

Our ref: MW/GAEL

15 July 2008

Action by Recipient
Response required
✓ Note and pass on
Note — update/information only

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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications update

The content of this letter should be passed on to the member of staff responsible for Gaelic (Learners) and Gàidhlig subjects.

Gaelic (Learners) and Gàidhlig update

We wish to bring the following matters to your attention.

1. External Assessment reports and Internal Assessment reports diet 2008 (formerly known as Principal Assessor, Senior Verifier and Course reports)

SQA will publish the above reports by October 2008. These will be available on each NQ language section of SQA's website. The reports are based on information and data from candidate performance, examiner feedback and the observations of question paper markers. Principal Assessors offer advice on performance and future preparation of candidates which centres will find useful for departmental planning and discussion.

2. Availability of past question papers on SQA's website

In and after 2007, all past papers are available to download from SQA's website. Papers are available via a link on accessing the website. During 2008 and 2009, MP3 sound files will also become available to accompany Listening papers. Please check the website for ongoing updates.

3. Listening examinations 2009

The timings for reading questions before candidates hear the recordings will be incorporated into all recordings, so the recordings can be played without pause. At Higher level some of the internal pauses will be altered to allow candidates more time to write their answers. The overall length of the examination will not change. A replacement instruction sheet will be provided to centres (where necessary) to illustrate the process.

In all Listening examinations a sheet of A4 paper will be provided for writing notes.

4. Use of texts and dictionaries

Dictionaries can be used in all other parts of the above examinations, but may not be taken in to listening examinations.

In the literature sections of all NQ examinations in Gaelic (Learners) and Gàidhlig, up to **four** texts may be taken in to the examination room. They must be unannotated and the titles should be recorded by candidates inside the front cover of their answer booklet. Up to **six** texts can be taken in to the exam by candidates at Advanced Higher Gàidhlig.

5. Appeals

Centres should avoid writing on evidence being submitted for appeals.

6. Examination of Writing

Reading stimuli/information points in the examination should not be lifted directly for use in the Writing component of the examination.

7. Gaelic Language Planning in SQA

SQA has been working on its Gaelic Language Plan for over a year and has now been approached on a formal basis by Bòrd na Gàidhlig with a request to develop a Gaelic Language Plan. We would appreciate and encourage feedback from members of the Gaelic teaching profession in relation to our language planning activities. Please contact Marilyn Waters at the above e-mail address with your comments.

Yours faithfully,



Alan Wilson
Qualifications Manager