ◆ researching information for their subject rather than receiving information from their teacher or lecturer
- ◆ using active and open-ended learning activities such as research, case studies and presentation tasks
- ◆ making use of the internet to draw conclusions about specific issues
- ◆ engaging in wide-ranging independent reading
- ◆ recording in a systematic way the results of research and independent investigation from different sources
- ◆ presenting findings/conclusions of research and investigation activities in a presentation
- ◆ participating in group work with peers and using collaborative learning opportunities to develop team working
- ◆ participating in informed debate and discussion with peers where they can demonstrate skills in constructing and sustaining lines of argument to provide challenge and enjoyment, breadth, and depth to learning
- ◆ drawing conclusions from complex information
- ◆ using sophisticated written and/or oral communication and presentation skills to present information
- ◆ using appropriate technological resources (eg web-based resources)

- ◆ using appropriate media resources (eg video clips)
- ◆ demonstrating development, improvement and refinement of techniques and practices in practical/performance-based subjects
- ◆ using real-life contexts and experiences familiar and relevant to young people to meaningfully hone and exemplify skills, knowledge and understanding
- ◆ participating in field trips and visits

Teachers and lecturers should support learners by having regular discussions with them and giving regular feedback. Some learning and teaching activities may be carried out on a group basis and, where this applies, learners could also receive feedback from their peers.

Teachers and lecturers should, where possible, provide opportunities to personalise learning for learners, and to enable them to have choices in approaches to learning and teaching. The flexibility in Advanced Higher Courses and the independence with which learners carry out the work lend themselves to this. Teachers and lecturers should also create opportunities for, and use, inclusive approaches to learning and teaching. This can be achieved by encouraging the use of a variety of learning and teaching strategies which suit the needs of all learners. Innovative and creative ways of using technology can also be valuable in creating inclusive learning and teaching approaches.

Centres are free to sequence the teaching of the Outcomes, Units and/or Course in any order they wish. For example:

- ◆ Each Unit could be delivered separately in any sequence.

And/or:

- ◆ All Units may be delivered in a combined way as part of the Course. If this approach is used, the Outcomes within Units may either be partially or fully combined.

Learning about Scotland and Scottish culture will enrich the learners' learning experience and help them to develop the skills for learning, life and work they will need to prepare them for taking their place in a diverse, inclusive and participative Scotland and beyond. Where there may be opportunities to contextualise approaches to learning and teaching to Scottish contexts in this Course, this could be done through mini-projects or case studies.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is important that learners are aware of the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that they are developing in the Course and the activities they are involved in that provide realistic opportunities to practise and/or improve them.

At Advanced Higher level it is expected that learners will be using a range of higher-order thinking skills. They will also develop skills in independent and autonomous learning.

Learners are expected to develop broad generic skills as an integral part of their learning experience. The *Course Specification* lists the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that learners should develop through this Course. These are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course.

For this Course, it is expected that the following skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work will be significantly developed.

Literacy

Writing means the ability to create texts which communicate ideas, opinions and information, to meet a purpose and within a context. In this context, 'texts' are defined as word-based materials (sometimes with supporting images) which are written, printed, Braille or displayed on screen. These will be technically accurate for the purpose, audience and context.

1.2 Writing

Learners develop the skills to effectively communicate key areas of Gaelic, make informed decisions and describe, clearly, Gaelic language issues in various media forms. Learners will have the opportunity to communicate applied knowledge and understanding throughout the Course, with an emphasis on applications and environmental/ethical/social impacts.

There will be opportunities to develop the literacy skills of listening and reading when gathering and processing information in Gaelic.

Thinking skills

This is the ability to develop the cognitive skills of remembering and identifying, understanding and applying.

The Course will allow learners to develop skills of applying, analysing and evaluating. Learners can analyse and evaluate practical work and data by reviewing the process, identifying issues and forming valid conclusions. They can

demonstrate understanding and application of key areas and explain and interpret information and data.

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5.3 Applying

Applying is the ability to use existing information to different contexts, and to plan, organise and complete a task such as a language investigation.

5.4 Analysing and evaluating

This covers the ability to identify and weigh up the features of a situation or issue in Gaelic and use judgement of them in coming to a conclusion. It includes reviewing and considering any potential solutions.

5.5 Creating

This is the ability to design something innovative or to further develop an existing thing by adding new dimensions or approaches. Learners can demonstrate their creativity, in particular, when planning writing or role plays. Learners have the opportunity to be innovative in their approach. Learners also have opportunities to make, write, say or do something new.

In addition, learners will also have opportunities to develop working with others and citizenship.

Working with others

Learning activities provide many opportunities, in all areas of the Course, for learners to work with others. Practical activities and investigations, in particular, offer opportunities for group work, which is an important aspect of language study and should be encouraged.

Citizenship

Learners will develop citizenship skills when considering the applications of Gaelic on our lives, as well as the social and cultural implications. Citizenship includes having concern for the environment and for others; being aware of rights and responsibilities; being aware of the democratic society; being outward looking towards society; being able to recognise one's personal role in this context; and being aware of global issues, understanding one's responsibilities within these, and acting responsibly.

Approaches to assessment

Assessment in Advanced Higher Courses will generally reflect the investigative nature of Courses at this level, together with high-level problem-solving and critical thinking skills and skills of analysis and synthesis.

This emphasis on higher-order skills, together with the more independent learning approaches that learners will use, distinguishes the added value at Advanced Higher level from the added value at other levels.

There are different approaches to assessment, and teachers and lecturers should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, as well as understanding of their learners and their varying needs, to determine the most appropriate ones and, where necessary, to consider workable alternatives.

Assessments must be fit for purpose and should allow for consistent judgements to be made by all teachers and lecturers. They should also be conducted in a supervised manner to ensure that the evidence provided is valid and reliable.

Unit assessment

Assessments must ensure that the evidence generated demonstrates, at the least, the minimum level of competence for each Unit. Teachers and lecturers preparing assessment methods should be clear about what that evidence will look like.

The purpose of this section is to give advice on approaches to assessment for the Unit. There will be other documents produced for centres to provide exemplification of assessments and guidance on how to write them.

Approaches to the assessment of a Unit when it forms part of a Course may differ from approaches to assessing the same Unit when it is not being delivered as part of a Course. If an integrated approach to Course delivery is chosen, then there may be opportunities for combining assessment across Units.

Assessments must be valid, reliable and fit for purpose for the subject and level, and should fit in with learning and teaching approaches.

Unit assessment should support learning and teaching and, where possible, enable personalisation and choice for learners in assessment methods and processes. Teachers and lecturers should select the assessment methods they believe are most appropriate, taking into account the needs of their learners and the requirements of the Unit.

There is no mandatory order for delivery of the Outcomes. These should be overtaken throughout the Unit and are an integral part of learning and teaching. This Course is divided into three components: performance, question paper and portfolio.

Performance (18% of total):

The purpose of this performance is to give learners the opportunity to demonstrate their talking and listening skills in Gaelic in a discussion.

Question paper (67% of total)

Section 1: Listening

The purpose of this question paper is to allow learners to demonstrate challenge and application in the skills of listening.

Section 2: Reading

The purpose of this question paper is to allow learners to demonstrate challenge and application in the skill of reading. Learners will read one written non-fiction text in Gaelic. They will respond to questions about the written text in English by using English.

Section 3: Discursive writing

The purpose of this question paper is to allow learners to demonstrate challenge and application in the skill of writing.

Section 4: Literature

The purpose of this question paper is to allow learners to demonstrate challenge and application in the skill of analysing and evaluating Gaelic literary text(s).

Portfolio (15% of total)

Strategies for gathering evidence

There may be opportunities in the day-to-day delivery of the Units in a Course to observe learners providing evidence which satisfies completely, or partially, a Unit or Units. This is naturally occurring evidence and can be recorded as evidence for an Outcome or parts of an Outcome. In some cases, additional evidence may also be required to supplement and confirm the naturally occurring evidence.

Approaches to assessment might cover the whole Unit or be combined across Outcomes. A holistic approach can enrich the assessment process for the learner by bringing together different Outcomes and/or Assessment Standards.

If a holistic approach is used, then it is necessary to be able to track individual Assessment Standard evidence.

Strategies for gathering evidence and ensuring that the learners' work is their own could include:

- ◆ personal interviews during which the teacher or lecturer can ask additional questions about completed work
- ◆ an oral presentation on their work

- ◆ writing reports in supervised conditions
- ◆ checklists to record the authenticity
- ◆ supplementary sources of evidence, such as witness testimony, film or audio clips

Evidence can be gathered from classwork, experiments, investigations and/or research carried out in this Unit. It can be obtained using one or more of the strategies outlined above or by alternative methods, which could include a test of knowledge, understanding and skills.

- ◆ Meaningful contribution to group work and/or discussions (making use of log books, blogs, question and answer sessions to confirm individual learners have met the required standards).
- ◆ Presentation of information to other groups and/or recorded oral evidence.
- ◆ Exemplification of concepts using (for example) a diagram.
- ◆ Practical demonstration with commentary/explanation/narrative.
- ◆ Investigations.
- ◆ Answers to multiple choice questions.
- ◆ Short written responses.
- ◆ Extended response essay-type questions.

Evidence should include the use of appropriate subject-specific terminology as well as the use of real-life examples where appropriate.

Flexibility in the method of assessment provides opportunities for learners to demonstrate attainment in a variety of ways and so reduce barriers to attainment.

The structure of an assessment used by a centre can take a variety of forms, for example:

- ◆ individual pieces of work could be collected in a folio as evidence for Outcomes and Assessment Standards
- ◆ assessment of each complete Outcome
- ◆ assessment that combines the Outcomes of one or more Units
- ◆ assessment that requires more than the minimum competence, which would allow learners to prepare for the Course assessment

Teachers and lecturers should note that learners' day-to-day work may produce evidence which satisfies assessment requirements of a Unit, or Units, either in full or partially. Such naturally occurring evidence may be used as a contribution towards Unit assessment. However, such naturally occurring evidence must still be recorded and evidence such as written reports, recording forms, PowerPoint slides, drawings/graphs, video footage or observational checklists provided.

Combining assessment across Units

Units will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the *Unit Specification*. Each Unit can be

assessed on an individual Outcome-by-Outcome basis or via the use of combined assessment for some or all Outcomes.

A combined approach to assessment will enrich the assessment process for the learner, avoid duplication of tasks and allow more emphasis on learning and teaching. Evidence could be drawn from a range of activities for a combined assessment. Care must be taken to ensure that combined assessments provide appropriate evidence for all the Outcomes that they claim to assess.

Units should be offered concurrently, thereby integrating and developing language skills in parallel with one another. This approach will make best possible use of available time and afford candidates greater flexibility and scope with regard to their research in the *Specialist Study Unit*.

Combining assessment will also give centres more time to manage the assessment process more efficiently. When combining assessments across Units, teachers/lecturers should use e-assessment wherever possible. Learners can easily update portfolios, electronic or written diaries and recording sheets.

For some Advanced Higher Courses, it may be that a strand of work which contributes to a Course assessment method is started when a Unit is being delivered and is completed in the Course assessment. In these cases, it is important that the evidence for the Unit assessment is clearly distinguishable from that required for the Course assessment.

Preparation for Course assessment

Each Course has additional time which may be used at the discretion of the teacher or lecturer to enable learners to prepare for Course assessment. This time may be used near the start of the Course and at various points throughout the Course for consolidation and support. It may also be used for preparation for Unit assessment, and, towards the end of the Course, for further integration, revision and preparation and/or gathering evidence for Course assessment.

Society, learning, employability and culture are the contexts within the Course assessment. Therefore, these are contexts that should be fully explored and developed in the delivery of the Units and the Course. In preparation, learners should be given opportunities to practise activities similar to what is expected in the external Course assessment.

For this Advanced Higher Course, the assessment methods for Course assessment are a question paper and a project. Learners should be given opportunities to practise these methods and prepare for them.

Examples of activities to include within this preparation time include:

- ◆ Preparing for the components of Course assessment, for example:
 - preparing for non-question paper components: selecting topics, gathering and researching information, evaluating and analysing findings,

developing and justifying conclusions, presenting the information (as appropriate)

- practising and refining practical skills
- practising and refining performance skills
- practising question paper techniques, revising for the question paper

In relation to preparing for the project, teachers and lecturers should explain requirements to learners and the amount and nature of the support they can expect. However, at Advanced Higher level it is expected that learners will work with more independence and less supervision and support.

Authenticity

In terms of authenticity, there are a number of techniques and strategies to ensure that learners present work that is their own. Teachers and lecturers should put in place mechanisms to authenticate learners' evidence.

In Advanced Higher Courses, because learners will take greater responsibility for their own learning and work more independently, teachers and lecturers need to have measures in place to ensure that work produced is the learner's own work.

For example:

- ◆ regular checkpoint/progress meetings with learners
- ◆ short spot-check personal interviews
- ◆ checklists which record activity/progress
- ◆ photographs, films or audio records

Group work approaches as part of the preparation for assessment can be helpful to simulate real-life situations, share tasks and promote teamworking skills. Group work approaches are acceptable as part of the preparation for assessment and also for formal assessment, where appropriate. However, there must be clear evidence for each learner to show that they have met the Evidence Requirements.

For more information, please refer to SQA's [Guide to Assessment](#).

Added value

Advanced Higher Courses include assessment of added value which is assessed in the Course assessment as well as confirming attainment in the Course and providing a grade. The added value for the Course will address the key purposes and aims of the Course, as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of challenge or application.

Information given in the *Course Specification* and the *Course Assessment Specification* about the assessment of added value is mandatory.

In Advanced Higher Courses, added value involves the assessment of higher-order skills such as high-level and more sophisticated investigation and research skills, critical thinking skills and skills of analysis and synthesis. Learners may be required to analyse and reflect on their assessment activity by commenting on it and/or drawing conclusions with commentary/justification. These skills contribute to the uniqueness of Advanced Higher Courses and to the overall higher level of performance expected at this level.

Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Course/Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Course.

It is important that centres are aware of and understand SQA's assessment arrangements for disabled learners, and those with additional support needs, when making requests for adjustments to published assessment arrangements. Centres will find more guidance on this in the series of publications on Assessment Arrangements on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.

The greater flexibility and choice in Advanced Higher Courses provide opportunities to meet a range of learners' needs and may remove the need for learners to have assessment arrangements. However, where a disabled learner needs a reasonable adjustment/assessment arrangements to be made, you should refer to the guidance given in the above link.

Appendix 1: Further information on Units in the Course

Approaches to the *Specialist Study*

- ◆ Learners will have the opportunity to study a topic in a Gaelic-related context. They may wish to choose a topic from the themes of society, learning, employability and culture which are addressed in the Course, in order to integrate language skills as much as possible. However, learners may choose from any themes or aspects of Gaelic culture, which may include an aspect or theme related to the literature studied.
- ◆ Learners will be expected, through the study of their chosen topics, to gain a growing understanding of the place of Gaelic language and society. At this level candidates will be expected to provide informed findings and conclusions.
- ◆ The *Specialist Study* will provide preparation of higher or further education. The activities in which candidates will engage during their study integrate their language, research and interpersonal skills. The process of acquiring information for the topic of study is as valuable as the end product itself.
- ◆ 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 and the information, materials or support that may be available to the candidate.
- ◆ Candidates will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own project. Some research may be undertaken outside the centre, making use of a variety of sources available locally or nationally.

Approaches to programming learning and tutorial support

- ◆ Candidates do not necessarily need a large amount of contact with the teacher/lecturer. Independent learning should be actively encouraged.
- ◆ Regular monitoring of learners' progress by the teacher/lecturer should take place. The teacher/lecturer should also provide intervention and support as appropriate.
- ◆ Opportunities to evaluate, review, revise and redraft are integral to the learning and teaching process.
- ◆ Opportunities should be given for learners to participate in a variety of activities such as individual, small group and whole class tasks. Tasks should stretch learners' capabilities and provide them with intellectual stimulation.

Possible liaison with FE/HE and employers

- ◆ Learners can develop their skills by joining conversation classes/reading groups outwith the presenting centre, either in their communities or through an FE/HE establishment.
- ◆ Learners should be encouraged to engage in work experience or seek employment where they can develop their skills.

- ◆ Learners may liaise with FE/HE establishments and employers when researching their *Specialist Study*.

Planning and preparing for the talking performance

- ◆ Candidates should become accustomed to conversing regularly and spontaneously in Gaelic both formally and informally throughout the Course.
- ◆ During talking exercises undertaken at this level, learners should be discouraged from relying on support notes and should be encouraged to try to manage without support notes.
- ◆ Candidates should be made aware of coping mechanisms to maintain interaction.
- ◆ Candidates should engage actively in listening to people talking and responding appropriately in Gaelic.
- ◆ Although independent learning is encouraged, candidates should be supported to some degree in choosing a topic for the performance.
- ◆ The talking performance should be recorded. It is the responsibility of centres to ensure the validity, reliability and security of assessment instruments.

In preparation for the listening assessment, learners should have the opportunity to practise:

- ◆ responding in English to questions in English
- ◆ listening to the views/intentions expressed or the events recounted
- ◆ listening to texts of greater complexity and sophistication that are of a more factual/discursive nature, eg news broadcasts
- ◆ making notes in English under given headings
- ◆ taking notes in Gaelic while listening
- ◆ working out different types of questions

Listening activities similar to those in the Course assessment should also be developed and practised.

In preparation for the reading assessment, learners should have the opportunity to practise:

- ◆ responding in English to questions in English
- ◆ reading the views/intentions expressed or the events recounted
- ◆ reading to texts of greater complexity and sophistication that are of a more factual/discursive nature, eg news broadcasts
- ◆ making notes in English under given headings
- ◆ understanding what is required of different types of questions
- ◆ annotating literary texts to facilitate their understanding and analysis of texts under controlled and timed conditions

In preparation for the writing assessment, learners should have the opportunity to practise:

- ◆ researching and revising/learning topic-specific vocabulary
- ◆ using language templates suitable for discursive writing
- ◆ presenting arguments on topical issues
- ◆ using information, ideas, approaches and language to develop writing skills in Gaelic
- ◆ developing ideas from talking activities

- ◆ responding to an unseen task
- ◆ developing different writing styles such as creative and personal, as well as factual, discursive writing — this will give learners personalisation and choice in adopting a style of their choosing in the Course assessment

In preparation for the literature assessment, learners should have the opportunity to practise:

- ◆ reading more complex and sophisticated examples of different genres of literature, eg poetry, short story, novel, drama, from the 20th/21st century
- ◆ understanding writers' themes, aims and messages
- ◆ understanding different literary techniques used to convey themes and messages, eg similes, metaphors, imagery, etc
- ◆ developing their personal responses to literary texts in order to demonstrate engagement
- ◆ supporting their responses with evidence from texts
- ◆ annotating literary texts to facilitate their understanding and analysis of texts under controlled and timed conditions
- ◆ understanding what is required of different types of questions

In preparation for developing translation skills:

- ◆ Learners at this level will develop the ability to translate from Gaelic into English. They will benefit from activities which develop their ability to understand and process what they read, for example: reading for the main information and ideas; identifying the meaning of new words and expressions; identifying the style and tone of the writing; identifying cultural references.
- ◆ When processing new language, learners could be encouraged to: identify the ideas and how they are linked in the text; choose the 'best' words and expressions to represent the meaning in English; convey the meaning of the original by rephrasing without changing the sense.

Suggested development of the four contexts

Society	Family and friends	Becoming an adult/new family structure/ marriage/partnership/gang culture/bullying/social influences and pressures; meeting new friends at college/university
	Lifestyle	Impact of smoking, drugs, alcohol on national/global level, comparison of rural and urban lifestyles, issues affecting traditional Gaelic speaking areas such as depopulation and unemployment
	Media	Impact of the digital age, positive and negative effects of media in language revivalism and preservation, emergence of Gaelic media
	Global languages	Minority languages and their importance/association with culture, impact of language decline, attitudes towards minority languages, evaluation of resources spent on language revivalism
	Citizenship	Global citizenship/democracy/politics/power
Learning	Learning in context	Understanding self as a learner, eg learning styles/importance of language learning, understanding the differences between school/college and higher education, showing initiative in taking responsibility for personal learning
	Education	Advantages/disadvantages of higher or further education, choosing a university/college, lifelong learning; impact, advantages and disadvantages of Gaelic medium education
Employability	Jobs	Getting a summer job, planning for future jobs/higher education, gap year, career path, equality in the workplace, benefits of bilingualism in seeking employment in Scotland and abroad
Employability	Work and CVs	Preparing for a job interview/importance of language in global contexts, job opportunities, preparing to compete for jobs in difficult economic times on national and global level

Culture	Planning a trip	Taking a gap year Working abroad (mobility) Travel
	Other countries	Living in a multicultural society/stereotypes/ prejudice and racism
	Celebrating a special event	Social influences on/importance of traditions, customs and beliefs in another country, comparison and evaluation of Gaelic festivals such as Fèisean, National Mod to festivals in other countries
	Literature	Literature — analysis and evaluation of texts from different genres
	Film and television	Studying the media of another country and evaluating its impact

Appendix 2: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications are available on SQA's website at: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.
- ◆ Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work
- ◆ Building the Curriculum 5: A Framework for Assessment
- ◆ [Course Specifications](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment](#)
- ◆ [Overview of Qualification Reports](#)
- ◆ Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook: User Guide](#) and [SCQF level descriptors](#)
- ◆ [SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)
- ◆ [Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool](#)
- ◆ [Coursework Authenticity: A Guide for Teachers and Lecturers](#)

Administrative information

Published: March 2013 (draft version 1.0)

History of changes to Advanced Higher draft Course/Unit Support Notes

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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