



## Course Report 2016

Subject	Gàidhlig
Level	Higher

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any Post Results Services.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers, lecturers and assessors in their preparation of candidates for future assessment. 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 assessment documents and marking instructions.

# Section 1: Comments on the Assessment

## Component 1: Question Paper – Leughadh agus Sgrìobhadh

### Section 1 — Leughadh airson Tuigsinn, Mion-Sgrùdadh is Luachadh

This section of the question paper largely performed in line with expectations, and feedback from the marking team and from practitioners suggested that the question paper was fair in terms of overall level of demand. Feedback from a number of candidates was positive, and it was clear that they found the passage interesting and enjoyable and as a consequence engaged fully with it.

All questions functioned as hoped, and individual questions functioned appropriately to differentiate candidates. Some minor adjustments were made to marking instructions to take account of overall performance.

### Section 2 — Leughadh Breithneachail is Sgrìobhadh

This section of the question paper fully performed in line with expectations, and again, feedback from the marking team and from practitioners suggested that the question paper was fair in terms of overall level of demand, providing plenty opportunities for candidates to select an appropriate question.

## Component 2: Question Paper – Èisteachd (Listening)

Here again, the question paper fully performed in line with expectations. Evidence from various sources suggested that the passage for the listening was interesting and engaging and this was borne out in candidate responses.

## Component 3: Performance - Talking

Candidates performed as expected in this aspect of the assessment. Teachers should ensure that the performance follows the new specifications, which are different to the old Higher. The assessment should consist of a conversation as opposed to a presentation.

# Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

## Areas in which candidates performed well

### Component 1: Question Paper – Leughadh agus Sgrìobhadh

#### Section 1 — Leughadh

Most candidates performed quite well in answering the questions based on the passage. It was clear that candidates were knowledgeable on how to answer specific questions, whether these were based around understanding or where they had to analyse how specific word choice or sentence structure was used. They were also able to use an example and then illustrate how features worked or the ideas associated with words. There was evidence of this having improved from last year.

## **Section 2 — Leughadh Breithneachail is Sgrìobhadh**

Most candidates wrote lengthy responses to their chosen text and were able to use evidence to back up points within their essays. Candidates chose questions based on poetry and prose texts, and many focused on the more 'traditional' texts which have proven their worth over the years.

## **Component 2: Question Paper 2 – Èisteachd (Listening)**

Most candidates performed well in this component with few questions not being attempted by candidates.

## **Component 3: Performance - Talking**

Candidates performed very well in this aspect of the assessment. Candidates were well prepared for the assessment. Candidates discussed a range of different topics that allowed them to perform to the best of their abilities.

## **Areas which candidates found demanding**

### **Component 1: Question Paper 1 – Leughadh agus Sgrìobhadh**

#### **Section 1 — Leughadh**

Some candidates found question 12 more challenging where they had to explain the suitability of particular imagery. The same was true of question 8 where imagery formed a possible answer here. Question 13 was also problematic for some where they had to consider the effectiveness of the ending of the passage. Some also found expressing answers in their own words demanding.

#### **Section 2 — Leughadh Breithneachail is Sgrìobhadh**

Some candidates found being able to write at sufficient length about their chosen text demanding. This was coupled with flaws in technical accuracy. A tendency to recite plot details or content from texts without any analysis or evaluation was also evident in a number of responses.

A small number of candidates found the time constraint for covering the two components in the paper quite challenging.

### **Component 2: Question Paper 2 – Èisteachd (Listening)**

Some candidates found particular questions more challenging.

In question 4 some candidates were unsure of the meaning of 'còmhdhail' and 'goireasan-siubhail'.

In question 5 some found gaining the second mark more difficult. This was also true for question 11.

### **Component 3: Performanc - Talking**

Some candidates did find it difficult to initiate the conversation, but were able to keep the conversation flowing with some encouragement from the assessor.

## **Section 3: Advice for the preparation of future candidates**

### **Component 1: Question Paper 1 – Leughadh agus Sgrìobhadh**

#### **Section 1 — Leughadh**

Candidates should continue to be aware of the number of marks awarded for questions and the need for the appropriate number of points and/or examples. They should also remember that in most cases marks are awarded for the explanation/analysis and not for the example itself.

In addition to a continued focus on answering questions based on word choice and sentence structure, they should also practise how to tackle those which focus on imagery, and the need for both the literal and figurative image to be explained. Questions that focus on the ending or a particular section should also be practised, and candidates are reminded that they are usually guided to consider and link to other sections of the passage.

#### **Section 2 — Leughadh Breithneachail is Sgrìobhadh**

Candidates need to ensure that they go beyond a retelling of the text and demonstrate some depth of analysis and evaluation in their answers, backed up by sufficient textual evidence. They should also show their own personal response to texts. Knowledge of critical terminology should also be evident in responses.

Teachers, lecturers and assessors should ensure the suitability of texts in terms of demand and scope for candidates to construct good quality answers. Care should also be taken with abridged versions of texts. Candidates should continue to work on technical accuracy.

The reading and writing sections were separated this year to facilitate candidates in working through the two components. Candidates should ensure that they answer in the correct booklet provided. They should also be aware of their time management in working through these two components.

### **Component 2: Question Paper 2 – Èisteachd (Listening); Component 3: Performance – Talking**

Candidates should continue to be encouraged to listen to online/radio/television broadcasts on news and current affairs to develop their knowledge of the vocabulary, subject matters and registers involved.

Teachers, lecturers and assessors are encouraged to make use of understanding standards materials to help with all areas of the course assessment along with past papers and marking instructions and specimen and exemplar papers.

## Grade Boundary and Statistical information:

### Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2015	87
------------------------------------	----

Number of resulted entries in 2016	132
------------------------------------	-----

### Statistical information: Performance of candidates

#### Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark -				
A	37.9%	37.9%	50	70
B	20.5%	58.3%	27	60
C	22.0%	80.3%	29	50
D	8.3%	88.6%	11	45
No award	11.4%	-	15	0

## General commentary on grade boundaries

- ◆ While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and a well prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary), it is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.
- ◆ Each year, SQA therefore holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Business Manager and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the management team at SQA.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.
- ◆ An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in, say, Higher Chemistry, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related, as they do not contain identical questions.
- ◆ SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.