



Higher Modern Languages — draft Course rationale and summary

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Course rationale

Background

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles

Learning a new language enables learners to make connections with different people and their cultures and to play a fuller part as global citizens. The ability to use language lies at the centre of thinking and learning.

Language is at the core of thinking. Learners reflect, communicate and develop ideas through language. Higher Modern Languages provides learners with the opportunity to: develop skills in listening and talking, reading, and writing, which are essential for learning, work and life; use different media effectively for learning and communication; and develop understanding of how language works, and use language to communicate ideas and information.

The Course also provides learners with the opportunity to: use creative and critical thinking to synthesise ideas and arguments; enhance their enjoyment and their understanding of their own and other cultures; explore the interconnected nature of languages; and develop independent learning.

The study of a modern language has a unique contribution to make to the development of cultural awareness, as it provides learners with a means of communicating directly with people from different cultures, enhancing their understanding and enjoyment of other cultures and of their own. They gain insights into other ways of thinking and other views of the world, and therefore develop a much richer understanding of active citizenship.

Learners encounter a wide range of different types of texts in different media. Building on the four capacities, the Course enables learners to communicate, be critical thinkers, develop cultural awareness, and be creative.

Purpose and aims of the Course

The main purpose of Higher Modern Languages is to develop the skills of listening and talking, reading, and writing, in order to understand and use one of the following languages:

- ◆ Cantonese
- ◆ French
- ◆ Gaelic (Learners)
- ◆ German
- ◆ Italian
- ◆ Mandarin (Simplified or Traditional)
- ◆ Spanish
- ◆ Urdu

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 listen and talk, read, and write in a modern language, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ the ability to understand and apply knowledge of a modern language
- ◆ the language skills of translation
- ◆ the ability to plan and research, integrating and applying language skills as appropriate to purpose, audience and context

The Course contributes towards the development of literacy skills by providing learners with opportunities to listen, talk, read, and write in a modern language, and to reflect on how this relates to English.

Successful completion of Higher Modern Languages represents a level of competence closely linked to Independent User level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Information about typical learners who might do the Course

The Course provides flexibility, personalisation and choice to enable learners to achieve in different ways and at a different pace.

Prior learning in the subject is not essential, although the Course provides opportunities for learners to build on prior learning experienced in a broad general education or in Modern Languages qualifications at a lower SCQF level.

The Course is designed to be accessible. The Units are organised by the receptive (listening and reading) and productive (talking and writing) skills of language.

Progression from Higher Modern Languages includes opportunities for vertical and lateral progression to:

- ◆ Advanced Higher Modern Languages
- ◆ Scottish Baccalaureate in Languages
- ◆ Modern Languages for Work Purposes Units
- ◆ further education
- ◆ higher education

and ultimately, for some, to employment.

Course summary

Course title: Higher Modern Languages

SCQF level 6 (24 SCQF credit points)

Course outline

Mandatory Units

Modern Languages: Understanding Language (Higher) (9 SCQF credit points)

Modern Languages: Expressing Language (Higher) (9 SCQF credit points)

Course assessment

(6 SCQF credit points)

This Course includes six SCQF credit points for 40 additional programmed hours to allow preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

Course structure and conditions of award

The Course provides learners with the opportunity to develop their listening and talking, reading, and writing skills in order to understand and use a modern language. The two Units, taken together, include the four language skills of listening and talking, reading, and writing. The structure of the Units enables learners to focus on the skills required to understand and use a modern language and to integrate listening and talking, reading, and writing skills across the Units. Each Unit also offers opportunities for learners to focus on particular skills.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a variety of ways.

Modern Languages: Understanding Language (Higher)

The purpose of this Unit is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop listening and reading skills, and to develop their knowledge and understanding of detailed and complex language in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts, such as citizenship, society, learning, employability, and culture. The Unit provides learners with the opportunity to develop the skills needed to understand a modern language in a wide range of contexts.

Modern Languages: Expressing Language (Higher)

The purpose of this Unit is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop talking and writing skills, and to develop their knowledge and understanding of detailed and complex language in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts, such as citizenship, society, learning, employability, and culture. The Unit provides learners with the opportunity to develop the skills needed to use a modern language in a wide range of contexts.

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

Assessment

Information about assessment standards for the Course will be included in the *Course Assessment Specification*, which will provide full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in Unit specifications.

They will be assessed pass/fail within centres.

SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgements are consistent and meet national standards.

Exemplification of possible assessment approaches for these Units will be provided in the *National Assessment Resource*.

Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)¹. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must 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 breadth, challenge or application.

In the Higher Modern Languages Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

Learners will provide evidence of their listening and talking, reading, and writing skills, and their ability to understand and use a modern language in a familiar context. The Course assessment will take the form of an [assignment](#)² through which learners will demonstrate their talking skills, and a [question paper](#)³ through which learners will demonstrate their listening, reading, and writing skills, in the modern language.

¹ Definitions can be found here: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html

² See link above for definition.

³ See link above for definition.