External Assessment Report 2011

Subject	**Gàidhlig**
Level	**Standard Grade**

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the Examination.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

The performance of candidates was generally good in all aspects of the examinations. The number of candidates was similar to the number in 2010. Once again, the question papers were set by an experienced team of setters who have worked together for a number of years. This results in a good degree of consistency in papers from one year to another. The marking is done by the same team of experienced markers.

The following general comments apply to this year's diet of examinations:

- The number of candidates this year was 173; the number in 2010 was 171. In 2009 it was 148, and in 2008 199.
- The directly-graded element of Speaking, which tends to be a good indicator of overall candidate ability, indicated that there were fewer candidates at Grade 1 and Grade 2 than in the previous three years.
- In the directly-graded element of Writing, the overall performance of candidates was slightly better than in recent years. In the Writing examination, 5% of candidates achieved Grade 1, compared to 6% in 2010 and 12% in 2009. The cumulative percentages for Grades 1 and 2 were 27% for 2011, 19% for 2010 and 24% for 2009.
- The performance of candidates in the Folio was better than in recent years. Both the Writing aspect of the Folio and the Reading aspect showed an improvement. In Writing (Folio), 23% of candidates achieved Grade 1 in 2011 and 44% achieved either Grade 1 or Grade 2. (In 2010, the corresponding percentages had been 14% and 33%.) In Reading (Folio), the percentage achieving Grade 1 increased from 16% in 2010 to 21% in 2011. 43% of candidates achieved Grades 1 or 2 (37% in 2010). It was pleasing to see an improvement in the overall quality of the Folio.
- There were a few instances where Folios were either incomplete (having only three pieces of work rather than the four that are required) or where the pieces of work submitted in the Folio were not consistent in standard (three pieces of a similar standard but a fourth piece of poorer quality). Candidates should be encouraged to re-draft pieces where appropriate.

Speaking

The performance of candidates in Speaking was broadly similar to the performance in recent years, although there was a smaller percentage of candidates who achieved Grade 1. Generally, the performance of candidates in this element is very good. The percentage of candidates achieving Credit level in Speaking in recent years is as follows:

Year	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**
%	76	76	75	69

While there have been some fluctuations in performance at certain grades in recent years, the overall trend illustrates a consistently high level of performance.

Listening

Candidates performed well in the Listening papers, particularly at Credit level. Overall, the performance of candidates was similar to previous years, and it is pleasing to see that candidate performance appears to be consistent in this element of the assessment.

The overall performance in the Credit paper was good, with 80% of candidates achieving a Credit award.

At General level, the overall performance was good, although some candidates did not answer all the questions. Markers commented that some candidates had tried to write what they had heard but that, in some cases, their writing was difficult to understand. Some candidates wrote responses in English, which would indicate that they understood what the response should be, but they did not write it in Gaelic.

At Foundation level, candidates performed well. Many of the questions are multiple choice, and many of the responses required are short.

Reading

Folio (Responses on literature studied during the course)

The quality of the Reading element of the Folio improved this year at Credit level, with 43% of candidates achieving Credit level compared to 37% in 2010. The performance of candidates in the Reading element of the Folio in recent years is as follows:

Year	Total entries	Grade 1 (%)	Grade 2 (%)	Grade 3 (%)	Grade 4 (%)
2008	193	18	17	26	21
2009	146	10	21	18	31
2010	171	16	21	17	30
2011	173	21	22	30	17

- It is pleasing to see that the performance of candidates in the Folio was good this year. The analysis of texts by some candidates was very good.
- Although the overall performance of candidates has improved, candidates should be encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to re-draft their work.
- There is a sense of literature being studied specifically for the Folio. Centres should endeavour to provide each candidate with access to a broad range of literary texts.

Examination

Candidates coped well with the Reading papers. Performance was generally good, although the percentage of candidates achieving Grade 1 was lower than the percentage of candidates achieving Grade 1 in Listening. It appears then, that candidates found the Credit Reading more demanding than the Credit Listening.

The main reason for candidates losing marks at Credit level was that some of their responses did not contain sufficient detail.

At General level and at Foundation level, candidates performed very well and there were no specific issues encountered.

Writing

The performance of candidates in the Writing element showed an improvement this year, both in the Folio and in the examination.

Folio (Personal Writing)

Candidates performed well in this element. There was good evidence of well-prepared essays. The performance of candidates in the Folio (Writing) in recent years is as follows:

Year	Total entries	Grade 1 (%)	Grade 2 (%)	Grade 3 (%)	Grade 4 (%)
2008	193	17	21	28	17
2009	146	14	18	25	28
2010	168	14	19	28	23
2011	173	23	21	23	23

Candidates in a number of centres submitted responses on the same topic. Centres should endeavour to offer candidates a range of Writing activities.

Examination

The performance of candidates in the Writing examination was slightly better than in recent years. The performance of candidates in this element in recent years is as follows:

Year	Total entries	Grade 1 (%)	Grade 2 (%)	Grade 3 (%)	Grade 4 (%)
2008	193	10	11	27	25
2009	146	12	12	25	29
2010	168	6	13	23	29
2011	173	5	22	28	30

Once again, the percentage of candidates achieving Grade 1 or Grade 2 was low compared to the percentage of candidates achieving Credit level in other elements.

Many candidates wrote longer essays in the examination than the essays they had submitted for the Folio.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Candidates performed particularly well in Speaking and Listening.

There was also an improvement in the quality of Writing this year.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Candidates performed well in all aspects of the assessment for Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2, and no specific issues were identified.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

- Particular attention should be paid to the preparation and presentation of the Folio. The Folio provides an ideal opportunity for candidates to present good quality work because they have opportunities for preparation and for re-drafting. It would be good to see the improvement in the quality of the Folios this year continued in future years.
- Centres should consider support for candidates whose handwriting is difficult to read.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Standard Grade

Number of resulted entries in 2010	171

Number of resulted entries in 2011	173

Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of overall awards

Grade 1	30.1%
Grade 2	36.4%
Grade 3	20.8%
Grade 4	8.7%
Grade 5	1.7%
Grade 6	0.0%
Grade 7	0.0%
No award	2.3%

Grade boundaries for each assessable element in the subject included in the report

Assess-able Element	**Credit Max Mark**	**Grade Boundaries**		**General Max Mark**	**Grade Boundaries**		**Found-ation Max Mark**	**Grade Boundaries**	
		1	2		3	4		5	6
R	50	43	32	40	28	21	30	19	15
L	50	37	25	40	27	19	30	19	13