

Our ref: MMW

15 December 2004

To: SQA Co-ordinator
Secondary Schools and FE Colleges

Action by Recipient	
	Response required
✓	Note and pass on
	None — update/information only

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Dear Colleague

**National Qualifications
Gaelic (Learners) and Gàidhlig**

The contents of this circular should be passed to the member of staff responsible for Gaelic subjects.

1 Access 3, Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher and Advanced Higher

SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk) is now the main channel for SQA information.

The following material is available from the Gaelic (Learners) and Gàidhlig subject page of the website:

- ◆ Arrangements (giving details of syllabus and assessment requirements)
- ◆ 2004 Marking Instructions for Gaelic (Learners) and Gàidhlig Higher
- ◆ Reports on 2004 external assessment and moderation
- ◆ National Qualification Review reports on Gaelic (Learners) and Gàidhlig

The following material is also available on the website:

- ◆ 2005 examination timetable
- ◆ Operational guide (giving details of submission dates and other procedural information)
- ◆ Catalogue of National Qualifications 2004/2005 — Supplementary Information (confirming code numbers and other details)

2 **Rubric — Standard Grade Gàidhlig Foundation, General and Credit**

From the 2005 examination, rubric on the front page of the Listening and Reading examination papers in the above subject will be in Gaelic rather than in English.

3 **Moderator guidance on Talk**

Centres should be aware of the following issues when assessing candidates for Talk:

- ◆ The maximum number of words permitted in notes/prompts is 40.
- ◆ The interlocutor should enable sufficient pauses in the presentation or conversation to allow candidates to recall an appropriate word or phrase. This is of particular importance in the ‘general/unrehearsed’ aspect of their Talk assessment.
- ◆ Tapes submitted for Moderation should be recorded continuously, with one tape submitted per candidate.

4 **Submission of Appeals**

- ◆ Whilst it is accepted that the best pieces of candidate work may have already been submitted in their Folios, centres may wish to include drafts and other pieces of work as evidence to support an appeal for individual candidates. Appeals should only be considered where an upgrade would alter the overall grade. A rationale sheet should also be submitted when Appeals are made for more than 10% of any cohort.
- ◆ Listening transcripts should accompany evidence of performance in listening.

5 **Standard Grade Predictions: Awarding of Grades**

For the elements of Listening and Reading, the *a priori* (‘cut-off’) scores are 50-69% for the lower award and 70%+ for the higher award. This information should be used by centres when predicting estimates for candidates in these elements.

6 **Gaelic Orthographic Conventions**

It is now hoped to issue the updated version of the above publication in Spring 2005. The Scottish Executive and Bòrd na Gàidhlig are thanked for their support and stakeholders are thanked for their ongoing contribution to the updating process.

7 **Listening Examinations in 2005**

It is intended to continue supplying Listening materials for external examinations on CD instead of audio-tape, although the latter are still available on request for this session. This should provide reliable sound quality as well as being less bulky for centres to store over time. If you anticipate that this will cause any difficulty in your

centres, please contact Clare Hickson in SQA's Dalkeith office — tel: 0131-561 6815.

8 **National Qualifications Review**

The final meeting of the Subject Advisory Group for Gaelic took place on the 13 and 14 December 2004. Consensus was achieved in relation to a number of important outstanding issues, and SQA would like to express its gratitude to the group and its appreciation of the hard work of all those involved. The next stage in the review is Subject Validation: it is envisaged that this will take place in early 2005 and will be undertaken by a new group of representatives from the Gaelic teaching profession.

9 **Provision of examinations in the medium of Gaelic**

SQA is currently able to make the following examinations available in the medium of Gaelic this session, subject to demand: Standard Grade Geography, Standard Grade History, Standard Grade Mathematics and Standard Grade Modern Studies.

10 **Numbering systems**

Centres are asked to be note that both numbering systems in use in Gaelic will also be represented in SQA's examination papers.

11 **Allocation of candidates to Gaelic (Learners) and Gàidhlig Courses and Programmes of Study**

Please see Appendix 1 for a copy of the above guidance.

10 **Enquires**

All enquiries in relation to Gaelic subjects and issues should be addressed primarily to Marilyn Waters, Qualifications Officer — direct line: **0141 242 2195**. Enquiries concerning copies of NAB materials and other publications should be directed to the Customer Contact Centre on **0845 279 1000**.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Wilson
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NQ Division