

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Sgrìobhaidh agus Sgrùdadh Litreachais
(Advanced Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Writing and Literary Criticism Skills*)

CODE DV4D 13

COURSE Gàidhlig (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

This Unit is a mandatory Unit of the Gàidhlig (Advanced Higher) Course and may also be used as a free-standing Unit. This Unit will provide the opportunity to write sophisticated creative or expressive pieces of written communication. Candidates will also study Gaelic literature and will learn how to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding and appreciation of the theme, viewpoint and purpose of a piece of literature mainly from the 20th and/or 21st century. They will also learn how to comment on technical aspects of literary writing.

The Unit is suitable for those who have completed the Gàidhlig (Higher) Course or Units from it. 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. Produce a sophisticated piece of writing.
2. Produce a sophisticated evaluation of one Gaelic literary text.

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:

- ♦ Higher Gàidhlig or its Units

Administrative Information

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Sgrìobhaidh agus Sgrùdadh Litreachais
(Advanced Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Writing and Literary Criticism Skills*)

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 Qualification*), available on the SQA website www.sqa.org.uk).

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

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**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 Sgrìobhaidh agus Sgrùdadh Litreachais
(Advanced Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Writing and Literary Criticism 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

Produce a sophisticated piece of writing.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Produce an extended piece of writing which shows insight and imagination.
- (b) Produce a piece of writing which is clear, controlled and deliberate, and is appropriate for the reader and the material.
- (c) Shape and sequence the piece skilfully.
- (d) Spell and punctuate accurately and use a wide range of vocabulary and idiom.

OUTCOME 2

Produce a sophisticated evaluation of one Gaelic literary text.

Performance Criteria

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

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Sgrìobhaidh agus Sgrùdadh Litreachais
(Advanced Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Writing and Literary Criticism Skills*)

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1 – Writing

One piece of written evidence produced on one summative assessment occasion. Candidates will produce an informative, expressive or imaginative piece of writing 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 the assessment. The piece of writing will be produced under controlled conditions in a maximum of 30 minutes.

Outcome 2: Literature

The content for this Outcome is specified in Appendix One.

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

Centres must be satisfied that the evidence submitted is the work of individual candidates. Although group work may be used as 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: Sgilean Sgrìobhaidh agus Sgrùdadh Litreachais
(Advanced Higher)
(*Gàidhlig: Writing and Literary Criticism 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

Writing

This Unit will help candidates to create a piece of informative, expressive or imaginative extended writing which is shaped and sequenced to produce a deliberate effect.

It is important that candidates should be encouraged to experiment with different types of writing and different styles. They should be encouraged to write for a wide readership within and beyond the presenting centre. Writing activities should have a clearly defined purpose and an identified audience. Candidates should be encouraged to engage in constructive critical evaluation of their own work and to engage in redrafting.

Literature: See Appendix One

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

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

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Prose and Poetry

Candidates are 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 viewpoint
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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, candidates should be able to sustain, and support with evidence, a recognisable and relevant line of thought. The candidate's general attitude to the literature should be established and justified.

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

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Sgrìobhaidh agus Sgrùdadh Litreachais (Advanced Higher) (*Gàidhlig: Writing and Literary Criticism Skills*)

Candidates will carry out the assessments 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.
- ◆ **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.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Gàidhlig: Sgilean Sgrìobhaidh agus Sgrùdadh Litreachais
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- ◆ **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)

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APPENDIX ONE

Literature: Candidates should study a wide variety of texts which will include mainly 20th-21st century Gaelic literature. The texts selected for study must include at least **three** of the following genres:

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