

GÀIDHLIG
Higher

First edition – published March 2006

National Course Specification

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

COURSE CODE C229 12

COURSE STRUCTURE

The Course has three mandatory Units:

DV47 12 Gàidhlig: Sgilean Èisteachd agus Leughaidh (Higher) 1 credit (40 hours)
(Gàidhlig: Listening and Reading Skills)

DV48 12 Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher) 1 credit (40 hours)
(Gàidhlig: Speaking and Writing Skills)

DV49 12 Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher) 1 credit (40 hours)
(Gàidhlig: Literature and Culture)

All Courses include 40 hours over and above the 120 hours for the Units. This may be used for induction, extending the range of learning and teaching approaches, support, consolidation, integration of learning and preparation for Course assessment.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following or equivalent:

- ♦ Standard Grade Gàidhlig at Credit level
- ♦ Intermediate 2 Gàidhlig or its Units

It is expected that candidates will have been allocated to Gàidhlig* or Gaelic* (Learners) programmes of study in accordance with SQA's published guidelines (see document *Guidance on Allocation to Gàidhlig or Gaelic (Learners) Programmes of Study and Qualifications*, available on the SQA website at www.sqa.org.uk).

***NOTE:** Gàidhlig and Gaelic refer throughout to Scottish Gaelic only.

Administrative Information

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National Course Specification (cont)

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

PROGRESSION

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- Advanced Higher Gàidhlig
- Higher National programmes
- higher education programmes
- training or employment

CREDIT VALUE

The Higher Course in Gàidhlig is allocated 24 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*.

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

Achievement of this Course gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill	Communication at SCQF Level 6
Core Skills components	None

National Course Specification: Course details

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

RATIONALE

The Gàidhlig (Higher) Course builds on the candidate's previous studies in the language at Standard Grade or at Intermediate 2 and will form a platform from which candidates can progress to further study.

Whatever the career pathway or progression route chosen, Gàidhlig (Higher) can provide a valuable experience for the candidate by enhancing their communication skills and their knowledge and understanding of Scotland's Gaelic literature, culture and heritage.

The Course will provide opportunities to:

- ◆ develop the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately at a complex level in spoken and written language with respect to audience, context and purpose
- ◆ develop the ability to listen to and interpret what others say and to respond appropriately with respect to audience, context and purpose
- ◆ deepen awareness of language and how it works taking account of style, grammar, structure and idiom
- ◆ introduce candidates to a range of reading material for appreciation, analysis, and evaluation
- ◆ study and evaluate literary texts from different genres
- ◆ develop creative and imaginative ability
- ◆ develop skills valuable for work
- ◆ engage in individual, group and/or class study of topics of a historical or cultural nature
- ◆ foster positive attitudes towards Gaelic language and culture
- ◆ build the self-esteem and self-confidence of candidates who are fluent in a minority language
- ◆ encourage candidates to appreciate the advantages of bilingualism educationally, socially and professionally

The intention is to ensure that candidate will be well equipped to use Gaelic in a society in which the status of the language and the opportunities open to those who use it are steadily increasing.

This Course is suitable for candidates attending schools and further education institutions or following other Gàidhlig programmes of study. Candidates may wish to gain a National Qualification in Higher Gàidhlig as part of their progression towards specialist courses in Further and Higher Education, for vocational reasons or for self-development.

Successful completion of the Higher Course will provide a sound base for further study of Gàidhlig language and literature at Advanced Higher level.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

AIMS

The aims of the Course are to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills gained in Standard Grade Gàidhlig or Intermediate 2 Gàidhlig. Specifically at this level the Course can:

- ◆ increase the candidate's knowledge, understanding and appreciation of:
 - Gaelic language
 - Gaelic literature
 - Gaelic culture
- ◆ provide a worthwhile and enjoyable educational experience
- ◆ develop the candidate's abilities to a complex level in:
 - listening
 - speaking
 - reading
 - writing
 - literary appreciation
- ◆ promote and encourage the candidate's awareness of the three main broad purposes of language:
 - *Informative*: effective communication in contemporary Gaelic society requires both understanding and command of appropriate vocabulary, structures and styles. In order to achieve this, the candidate must be able to recognise specific purposes and the needs of particular audiences.
 - *Expressive*: the candidate will develop the ability to clarify and to articulate accurately their own wishes, intentions, experiences, reactions, attitudes, ideas and values, and to relate these to the Gaelic culture of which they are part.
 - *Imaginative*: imaginative uses of language also have great significance for personal and linguistic development. Both literature and the imaginative output of the media can promote appreciation of:
 - the complexity of human motivations, actions, emotions, relationships and ideas
 - the use of language as a very versatile and sensitive means of communication
- ◆ develop research and reporting skills
 - The individual study in the Unit *Litreachas agus Cultar* caters for individual interest and provides opportunity for individual fulfilment. It can also equip candidates with reporting skills. The candidate will be encouraged to engage in independent study as an end in itself and also as essential preparation for further study or for the world of work.

The overall intention across the Course is to ensure that candidates will be well equipped to use Gaelic in a society in which the status of the language and the opportunities open to speakers of it are steadily increasing.

The Gàidhlig Courses from Intermediate 1 to Higher have been designed in a hierarchical structure. The common approach between the Courses at Intermediate 2 and Higher is such that the Unit Specifications contain similar Outcomes.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

AIMS (cont)

However, it is important to distinguish between the Intermediate 2 and Higher levels. This has been achieved in three ways:

- ♦ greater complexity in language skills is required and is reflected in the demands of the Outcomes and the Course assessment
- ♦ the literature requirements at Unit and Course level are more demanding of candidates
- ♦ there is recognition of the growing independence of candidates and the individual study requires more personal responsibility for learning from candidates

COURSE CONTENT

This Course has three mandatory Units:

Gàidhlig: Sgilean Èisteachd agus Leughaidh (Higher) 1 credit (40 hours)
(Gàidhlig: Listening and Reading Skills) (Higher)

Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher) 1 credit (40 hours)
(Gàidhlig: Speaking and Writing Skills) (Higher)

The two Units *Gàidhlig: Sgilean Èisteachd agus Leughaidh (Higher)* and *Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher)* include:

- ♦ the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing
- ♦ language rules

Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher) 1 credit (40 hours)
(Gàidhlig: Literature and Culture) (Higher)

This Unit of the Higher Course will provide opportunity for the study of literature and for an individual study linked to a background aspect of Gaelic culture.

Gàidhlig: Sgilean Èisteachd agus Leughaidh (Higher)

This Unit will help candidates to understand and appreciate complex spoken and written communication. It requires them to identify the main points of a text and the specific points of detail which support main points. It also requires candidates to interpret an author's purpose in writing a text and to assess the techniques used by the author to achieve that purpose.

Material from newspapers, magazines, electronic publications, promotional literature, radio or television programmes, expository or journalistic prose and excerpts from novels or short stories will provide a wide choice of reading and listening sources at this level.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher)

This Unit will help candidates to deliver complex spoken communication and to produce complex written communication. It requires candidates to think about the reason why they are delivering or producing a communication and it also requires them to consider the intended audience for their communication to ensure that it is coherent, accurate and appropriate.

Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher)

Literature

This part of the Unit will help candidates to appreciate and evaluate Gaelic literature mainly from the 20th and/or 21st century. The texts selected for study can include the following genres:

- ◆ novel
- ◆ biography
- ◆ autobiography
- ◆ poetry/song
- ◆ drama
- ◆ short story
- ◆ essay

Candidates will learn how to demonstrate a heightened understanding and appreciation of the theme, viewpoint and purpose of a piece of literature, as well as how to comment on technical aspects of literary writing.

Culture – Individual Study

This Unit will enable candidates to engage in an individual study of an aspect of Gaelic which interests them. This study may be related to the texts studied for the literature part of the Unit. Candidates will be expected, through the study of their chosen topic, to show a developing understanding of the place of Gaelic in society.

At this level candidates will be expected to engage with their chosen topic to provide informed findings and conclusions.

The following are possible topic areas for the study:

- ◆ the historic Gaelic world
- ◆ the contemporary Gaelic world
- ◆ Gaelic literature
- ◆ Gaelic music and song
- ◆ Gaelic language issues
- ◆ Gaelic in a national/international context

The topic areas range from the historical to the contemporary and can provide opportunities to investigate the recent expansion in Gaelic media, education, careers, arts, language bodies and politics.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

ASSESSMENT

To achieve the Course award the candidate must pass the Units as well as the Course assessment. The candidate's grade is based on the Course assessment.

Note: The document *Gaelic Orthographic Conventions*, SQA, 2005 which will be used by SQA in the production of assessment materials, such as Question Papers and NAB items, is available on the SQA website at www.sqa.org.uk. Candidates will be expected to use these conventions.

Assessment objectives

The key objectives of the Gàidhlig Course at Higher are to develop a knowledge and understanding of:

- ♦ Gaelic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing
- ♦ Gaelic language rules

and a knowledge, understanding and appreciation of:

- ♦ Gaelic literature
- ♦ Gaelic culture

Unit assessment permits candidates to demonstrate their language skills in communicating effectively at a high level and to show a deepening knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Gaelic literature and culture.

Course assessment permits candidates to demonstrate the development of their language skills in a variety of contexts. It will also assess candidates' ability to deal with unseen prose and previously studied literature.

Summary of Unit assessment

For the Unit **Gàidhlig: Sgilean Èisteachd agus Leughaidh (Higher)** (Gàidhlig: Listening and Reading Skills), assessment will consist of one listening activity and one reading activity. The assessment will take place under controlled conditions. The total time allowed for the Unit assessment is one hour.

For the Unit **Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher)** (Gàidhlig: Speaking and Writing Skills (Higher)), assessment will consist of one writing activity and one speaking activity. The assessment will take place under controlled conditions. The total time allowed for the Unit assessment is one hour.

For the Unit **Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher)** (Gàidhlig: Literature and Culture (Higher)) assessment will consist of one task for literature and one task for Culture. The assessment will take place under controlled conditions. The total time allowed for the Unit assessment is one hour.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

ASSESSMENT (Cont)

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

Full details of the structure, Outcomes, Performance Criteria, evidence and conditions for Unit assessment can be found in the Unit specifications for Gàidhlig (Higher).

Further details about Unit assessment can be found in the National Assessment Bank (NAB) materials and the Unit specifications.

Components of Course assessment

The Course assessment has two components:

- ◆ a Question Paper
- ◆ a Speaking assessment

The Question Paper has four sections:

- ◆ Listening
- ◆ Reading
- ◆ Writing
- ◆ Literature.

It lasts a total of 2 hours 40 minutes and has a total of 120 marks available.

The Speaking assessment involves interaction with another person and focuses on general issues and/or work undertaken throughout the Course. It lasts up to a maximum of ten minutes and has a total of 30 marks available. Candidates may use their own notes in the speaking assessment. Use of a dictionary is not permitted in the assessment.

Further details on the structure of the Course Assessment are given in the Course Assessment Specification and the Specimen Question Paper.

Link between Unit and Course assessment

The Unit assessments will assess candidates' listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, together with some evaluative skills.

The Course assessment samples across all three Units and will require candidates to demonstrate their ability to retain and integrate their listening, reading, speaking, writing and evaluative skills in a variety of contexts. The Speaking assessment will allow candidates to focus on general issues and/or work undertaken throughout the Course for up to ten minutes.

The Added Value of the Course

The Unit and Course assessments are designed to complement each other. The Unit assessments provide evidence of a specific level of achievement in separate sections of the Course. The Course assessment provides evidence of added value. In Gàidhlig (Higher) this added value consists of the development, retention and integration of the listening, speaking, reading, writing and evaluative skills acquired in the Units.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

Further details about assessment for this Course can be found in the Course Assessment Specification and the Specimen Question Paper.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS AT 'A' AND 'C'

The candidate's grade will be based on the total score obtained from all parts of the Course assessment ie listening, speaking, reading, writing and literature. The descriptions below indicate the nature of achievement required for an award at Grade C and A in the Course.

The Course assessment requires candidates to integrate the language skills developed throughout the Course, and to demonstrate retention of the knowledge and understanding acquired in the Units.

Descriptions are given of the nature of performance required for an award at Grade C and for an award at Grade A in the Course components. Grade descriptions are offered for each of the language skills and for literature. These should be interpreted in the context of the provision of stimuli appropriate to the level.

Listening Grade C	
The candidate will demonstrate an ability to give a reasonably detailed interpretation of complex passages which are heard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ analysis of general information will be reasonably comprehensive ◆ much of the specific information will be identified correctly ◆ responses will be reasonably accurate with an intelligible line of thought
Listening Grade A	
The candidate will demonstrate an ability to give a detailed interpretation of complex passages which are heard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ analysis of general information will be comprehensive. ◆ all or very nearly all of the specific detail will be identified correctly ◆ responses will be accurate with a clear line of thought
Speaking Grade C	
The candidate will demonstrate an ability to give fairly comprehensive responses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ reasonably comprehensive responses ◆ reasonable degree of clarity, expression and accuracy ◆ evidence of appropriate choice of vocabulary ◆ control of a fairly wide range of language structures and idiom
Speaking Grade A	
The candidate will demonstrate an ability to give convincing, comprehensive responses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ comprehensive and detailed responses ◆ high degree of clarity, expression and accuracy ◆ clear evidence of appropriate choice of vocabulary ◆ control of a wide range of language structures and idiom

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS AT 'A' AND 'C' (cont)

Reading Grade C	
The candidate will demonstrate an ability to provide reasonably detailed and clear responses to complex reading text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ analysis of general information will be reasonably comprehensive ◆ much of the specific detail will be identified correctly ◆ responses will be accurate with a clear line of thought ◆ the main concerns of text are summarised in a concise yet comprehensive way ◆ evaluation of the effectiveness of text shows full appreciation of the purpose and stance of the writer and is substantiated convincingly by evidence from text
Reading Grade A	
The candidate's responses to complex reading text will be highly detailed and very clear.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ analysis of general information will be comprehensive. ◆ all or very nearly all of the specific detail will be identified correctly ◆ responses will be accurate with a clear line of thought ◆ the main concerns of text are summarised in a concise yet comprehensive way ◆ evaluation of the effectiveness of text shows full appreciation of the purpose and stance of the writer and is substantiated convincingly by evidence from text
Writing Grade C	
The candidate will produce extended pieces of complex writing which will adhere fairly closely to the prescribed task and demonstrate some engagement with the topic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ responses will reveal reasonable control of the task through the use of a moderately wide range of vocabulary, idiom and language structures ◆ responses will be presented with a reasonable degree of clarity, fluency and accuracy
Writing Grade A	
The candidate will produce extended pieces of complex writing which will adhere closely to the prescribed task and demonstrate close engagement with the topic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ responses will reveal control of the task through the use of a wide range of vocabulary, idiom and language structures ◆ responses will be presented with a high degree of clarity, fluency and accuracy
Literature Grade C	
The candidate's responses will be substantial and will contain some evidence of personal reaction to the literature under review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ responses will reveal a recognisable and relevant line of thought, but there may be gaps or inconsistencies ◆ responses may on occasion reveal inaccuracy, a lack of clarity or a failure to develop appropriate depth of literary analysis, but there will be clear evidence of an attempt at such analysis ◆ answers will demonstrate an acceptable attempt to present an intelligible response to the literature
Literature Grade A	
Candidate responses will show a high degree of consistency in evaluating literature critically and effectively by using a coherent, analytic approach and a range of critical terminology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ responses will reveal insight into key elements and central concerns of the literature ◆ explanation of insights is detailed and thorough ◆ answers will demonstrate a clear, unambiguous response to the literature and will be presented in a clear, logical fashion

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

ESTIMATES AND APPEALS

Estimates

In preparing estimates, evidence must take account of performance across all components of the Course and must be judged against the Grade Descriptions. Further advice on the preparation of estimates is given in the Course Assessment Specification.

Appeals

In this Course, there are two components of Course assessment:

- ◆ the Question Paper, which is externally assessed
- ◆ the Speaking assessment, which is internally assessed and externally moderated

Appeals are only permitted for the externally assessed component – the Question Paper.

The principal source of evidence to support an appeal will usually be generated from an integrated assessment (eg a prelim) which reflects the range, style, level of demand, balance, depth and mark allocation of the Question Paper. Evidence must show a sufficient breadth of coverage of content and must relate to the Course Grade Descriptions. Centres should refer to the Course Assessment Specification and Specimen Question Paper for guidance in constructing a prelim or other integrated assessment.

Although a prelim is not mandatory it can give an indication of how the candidate will perform in questions which require integration, retention and application of knowledge and understanding in less familiar contexts within a time restraint.

Centres generating their own prelim papers sometimes draw heavily on past papers for their questions. These questions should be carefully selected from a range of Question Papers to ensure a balanced paper of acceptable format and standard. Questions should not be lifted en bloc from past papers and should contain some degree of modification or adaptation in order to provide an unseen test of the candidate's abilities. Past papers or SQA specimen papers in their entirety, will not be accepted as evidence to support an appeal. Centres must be certain that test materials have not been previously seen by candidates and that controlled conditions apply.

In some cases, a prelim might not provide evidence of performance over the whole Course, but rather over two Units of the Course. In this case, supplementary evidence from a National Assessment Bank (NAB) or other assessment item for a Unit, together with evidence from the prelim, might provide evidence towards an appeal for a grade C. However, while Unit assessments can provide evidence of attainment within familiar contexts and demonstrate limited retention, they do not usually provide evidence of a candidate's ability to cope with questions based on integrated topics or to deal with questions of a more complex nature based on unfamiliar contexts. Further evidence is desirable for an appeal for a grade above grade C.

It is the responsibility of centres to ensure the validity, reliability and security of assessment instruments used for Estimates and Appeals.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

QUALITY ASSURANCE

All National Courses are subject to external marking and/or moderation. External markers, visiting examiners and moderators are trained by SQA to apply national standards.

The Units of all Courses are subject to internal moderation and may also be chosen for external moderation. This is to ensure that national standards are being applied across all subjects.

Courses may be assessed by a variety of methods. Where marking is undertaken by trained markers in their own time, markers meetings are held to ensure that a consistent standard is applied. The work of all markers is subject to scrutiny by the Principal Assessor.

To assist centres, Principal Assessor and Senior Moderator reports are published on SQA's website at www.sqa.org.uk.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS COURSE

Learning and teaching in the three Units in this Course should be active and candidate-centred. Candidates should have opportunities to contribute to the planning of their work, to make decisions for themselves and to demonstrate initiative and independence.

The Units may be studied sequentially or concurrently. If the units are offered concurrently language skills will be integrated and all skills will be developed in parallel with one another. This approach will also make the best use of the available time and afford candidates greater flexibility and scope with regard to their research for the *Litreachas agus Cultar* Unit.

Induction to the Units and to the activities to be undertaken should provide a clear understanding of the nature and purpose of the work. Opportunity should be given for candidates to participate in a variety of activities such as individual, small-group and whole-class tasks. Tasks should stretch candidates' capabilities and provide them with intellectual stimulation.

Learning and teaching should be planned and organised to ensure that there is a direct relation to Unit assessments.

Regular monitoring of candidate progress by the teacher/lecturer should take place. Teacher/lecturer intervention and support, and candidate opportunity for evaluating, reviewing, revising and redrafting should be seen as essential to the learning and teaching process. Further guidance on learning and teaching approaches is contained in the Unit Specifications.

Specific suggested approaches to learning and teaching for each of the Units are offered below.

Gàidhlig: Sgilean Èisteachd agus Leughaidh (Higher)

Although the focus of this Unit is listening and reading, it is recommended that speaking and writing are taught concurrently to provide an integrated approach to the learning and teaching of language skills.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher)

As with *Gàidhlig: Sgilean Òisteachd agus Leughaidh (Higher)*, although the focus of this Unit is speaking and writing, it is recommended that listening and reading are taught concurrently to provide an integrated approach to the learning and teaching of language skills.

Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher)

This Unit will give candidates the opportunity to study a range of literature and to undertake a study of an aspect of Gaelic which interests them and which may be related to the literature read by candidates.

Where a candidate is undertaking a Course award at Higher, it is recommended that the Literature and Culture Unit runs concurrently with the other two Units in the Course. Some of the reading materials in the language Units will be of a literary nature, such as excerpts from short stories and novels, and will add value to the *Litreachas agus Cultar* Unit.

The individual study will provide a sound preparation for Advanced Higher, and for Further and Higher Education. The activities that candidates will engage in during their research will integrate language, research and interpersonal skills. The process of acquiring information for the topic of study is as valuable as the end product itself.

Candidates will choose a topic for detailed study. Teachers/lecturers will have a supporting role in guiding the choice of topic and in determining its appropriateness. Some factors which should be borne in mind when candidates are selecting a topic include:

- ◆ the candidate's own interest in the topic
- ◆ the benefit to the candidate from studying that topic
- ◆ the information, materials or support that may be available to the candidate

Candidates will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own studies. Some research may be undertaken outside the centre, making use of a variety of sources available locally or nationally. Candidates will decide, in consultation with teachers/lecturers, which sources will be most appropriate for their purposes and will plan their research in order to make the best use of these sources. Candidates should make the best use of the time available to them. One reason for suggesting that the three Units in this course be taught concurrently is that the research work for this Unit may then be spread over a longer period of time.

Additional 40 hours

In addition to the time allocated to the three Units, 40 hours are available across the Course to support learning and teaching. That additional time can be used as appropriate at the discretion of staff and candidates. The following suggestions indicate some of the ways in which that time could be used:

- ◆ provide an induction to the Course
- ◆ provide opportunities for consolidation, revision and review
- ◆ enable candidates to engage in research or to go on educational visits outwith the centre
- ◆ preparation for Course assessment

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Course Specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, September 2004).

GÀIDHLIG IN A BROADER CONTEXT

A number of national initiatives and programmes have been designed to promote themes that are important to contemporary society such as citizenship and enterprise. These themes contribute to individual subjects and Courses by making connections beyond the subject boundaries and enrich the learning experience. Similarly, the specialist knowledge and skills developed through study of a particular subject contributes to the understanding of these themes.

The study of Gàidhlig, with its opportunities for personal and social development, individual and group learning, and development of communication and research skills provides candidates with competences which are valuable in this broader context. Gàidhlig allows candidates to develop a greater understanding of Scotland's history and of how Gaelic has affected and does affect the society in which they participate.

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Èisteachd agus Leughaidh (Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Listening and Reading Skills*)

CODE DV47 12

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

SUMMARY

This Unit is a mandatory Unit of the Gàidhlig (Higher) Course and may also be used as a free-standing Unit. It aims to develop the ability of candidates in the skills of listening and reading. Candidates will become skilled at understanding complex spoken and complex written communication in Gaelic.

The Unit is suitable for those who have satisfactorily completed the Gàidhlig (Intermediate 2) Course or Units from it, or Standard Grade at Credit level. It is relevant for candidates who have a general interest in the language and for those who wish to pursue further study in Gaelic and/or a Gaelic-related career.

OUTCOMES

1. Demonstrate understanding and appreciation of complex spoken communication.
2. Demonstrate understanding and appreciation of complex written communication.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ Standard Grade Gàidhlig at Credit level
- ◆ Intermediate 2 Gàidhlig or its Units

It is expected that candidates will have been allocated to Gàidhlig* or Gaelic* (Learners) or programmes of study in accordance with SQA's published guidelines (see document *Guidance on Allocation to Gàidhlig or Gaelic (Learners) Programmes of Study and Qualifications*, available on the SQA website at www.sqa.org.uk).

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Additional copies of this Unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The cost for each Unit specification is £2.50. (A handling charge of £1.95 will apply to all orders for priced items.)

National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Èisteachd agus Leughaidh (Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Listening and Reading Skills*)

***NOTE:** Gàidhlig and Gaelic refer throughout to Scottish Gaelic only.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components in this Unit.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Èisteachd agus Leughaidh (Higher) (*Gàidhlig: Listening and Reading Skills*)

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit Specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Demonstrate understanding and appreciation of complex spoken communication.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Demonstrate understanding of the main points of a spoken communication.
- (b) Recognise specific points of detail which support the main points of a spoken communication.
- (c) Recognise the purpose of a spoken communication.
- (d) Evaluate the effectiveness of a spoken communication in fulfilling its purpose.

OUTCOME 2

Demonstrate understanding and appreciation of a complex written communication.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Demonstrate understanding of the main points of a written communication.
- (b) Recognise specific points of detail which support the main points of a written communication.
- (c) Recognise the purpose of a written communication.
- (d) Evaluate the techniques used in a written communication to help fulfil its purpose.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

All evidence will be produced in Gaelic.

Outcome 1: Listening

One piece of recorded evidence produced on one summative assessment occasion. Answers will be produced in Gaelic in response to questions in Gaelic on text of around 3 - 3½ minutes long. The answers will be produced under controlled conditions. Use of a dictionary is not permitted in the assessment. The assessment will last up to a maximum of 25 minutes.

Outcome 2: Reading

One piece of recorded evidence produced on one assessment occasion. Candidates will produce answers in Gaelic to questions in Gaelic on text of around 350 – 400 words long. The assessment will take place under controlled conditions. Use of a dictionary is not permitted in the assessment. The assessment will be up to a maximum of 35 minutes long.

The standard to be applied and the breadth of coverage are illustrated in the National Assessment Bank items available for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard and moderated by SQA prior to its use.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Èisteachd agus Leughaidh (Higher) (*Gàidhlig: Listening and Reading Skills*)

This part of the Unit Specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit will help candidates to understand and appreciate complex spoken and written communication. It requires them to understand the main points and specific points of detail of a communication. It also requires candidates to interpret an author's viewpoint and purpose in writing a piece. The candidate also has to assess the techniques used by the author to achieve that purpose.

Material from newspapers, magazines, electronic publications, promotional literature, radio or television programmes, discursive or journalistic prose and excerpts from novels or short stories will provide a wide choice of reading and listening sources at this level.

All four language skills can be addressed within the teaching and learning process, but formal assessment will focus on listening and reading.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

If this Unit is being offered as part of the Higher Course, it is recommended that centres deliver both this Unit and the Unit *Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Gàidhlig: Speaking and Writing Skills)* concurrently using a thematic approach as this will facilitate the integration of language skills and will reinforce learning over a longer time period for the four language skills.

Themes are not prescribed since it is considered appropriate to allow centres to select these in accordance with the interests and needs of their own candidates and the resources available to them.

Candidates can listen to or read texts which inform, describe, persuade, narrate, entertain, or present an argument.

The types of text for listening should expose candidates to a variety of speakers and dialects. The texts can be:

- ◆ spoken live
- ◆ recorded
- ◆ supported by visual evidence such as television broadcasts or video

Reading texts should cover a range of present-day contexts which are accessible to the candidate.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Texts for both Outcomes will be straightforward in structure and language and will provide appropriate intellectual challenges for candidates at this level.

Reading texts should cover a range of present-day contexts which are accessible to the candidate.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Èisteachd agus Leughaidh (Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Listening and Reading Skills*)

ASSESSMENT IS FOR LEARNING

By active involvement in the testing process candidates can be beneficiaries rather than victims of testing because tests can help candidates improve their learning. It has become clear that no matter how great the pressure to achieve good test and examination scores, learning cannot be done **for** the candidate; it has to be done **by** the candidate.

The positive use of formative assessment can help in assisting candidates to raise their summative assessment performances. In preparing candidates for summative assessment, the following four aspects of effective formative assessment should be considered:

- ◆ **share the success criteria** required for achieving the summative assessment — ie explain and discuss Outcomes and Performance Criteria with candidates. Discuss with candidates what is required to pass an assessment. Guidelines intended for use by teaching professionals may need to be translated into language accessible to candidates.
- ◆ **provide quality feedback from formative assessment** in the lead up to summative assessment. Feedback which gives each candidate guidance on how to improve, as well as opportunity and help to work at the improvement, is much more effective in raising standards than a mark. Feedback should be about the particular qualities of a candidate's work, with advice on what he or she can do to improve, and should avoid comparisons with other candidates.
- ◆ **use structured questioning in discussing a formative assessment** to enable candidates to understand not just what was incorrect but also how it may be improved and corrected. Dialogue between candidates and a teacher/lecturer should be thoughtful, reflective and focused to evoke and explore understanding. It should be conducted so that all candidates have an opportunity to think and express their ideas concerning their performance.
- ◆ **use self and peer assessment to discuss answers to questions and remove misunderstandings** in learning. Candidates should be able to self-assess to understand the main purposes of their learning and thereby grasp what they need to achieve.

When candidates do acquire an overview of their targets, they then become more committed and more effective as learners. Consequently, their assessments become an object of discussion with their teachers/lecturers and with one another, and this promotes even further the reflection on one's own ideas which is essential to good learning.

Where anyone is trying to learn, feedback about their efforts has three elements:

- ◆ the desired goal
- ◆ the evidence about their present position
- ◆ some understanding of the way to close the gap between the two

All three must to a degree be understood by anyone before they can take action to improve their learning.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Èisteachd agus Leughaidh (Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Listening and Reading Skills*)

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Unit Specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, September 2004).

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher) (<i>Gàidhlig: Speaking and Writing Skills</i>)
CODE	DV48 12
COURSE	Gàidhlig (Higher)

SUMMARY

This Unit is a mandatory Unit of the Gàidhlig (Higher) Course and may also be used as a free-standing Unit. It aims to develop the ability of candidates in the skills of speaking and writing. Candidates will become skilled at delivering complex spoken communication and producing complex written communication in Gaelic.

The Unit is suitable for those who have satisfactorily completed the Gàidhlig (Intermediate 2) Course or Units from it, or Standard Grade at Credit level. It is relevant for candidates who have a general interest in the language and for those who wish to pursue further study in Gaelic and/or a Gaelic-related career.

OUTCOMES

1. Deliver complex spoken communication.
2. Produce complex written communication.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ Standard Grade Gàidhlig at Credit level
- ◆ Intermediate 2 Gàidhlig or its Units

It is expected that candidates will have been allocated to Gàidhlig* or Gaelic* (Learners) programmes of study in accordance with SQA's published guidelines (see document *Guidance on Allocation to Gàidhlig or Gaelic (Learners) Programmes of Study and Qualifications*, available on the SQA website at www.sqa.org.uk).

Administrative Information

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgìlean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher)
(Gàidhlig: *Speaking and Writing Skills*)

***NOTE:** Gàidhlig and Gaelic refer throughout to Scottish Gaelic only.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components in this Unit.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Speaking and Writing Skills*)

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit Specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Deliver complex spoken communication.

Performance Criteria

- a) Deliver a spoken communication which is relevant and appropriate for purpose and audience, and shows depth and complexity of thought.
- b) Demonstrate clarity, fluency and accuracy.
- c) Communicate verbally in a structured and logical manner.
- d) Demonstrate a range of vocabulary and idiom appropriate to purpose and audience.

OUTCOME 2

Produce complex written communication.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Produce a piece of writing which is relevant and appropriate for purpose and audience, and shows depth and complexity of thought.
- (b) Demonstrate a high degree of clarity, fluency and accuracy.
- (c) Communicate in a structured and logical manner.
- (d) Demonstrate a range of vocabulary and idiom appropriate to purpose and audience.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

All evidence will be produced in Gaelic:

Outcome 1: Speaking

One piece of recorded evidence (audio/visual) produced on one summative assessment occasion. Candidates must undertake a spoken activity which fulfils the requirements of the Performance Criteria. Candidates may use their own notes to assist but may not read a transcript of a speech. The assessment will be conducted under controlled conditions. Use of a dictionary is not permitted in this assessment. The spoken presentation will be no more than five minutes long.

Outcome 2: Writing

One piece of written evidence produced on one summative assessment occasion. Candidates will produce an informative, expressive or imaginative response in Gaelic consistent with their purpose and appropriate for the intended audience. An informative piece of writing could be in the style of a newspaper or other report. An expressive piece of writing could be in a reflective, persuasive or argumentative form. An imaginative piece could be in any genre. Candidates may use their own notes in the assessment. Use of a dictionary is not permitted in this assessment. The piece of writing will be produced under controlled conditions in a maximum of 55 minutes.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Speaking and Writing Skills*)

Centres must be satisfied that the evidence submitted is the work of individual candidates. Although group work may be used as a learning and teaching approach, any work which contributes to a candidate's evidence for assessment must be carried out on an individual basis to ensure authenticity.

The standard to be applied and the breadth of coverage are illustrated in the National Assessment Bank items available for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher) *(Gàidhlig: Speaking and Writing Skills)*

This part of the Unit Specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit will help candidates to deliver complex spoken communication and to produce complex written communication. It requires candidates to think about why they are delivering or producing a communication and it also requires them to consider the intended audience for their communication to ensure that it is coherent, accurate and appropriate.

Candidates will undertake a spoken activity which may be based on an activity, event or personal experience and produce an informative, expressive or imaginative piece of writing.

While all four language skills may be used in this Unit, there will be particular focus on speaking and writing as these are formally assessed.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

If this Unit is being offered as part of the Higher Course, it is appropriate that Centres deliver both this Unit and the Unit *Gàidhlig: Sgilean Èisteachd agus Leughaidh (Gàidhlig: Listening and Reading Skills)* concurrently, using a thematic approach. This will facilitate the integration of language skills and will reinforce learning over a longer time period for the four language skills.

Themes are not prescribed since it is considered appropriate to allow centres to select these in accordance with the interests and needs of their own candidates and the resources available to them.

Outcome 1: Speaking

Candidates will be expected to participate in a variety of talk activities. These may include those which inform, describe, discuss, debate, narrate, persuade, and entertain.

It is impracticable to provide a comprehensive list of situations in which candidates would speak, but the following are offered as examples:

- ◆ informal dialogue with the teacher/lecturer
- ◆ informal dialogue with one other candidate
- ◆ informal discussion in a group or whole-class situation
- ◆ formal presentation to a whole class or other group
- ◆ active participation in a formally constituted meeting
- ◆ active participation in debate

Outcome 2: Writing

Candidates should be encouraged to experiment with different types of writing and different styles. The writing activity should have a clearly defined purpose and audience. Candidates should be encouraged to engage in constructive critical evaluation of their own work and to engage in redrafting.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Speaking and Writing Skills*)

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1: Speaking

Candidates should be made fully aware of the conditions under which their spoken presentation will be given, and the criteria by which their spoken presentation will be assessed.

Candidates' vocabulary, register and sentence structures should be consistently appropriate to purpose and audience and be varied effectively. Candidates should consciously vary tone, pace and modulation to suit audience needs.

The assessment will take place under controlled conditions.

The assessment requirements for this Outcome are stated in the Evidence Requirements.

Use of a dictionary is not permitted in the assessment.

Outcome 2 Writing

The length required in a piece of writing depends upon the nature of the task. It would not, for example, be expected that a poem would be as long as a creative writing essay or a drama script. Candidates should be made fully aware of the conditions under which their writing assessment will take place, and the criteria by which it will be assessed. Writing tasks should arise out of what is being listened to, studied or read.

Candidates will undertake this assessment under controlled conditions. It is recommended that teachers/lecturers follow a similar pattern when providing formative feedback before the summative assessment. Research has indicated that the following pattern is best practice for providing formative assessment for a written task:

1. First draft — the teacher/lecturer reads over the candidate's work and provides verbal feedback to indicate areas for improvement. Feedback is most effective when it comprises two positive statements about the candidate's work as well as one statement which deals with an aspect requiring improvement.
2. Second draft — the teacher/lecturer reads over the candidate's work and provides written feedback to indicate areas for improvement. The written feedback, as indicated above, is most effective when it comprises two positive statements about the candidate's work and one statement about an aspect requiring improvement.

The piece of writing must be produced under a system which checks and records its authenticity. This can be done by asking the candidate to submit the two drafts as suggested above with the teacher/lecturer recording that these have been seen.

Use of a dictionary is not permitted in the assessment.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Speaking and Writing Skills*)

ASSESSMENT IS FOR LEARNING

By active involvement in the testing process candidates can be beneficiaries rather than victims of testing because tests can help candidates improve their learning. It has become clear that no matter how great the pressure to achieve good test and examination scores, learning cannot be done **for** the candidate; it has to be done **by** the candidate.

The positive use of formative assessment can help in assisting candidates to raise their summative assessment performances. In preparing candidates for summative assessment, the following four aspects of effective formative assessment should be considered:

- ◆ **share the success criteria** required for achieving the summative assessment — ie explain and discuss Outcomes and Performance Criteria with candidates. Discuss with candidates what is required to pass an assessment. Guidelines intended for use by teaching professionals may need to be translated into language accessible to candidates.
- ◆ **provide quality feedback from formative assessment** in the lead up to summative assessment. Feedback which gives each candidate guidance on how to improve, as well as opportunity and help to work at the improvement, is much more effective in raising standards than a mark. Feedback should be about the particular qualities of a candidate's work, with advice on what he or she can do to improve, and should avoid comparisons with other candidates.
- ◆ **use structured questioning in discussing a formative assessment** to enable candidates to understand not just what was incorrect but also how it may be improved and corrected. Dialogue between candidates and a teacher/lecturer should be thoughtful, reflective and focused to evoke and explore understanding. It should be conducted so that all candidates have an opportunity to think and express their ideas concerning their performance.
- ◆ **use self and peer assessment to discuss answers to questions and remove misunderstandings** in learning. Candidates should be able to self-assess to understand the main purposes of their learning and thereby grasp what they need to achieve.

When candidates do acquire an overview of their targets, they then become more committed and more effective as learners. Consequently, their assessments become an object of discussion with their teachers/lecturers and with one another, and this promotes even further the reflection on one's own ideas which is essential to good learning.

Where anyone is trying to learn, feedback about their efforts has three elements:

- ◆ the desired goal
- ◆ the evidence about their present position
- ◆ some understanding of the way to close the gap between the two

All three must to a degree be understood by anyone before they can take action to improve their learning.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Labhairt agus Sgrìobhaidh (Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Speaking and Writing Skills*)

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Unit Specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, September 2004).

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Literature and Culture*)

CODE DV49 12

COURSE Gàidhlig (Higher)

SUMMARY

This Unit is a mandatory Unit of the Gàidhlig (Higher) Course and may also be used as a free-standing Unit. This Unit will provide opportunity for the study of literature and for an individual study linked to an aspect of Gaelic Scotland or to a background aspect of the literature studied.

The **Literature** part of the Unit will help candidates to appreciate and evaluate Gaelic literature mainly from the 20th and/or 21st century. Candidates will learn how to demonstrate an understanding and an appreciation of the theme, viewpoint and purpose of a piece of literature. They will also learn how to comment on technical aspects of literary writing.

The **Culture** part of the Unit will enable candidates to engage in an individual study of an aspect of Gaelic culture which interests them. This study may be related to the literature studied in the Unit. The possible topic areas range from the historical to the contemporary, and can provide opportunities to investigate the recent expansion in Gaelic media, education, careers, arts, language bodies and politics.

The Unit is suitable for those who have satisfactorily completed the Gàidhlig (Intermediate 2) Course or Units from it, or Standard Grade at Credit level. It is relevant for candidates who have a general interest in the language and for those who wish to pursue further study in Gaelic and/or a Gaelic-related career.

OUTCOMES

1. Evaluate one Gaelic literary text critically.
2. Report on the findings and conclusions of a study into an aspect of a Gaelic culture.

Administrative Information

Superclass: FK

Publication date: March 2006

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Literature and Culture*)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following, or equivalent:

- ♦ Standard Grade Gàidhlig at Credit level
- ♦ Intermediate 2 Gàidhlig or its Units

It is expected that candidates will have been allocated to Gàidhlig* or Gaelic* (Learners) programmes of study in accordance with SQA's published guidelines (see document *Guidance on Allocation to Gàidhlig or Gaelic (Learners) Programmes of Study and Qualifications*, available on the SQA website at www.sqa.org.uk).

***NOTE:** Gàidhlig and Gaelic refer throughout to Scottish Gaelic only.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components in this Unit.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher) (*Gàidhlig: Literature and Culture*)

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit Specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Evaluate one Gaelic literary text critically.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Recognise key elements, central concerns and significant details of a literary text.
- (b) Explain accurately and in detail the ways in which aspects such as structure, style and language contribute to the meaning, and impact of the literary text.
- (c) Provide a considered personal response with detailed and relevant evidence from the text.
- (d) Use critical terminology appropriate to the text.

OUTCOME 2

Report on the findings and conclusions of a study into an aspect of Gaelic culture.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify clearly the aspect of Gaelic culture studied.
- (b) Explain succinctly how the aspect of Gaelic culture was studied.
- (c) Explain succinctly why the aspect of Gaelic culture was studied.
- (d) Outline the main findings and conclusions of the study.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

All evidence will be produced in Gaelic.

Appendix One provides information on mandatory content/context for this Unit.

Outcome 1: Literature

One piece of written evidence produced on one summative assessment occasion. The candidate will produce a critical analysis in Gaelic of a previously seen text. This will be produced under controlled conditions. The candidate may use unannotated copies of the text and their own notes in the assessment. Use of a dictionary is not permitted in the assessment. The maximum time allocation for the critical analysis is 30 minutes.

Outcome 2: Culture

One piece of written evidence produced on one summative assessment occasion. This will be produced under controlled conditions. The candidate will produce a summary in Gaelic of the findings and conclusions of their individual study. Candidates may use their own notes in the assessment. Use of a dictionary is not permitted in the assessment. The maximum time allocation for producing the summary is 30 minutes.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher) (*Gàidhlig: Literature and Culture*)

Centres must be satisfied that the evidence submitted is the work of individual candidates. Although group work may be used as a learning and teaching approach, any work which contributes to a candidate's evidence for assessment must be carried out on an individual basis to ensure authenticity.

The standard to be applied is exemplified in the National Assessment Bank items available for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher) (*Gàidhlig: Literature and Culture*)

This part of the Unit Specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

Literature: See Appendix One.

Culture:

The candidate will research an aspect of Gaelic culture, which may be related to the literature they have studied. They will be expected to provide informed findings and conclusions.

The following are suggested for study:

- ◆ the historic Gaelic world
- ◆ the contemporary Gaelic world
- ◆ social or historical context of a piece of literature or literary theme
- ◆ love
- ◆ nostalgia
- ◆ politics
- ◆ background to a writer's life
- ◆ Gaelic music and song
- ◆ Gaelic language issues
- ◆ Gaelic in a national/international context
- ◆ war
- ◆ cultural developments
- ◆ published work(s) of a specific writer or writers

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

Literature

Centres or individual candidates should have flexibility to select literature of their choice, such as the work of a local author or texts on a topic in which they have an interest.

Culture – Individual Study

The candidate are expected to work independently at this level and to take responsibility for their own study. The candidate should make use of a variety of sources. The candidate will decide, in consultation with teachers/lecturers, which sources will be most appropriate for their purposes and will plan their research in order to make the best use of these sources.

Teachers/lecturers can allocate time at the beginning of the 40 hours to enable candidates to write a plan of action for their study.

The candidate can access suitable resources in many ways. A few examples include:

- ◆ making use of local libraries
- ◆ using material available in community resources, such as local museums
- ◆ interviewing people
- ◆ using the media - TV, radio, newspapers
- ◆ communicating with various organisations
- ◆ accessing websites

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher) *(Gàidhlig: Literature and Culture)*

Candidates will choose a topic to study in detail. Teachers/lecturers will have a supporting role in guiding the choice of topic and in determining its appropriateness. Some factors which should be borne in mind when candidates are selecting a topic include:

- ◆ the candidate's own interest in the topic
- ◆ the benefit to the candidate from studying that topic
- ◆ the information, materials or support that may be available to the candidate

Candidates are expected to work independently at this level and to take responsibility for their own study.

Candidates should make the best use of the time available to them. One reason for suggesting that the three Units in this Course be taught concurrently is that the research work for this Unit may then be spread over a longer period of time. It will also allow time for candidates to correspond with individuals/organisations and to receive correspondence from them.

While candidates are only required to report on findings and conclusions for assessment purposes, they may wish to produce a full report in preparation for future studies. This full report could take the format below.

1. Terms of reference (details the specific focus of the study and why it is being undertaken)
2. Methodology (describes the methods used to collect the information for the study)
3. Findings (arranges the information collected into a suitable format)
4. Conclusions (summarises what may be deduced from the Findings)

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Literature

The candidate is expected to pay attention, where appropriate, to aspects such as:

Key elements

theme	plot	character	setting	structure
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Central concerns

author's purpose	author's stance
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Significant details

syntax	techniques/devices	word choice	mood	tone	layout
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Detailed textual evidence should be cited to support analysis and argument. In giving a personal response to a text, the candidate should be able to sustain, and support with evidence, a recognisable and relevant line of thought. The candidate's general attitude to the text should be established and justified.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher) (Gàidhlig: *Literature and Culture*)

Candidate responses should demonstrate an understanding of accepted literary terminology and an ability to apply that terminology correctly.

Culture – Individual Study

A specific aspect should be identified for study.

In this Unit candidates will research an aspect of Gaelic culture which may be related to the literature they have studied. They will be expected to provide informed findings and conclusions.

Candidates will carry out this assessment under controlled conditions. It is recommended that teachers/lecturers follow a similar pattern when providing formative feedback before the summative assessment. Research has indicated that the following pattern is best practice for providing formative assessment for a written task:

1. First draft — the teacher/lecturer reads over the candidate's work and provides verbal feedback to indicate areas for improvement. Feedback is most effective when it comprises two positive statements about the candidate's work as well as one statement which deals with an aspect requiring improvement.
2. Second draft — the teacher/lecturer reads over the candidate's work and provides written feedback to indicate areas for improvement. The written feedback, as indicated above, is most effective when it comprises two positive statements about the candidate's work and one statement about an aspect requiring improvement.

The piece of writing must be produced under a system which checks and records its authenticity. This can be done by asking the candidate to submit the two drafts as suggested above with the teacher/lecturer recording that these have been seen.

ASSESSMENT IS FOR LEARNING

By active involvement in the testing process candidates can be beneficiaries rather than victims of testing because tests can help candidates improve their learning. It has become clear that no matter how great the pressure to achieve good test and examination scores, learning cannot be done **for** the candidate; it has to be done **by** the candidate.

The positive use of formative assessment can help in assisting candidates to raise their summative assessment performances. In preparing candidates for summative assessment, the following four aspects of effective formative assessment should be considered:

- ◆ **share the success criteria** required for achieving the summative assessment—ie explain and discuss Outcomes and Performance Criteria with candidates. Discuss with candidates what is required to pass an assessment. Guidelines intended for use by teaching professionals may need to be translated into language accessible to candidates.
- ◆ **provide quality feedback from formative assessment** in the lead up to summative assessment. Feedback which gives each candidate guidance on how to improve, as well as opportunity and help to work at the improvement, is much more effective in raising standards than a mark. Feedback should be about the particular qualities of a candidate's work, with advice on what he or she can do to improve, and should avoid comparisons with other candidates.

National Unit Specification: support notes (Cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher) (Gàidhlig: *Literature and Culture*)

- ◆ **use structured questioning in discussing a formative assessment** to enable candidates to understand not just what was incorrect but also how it may be improved and corrected. Dialogue between candidates and a teacher/lecturer should be thoughtful, reflective and focused to evoke and explore understanding. It should be conducted so that all candidates have an opportunity to think and express their ideas concerning their performance.
- ◆ **use self and peer assessment to discuss answers to questions and remove misunderstandings** in learning. Candidates should be able to self-assess to understand the main purposes of their learning and thereby grasp what they need to achieve.

When candidates do acquire an overview of their targets, they then become more committed and more effective as learners. Consequently, their assessments become an object of discussion with their teachers/lecturers and with one another, and this promotes even further the reflection on one's own ideas which is essential to good learning.

Where anyone is trying to learn, feedback about their efforts has three elements:

- ◆ the desired goal
- ◆ the evidence about their present position
- ◆ some understanding of the way to close the gap between the two

All three must to a degree be understood by anyone before they can take action to improve their learning.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Unit Specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, September 2004).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Litreachas agus Cultar (Higher)
 (*Gàidhlig: Literature and Culture*)

APPENDIX ONE

NB: This appendix forms part of the statement of standards, ie the mandatory requirements of this Unit.

Literature: The texts which are studied will be mainly 20th and/or 21st century Gaelic literature. The texts selected for study must include at least at least **two** of the following genres:

- ♦ novel
- ♦ biography
- ♦ autobiography
- ♦ short story
- ♦ poetry/song
- ♦ drama
- ♦ essay