



Course Report 2018

Subject	Gàidhlig
Level	Advanced Higher

This report provides information on the performance of candidates. Teachers, lecturers and assessors may find it useful when preparing candidates for future assessment. The report 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.

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

Section 1: comments on the assessment

Summary of the course assessment

Component 1 — question paper: Sgrùdadh (Practical Criticism)

This question paper performed as expected. Feedback from marking suggested that the question paper was fair in terms of overall level of challenge and demand, and the texts were suitably accessible and able to differentiate between candidates. The prose text was on the subject of smoking, and the fiction text was the poem *A' sealltainn thar Chluaidh*.

Component 2 — question paper: Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh (Literature and Writing)

Marking suggested again that the question paper was fair in terms of overall level of demand, content and that there was plenty scope for candidates to select suitable questions in both literature and a writing to demonstrate their ability.

Component 3 — Còmhradh (performance)

Visiting assessors commented that candidates were prepared to converse on a range of different topics including their coursework and future plans.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1 — question paper: Sgrùdadh (Practical Criticism)

Many candidates performed well in tackling the questions on the prose section and most made a good attempt at working with the piece of poetry.

Component 2 — question paper: Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh (Literature and Writing)

In writing, many chose the title *An Rathad* and composed different genres of writing. The most popular being personal experience, with writing dealing with the metaphorical idea of a road.

In the literature section, markers highlighted the number of candidates who tackled questions which drew on more than one text, and their success in doing this. This was coupled with the number of candidates who chose longer pieces of literature such as *An t-Aonaran* and *Fo Sgail a Swastika*.

Component 3 — Còmhradh (performance)

All visiting assessors again commented on their enjoyment of the way in which candidates engaged with them in their discussions of their coursework and future plans.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1 — question paper: Sgrùdadh (Practical Criticism)

Some candidates found questions in the poetry section more challenging, and failed to explain examples in sufficient depth.

Question 5 in the prose section, and its requirement to explain the message, was problematic for some candidates with regards to being precise and using evidence to support ideas.

Component 2 — question paper: Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh (Literature and Writing)

In the literature section of this question paper, some candidate responses were weak, and needed to give more detail and include more depth of analysis required at this level. Candidates should be aware of the progression of skills they are required to demonstrate.

In the writing section, some essays were at times underdeveloped and lacked any style or complexity.

Component 3 — Còmhradh (performance)

Some candidates need to be more thoroughly prepared to discuss the literature covered in their course, and to have more of a working knowledge of features of the texts studied and a grasp of the ideas within them. There was evidence in one or two centres of very little literature being covered other than one or two poems and candidates' details of these were limited. This also affects candidates' preparation for the literature aspect of the examination.

Section 3: advice for the preparation of future candidates

Component 1 — question paper: Sgrùdadh (Practical Criticism)

Candidates should refer to techniques where appropriate, and ensure sufficiently detailed explanations of how meaning has been interpreted, particularly in the poetry section along with the use of examples. Connotations and imagery should be illustrated carefully.

Candidates should also ensure time is managed appropriately so that marks are not lost. Some may wish to consider how bullets can assist their answering technique.

Component 2 — question paper: Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh (Literature and Writing)

Candidates should have the opportunity to study a range of literature within their course. They should practise developing a stylish approach to critical essay writing, which is a progression of skills, and has sufficient depth of analysis and personal response. The appropriateness of particular texts and their lending to comprehensive answers should also be considered. Where texts are being compared, there needs to be a connection made between the texts rather than the analysis being focused on the two texts individually.

In writing, there should be some development of style and accuracy with spelling and grammar and engagement with the reader. The best pieces of writing are those that are able to balance these.

Component 3 — Còmhradh (performance)

Candidates should ensure they have a good knowledge of the literature they have covered in the course, and that they are able to highlight themes and techniques inherent within them. The candidates' personal research studies should be based on an appropriate amount of study and have some substance to them. The best conversations came from studies which had engaged the candidates' personal interests, and where they demonstrated their own opinions and thoughts about them.

It would be beneficial if equipment for the assessment was tested and ready for the assessor arriving.

Grade boundary and statistical information:

Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2017	28
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Number of resulted entries in 2018	30
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Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of course awards	Percentage	Cumulative %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum mark				
A	60.0%	60.0%	18	70
B	13.3%	73.3%	4	60
C	13.3%	86.7%	4	50
D	6.7%	93.3%	2	45
No award	6.7%	-	2	-

General commentary on grade boundaries

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.

SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which 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.

Therefore SQA holds a grade boundary meeting every year for each subject at each level to bring 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.

Grade boundaries from exam papers in the same subject at the same level tend to be marginally different year to year. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set by centres. If SQA alters a boundary, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter their boundary in the corresponding practice exam paper.