Advanced Higher Gàidhlig

Course code:	C832 77
Course assessment code:	X832 77
SCQF:	level 7 (32 SCQF credit points)
Valid from:	session 2019–20

This document provides detailed information about the course and course assessment to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It describes the structure of the course and the course assessment in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that are assessed.

This document is for teachers and lecturers and contains all the mandatory information required to deliver the course.

This edition: September 2019 (version 3.0)

Contents

Course overview

This course consists of 32 SCQF credit points, which includes time for preparation for course assessment. The notional length of time for candidates to complete the course is 160 hours.

The course assessment has four components.

Component	Marks	Duration
Component 1: question paper: Sgrùdadh (Practical Criticism)	30	1 hour and 30 minutes
Component 2: question paper: Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh (Literature and Writing)	40	1 hour and 40 minutes
Component 3: question paper: Eadar-theangachadh (Translating)	15	30 minutes
Component 4: Còmhradh (performance–talking)	30	20 minutes approximately see 'Course assessment' section

Recommended entry	Progression
Entry to this course is at the discretion of the centre. Candidates should have achieved the Higher Gàidhlig course or equivalent qualifications and/or experience prior to starting this course.	♦ further study, employment and/or training

Conditions of award

The grade awarded is based on the total marks achieved across all course assessment components.

Achievement of this course gives automatic certification of the following Core Skill:

♦ Communication at SCQF level 6

Course rationale

National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide time for learning, focus on skills and applying learning, and provide scope for personalisation and choice.

Every course provides opportunities for candidates to develop breadth, challenge and application. The focus and balance of assessment is tailored to each subject area.

Language and literacy are of personal, social and economic importance. Candidates' ability to use language lies at the centre of the development and expression of their emotions, thinking, learning, and sense of personal identity.

The course develops an appreciation of language awareness, and of a wide range of literature and texts. This enables candidates to access their own cultural heritage and history, as well as the culture and history of others. It provides flexibility, and personalisation and choice, to enable candidates to achieve in different ways and at different paces.

It enables candidates to understand and use complex vocabulary, word patterns, text structures and authentic, idiomatic style. They develop skills to recognise, analyse and use language for a range of purposes.

Purpose and aims

The course provides candidates with the opportunity to develop and apply advanced language skills in critical reading, translating, talking and writing.

As candidates develop sophisticated literacy skills, they are able to process information easily, and apply a sound knowledge of language in a range of practical and relevant contexts. They study an array of texts and gain confidence to undertake new and challenging tasks in a variety of situations.

The course gives candidates the opportunity to:

♦ develop the ability to express and communicate using complex and sophisticated language
♦ develop the ability to communicate in writing using complex and sophisticated language with respect to audience, context and purpose
♦ deepen awareness of language and how it works, taking account of style, grammar, structure and idiom, and local or regional influences on language
♦ develop the ability to analyse and evaluate texts from different genres
♦ develop awareness of translating from written English to written Gaelic
♦ interact with an individual on Gaelic-related issues of, for example, a historical or cultural nature
♦ apply higher-order thinking skills
♦ develop advanced critical literacy skills
♦ learn independently
♦ plan and research, integrating and applying language skills, for a range of purposes including independent study

Who is this course for?

This course is suitable for fluent speakers of Gaelic. It provides opportunities for candidates to build on prior learning experienced in a broad general education or in Gaelic qualifications at a lower SCQF level. Please refer to SQA guidelines *Guidance on Allocation to Gàidhlig or Gaelic (Learners) Programmes of Study and Qualifications*.

Course content

The course provides candidates with the opportunity to develop advanced critical reading, translating, talking and writing skills in order to understand and use Gaelic language.

The structure of the course enables candidates to focus on the skills required to understand, analyse, evaluate, translate, create and produce language.

Skills, knowledge and understanding

Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course

The following provides a broad overview of the subject skills, knowledge and understanding developed in the course:

♦ advanced critical reading, translating, talking and writing skills, as appropriate to purpose and audience in a wide range of contexts
♦ understanding, analysing and evaluating a wide range of complex and sophisticated literary texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience
♦ creating and producing a wide range of complex and sophisticated texts, as appropriate to a range of purposes and audiences
♦ advanced translating skills from written English to written Gaelic
♦ knowledge of Gaelic language, literature and culture

Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment

The following provides details of skills, knowledge and understanding sampled in the course assessment:

♦ distinction between connotative and denotative uses of language
♦ names and uses of the main word classes: noun, pronoun, adjective, article, verb, adverb, preposition and conjunction
♦ names and uses of the syntactic units: sentence, clause, phrase and group
♦ conventions of written Gaelic language
♦ critical terminology for discussing literary texts
♦ critically analysing complex and sophisticated literary and non-fiction texts
♦ knowledge of complex literary forms and genres
♦ knowledge of literature
♦ knowledge of literary techniques and devices, including:
    — characterisation
    — use of dialogue
    — structure
    — word choice and tone
    — narrative stance

- — mood
- — creation of a sense of place
- — conventions of genre
- — syntax and layout
♦ Gaelic orthographic conventions
♦ knowledge of Gaelic literary heritage
♦ advanced writing skills

Skills, knowledge and understanding included in the course are appropriate to the SCQF level of the course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level, and are available on the SCQF website.

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

This course helps candidates to develop broad, generic skills. These skills are based on SQA's Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work and draw from the following main skills areas:

1   Literacy

1.1   Reading
1.2   Writing
1.3   Listening and talking

5   Thinking skills

5.3   Applying
5.4   Analysing and evaluating
5.5   Creating

Teachers and lecturers must build these skills into the course at an appropriate level, where there are suitable opportunities.

Course assessment

Course assessment is based on the information in this course specification.

The course assessment meets the purposes and aims of the course by addressing:

♦ breadth — drawing on knowledge and skills from across the course
♦ challenge — requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
♦ application — requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate

This enables candidates to apply:

♦ advanced language skills to understand, analyse and evaluate complex and sophisticated unseen written texts
♦ advanced language skills to use complex and sophisticated written and spoken language, as appropriate to purpose and audience

Course assessment structure: question paper

Question paper: Sgrùdadh (Practical Criticism)   30 marks

This question paper has 30 marks out of a total of 115 marks for the course assessment.

It gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate:

♦ critical reading skills to complex and sophisticated unseen texts
♦ knowledge and understanding of appropriate literary context, forms, genres and culture

Candidates read two complex and sophisticated unseen written Gaelic texts: one fiction and one non-fiction.

They respond to questions about the written texts.

Setting, conducting and marking the question paper

SQA sets and marks this questions paper. It is conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA.

Candidates have 1 hour and 30 minutes to complete this question paper.

Question paper: Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh (Literature and Writing)   **40 marks**

This question paper has 40 marks out of a total of 115 marks for the course assessment.

It has two sections.

Section 1: Litreachas (Literature) 20 marks

This section gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate:

♦ advanced critical reading skills with reference to familiar texts
♦ knowledge and understanding of appropriate literary context, forms, genres and culture

Candidates write an essay on aspects of a literary text studied, from the genres of drama, prose or poetry. Candidates select one essay question from a choice of eight.

Section 2: Sgrìobhadh (Writing) 20 marks

This section gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate:

♦ using complex and sophisticated written Gaelic

Candidates write an essay in Gaelic from a choice of eight essay titles.

Setting, conducting and marking the question paper

SQA sets and marks this question paper. It is conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA.

Candidates have 1 hour and 40 minutes to complete this question paper.

Question paper: Eadar-theangachadh (Translating)   15 marks

This question paper has 15 marks out of a total of 115 marks for the course assessment.

It gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate:

♦ translating from written English into written Gaelic
♦ knowledge of technically accurate complex and sophisticated Gaelic language
♦ replicating tone and impact, as appropriate to genre

Candidates translate one non-fiction written English text into written Gaelic.

Setting, conducting and marking the question paper

SQA sets and marks this question paper. It is conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA.

Candidates have 30 minutes to complete this question paper.

Specimen question papers for Advanced Higher courses are published on SQA's website. These illustrate the standard, structure and requirements of the question papers. The specimen papers also include marking instructions.

Course assessment structure: performance–talking

Performance–talking   30 marks

The performance–talking has 30 marks out of a total of 115 marks for the course assessment.

It gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate:

♦ using complex and sophisticated spoken Gaelic as part of a discussion
♦ knowledge and understanding of appropriate literary context, forms, genres and culture

Performance–talking overview

Candidates take part in a face-to-face discussion with a visiting assessor on the candidate's chosen area of research undertaken during the course. They should also discuss other topics relevant to the course, and ask questions where appropriate.

The visiting assessor uses a range of questioning techniques to allow candidates to demonstrate their ability to sustain a discussion.

Setting, conducting and marking the performance–talking

The performance–talking is:

♦ set by centres within SQA guidelines
♦ carried out by visiting assessors appointed by SQA
♦ conducted under a high degree of supervision
♦ a live assessment marked by the visiting assessor

Centres must provide details of the themes and topics studied by the candidates, and the focus of the candidates' portfolio, in advance of the performance. Candidates complete an STL form, which centres must forward to SQA no later than one week prior to the start of the visiting assessment period (normally mid-February).

The performance–talking is audio recorded by the visiting assessor.

All marking is quality assured by SQA.

Assessment conditions

Time

This assessment is a one-off single assessment event. The visiting assessor contacts centres to agree suitable time(s) and dates, normally during February and March.

The discussion lasts approximately 20 minutes.

Supervision, control and authentication

The performance is conducted under a high degree of supervision.

During the performance candidates:

♦ face the visiting assessor during the period of assessment
♦ must not speak to anyone other than the visiting assessor

Centres must provide quiet surroundings for conducting the assessment. Candidates must not bring mobile phones with them to the assessment.

Resources

During this assessment, candidates may use brief notes as an aide-mémoire. Candidates may refer to several bullet points containing prompt words but should not be full sentences to be read out word for word. Frequent reference to notes can detract from the quality of the performance.

Reasonable assistance

Candidates must prepare for the assessment independently. However, they can receive reasonable assistance before the formal assessment process takes place. The term 'reasonable assistance' is used to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving

too much help. If any candidates need more than what is thought to be 'reasonable assistance', they may not be ready for assessment or they may have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

Teachers and lecturers can give reasonable assistance on a generic basis to a class or group of candidates (for example, advice on the appropriateness of topics candidates choose). Teachers and lecturers can also give assistance to candidates on an individual basis.

However, helping candidates on a one-to-one basis in the context of something they have already produced or demonstrated could become support for assessment and may be going beyond reasonable assistance.

The performance lasts approximately 20 minutes. The visiting assessor manages this appropriately and ensures that the discussion of the candidate's personal research and topics studied are given sufficient time.

Where candidates are clearly having difficulty in maintaining the interaction, the visiting assessor will try to continue the conversation as long as possible, avoiding excessive length.

Evidence to be gathered

The following candidate evidence is required for this assessment:

♦ an audio recording of the performance

Volume

This does not apply to the performance.

Performance–talking marking instructions

In line with SQA's normal practice, the following marking instructions for the Advanced Higher Gàidhlig performance–talking are addressed to the visiting assessor. They will also be helpful for those preparing candidates for course assessment.

Candidates' evidence is marked in centres by an SQA visiting assessor.

General marking principles

Always apply these general principles. Use them in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates' responses.

a   Always use positive marking. This means candidates accumulate marks for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding; marks are not deducted for errors or omissions.

b   Assessment should be holistic. There are strengths and weaknesses in the performance; assessment should focus as far as possible on the strengths, taking account of weaknesses only when they significantly detract from the overall performance. The performance does not have to be perfect to gain full marks.

Detailed marking instructions

Candidates gain marks by demonstrating ability in the five main characteristics of the performance–talking. These are:

♦ style and structure
♦ content
♦ language resource
♦ accuracy
♦ interaction

In order to arrive at the final mark, visiting assessors should first select the column in which the descriptors most closely match the candidate's performance.

Once that column has been identified:

♦ if the evidence mostly meets the standards described, award the highest available mark from that range
♦ if the candidate's work just meets the standard described, award the lowest mark from the range
♦ otherwise award the mark from the middle of the range

Use professional judgement to decide allocation of mark. For example, if the number of marks in the band selected is best described as 18–15: reconsider the candidate's abilities in the five main characteristics. If the candidate just misses an 18, award 17. If the candidate is slightly above a 15, award 16.

If the candidate does not produce any evidence that matches the descriptions of performance, award zero (0) marks.

Record the mark on the candidate assessment record. You may provide a comment justifying why you awarded the mark.

	Description of performance and mark						
	30–27	26–23	22–19	18–15	14–11	10–6	5–1
	The candidate:						
Style and structure	speaks effectively, coherently, fluently and in a structured manner with only limited and/or natural hesitation	speaks effectively, coherently and in a structured manner with only some hesitation	speaks effectively, coherently and in a structured manner with limited inappropriate hesitation	speaks coherently and in a structured manner with a level of hesitation which does not detract from communication	lacks sufficient coherence and organisation, and hesitation may interfere with the interaction	lacks coherence and organisation, and hesitation interferes with the interaction	is not coherent or organised, and hesitation interferes with the interaction
Content	contributes a wide range of relevant ideas and opinions with appropriate linkage and which contain extensive development of personal research and any other context	contributes a good range of relevant ideas and opinions with appropriate linkage and which contain development of personal research and any other context	contributes a range of relevant ideas and opinions with appropriate linkage and which contain development of personal research and any other context	contributes a sufficient range of relevant ideas and opinions with appropriate linkage and which contain some development of personal research and any other context	contributes some relevant ideas and opinions with some linkage and some development of personal research and any other context	struggles to give a sufficient range of relevant ideas and opinions which develop the personal research or any other context	struggles to give relevant ideas and opinions and to develop personal research or any other context
Language resource	shows knowledge of a wide range of vocabulary for the personal research and any other chosen topic, and uses this with ease	shows knowledge of a wide range of vocabulary for the personal research and any other chosen topic	shows knowledge of a sufficient range of vocabulary for the personal research and any other chosen topic to maintain the discussion	shows knowledge of a sufficient range of vocabulary for the personal research and any other chosen topic to maintain the discussion with some prompting	shows limited knowledge of vocabulary for the personal research and any other chosen topic which hinders communication at times	shows limited knowledge of vocabulary for the personal research or any other chosen topic which frequently hinders communication	has difficulty discussing the personal research or any other chosen topic due to limited language resource
	uses a wide range of structures, frequently and naturally including complex structures and idioms	uses a wide range of structures, which include complex structures and idiomatic language	uses a wide range of structures which may include some attempts at complex structures and idiomatic language	uses a range of structures, which may include some attempts at complex structures and idiomatic language	uses a limited range of structures with little or no use of idiomatic language	struggles to use a sufficient range of structures to sustain the discussion	uses structures which impede communication

	Description of performance and mark						
	30–27	26–23	22–19	18–15	14–11	10–6	5–1
	The candidate:						
Accuracy	uses complex and sophisticated language with a high level of accuracy	uses complex and sophisticated language which is mostly accurate	uses complex and sophisticated language despite some grammatical errors	uses complex and sophisticated language despite lapses in grammatical accuracy	talks with an insufficient level of accuracy to convey meaning consistently	talks with a level of accuracy which may at times interfere with clear communication	talks with a level of accuracy which impedes communication
Interaction	engages and responds naturally, and with a level of spontaneity which develops the discussion effectively	engages and responds with a degree of spontaneity which fully supports the discussion	engages and responds with some spontaneity, although may require minimal prompting	engages and maintains the discussion, although may require prompting	requires prompting, pays inconsistent attention to what is said, and may respond in a way that is not relevant	requires frequent prompting, pays little attention to what is said, often responding in a way that is not relevant	constantly requires prompting, pays little or no attention to what is said, and responds in a way that is not relevant
	readily varies intonation to convey meaning or adjusts pace to suit the circumstances	varies intonation to convey meaning or adjusts pace to suit the circumstances	attempts to vary intonation to convey meaning or adjusts pace to suit the circumstances	shows some attempt to vary intonation to convey meaning or adjusts pace to suit the circumstances	makes little or no attempt to vary intonation to convey meaning or adjust pace to suit the circumstances	makes no attempt to vary intonation to convey meaning or adjust pace to suit the circumstances	makes no attempt to vary intonation to convey meaning or adjust pace to suit the circumstances
	understands fully and in detail what is said, including idiomatic use of language	understands fully what is said, including some idiomatic use of language	understands fully what is said clearly, which may include some idiomatic use of language	understands what is said clearly	has difficulty in understanding some of what is said clearly	has difficulty in understanding some of what is said clearly	has difficulty in understanding most of what is said clearly, even with re-questioning
	may ask for clarification from the visiting assessor				does not ask for clarification from the visiting assessor, or does ask for clarification from the visiting assessor but still has difficulty		

Grading

Candidates' overall grades are determined by their performance across the course assessment. The course assessment is graded A–D on the basis of the total mark for all course assessment components.

Grade description for C

For the award of grade C, candidates will typically have demonstrated successful performance in relation to the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course.

Grade description for A

For the award of grade A, candidates will typically have demonstrated a consistently high level of performance in relation to the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course.

Equality and inclusion

This course is designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs is available on the assessment arrangements web page: www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Further information

- Advanced Higher Gàidhlig subject page
- Assessment arrangements web page
- Building the Curriculum 3–5
- Guide to Assessment
- Guidance on conditions of assessment for coursework
- SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work
- Coursework Authenticity: A Guide for Teachers and Lecturers
- Educational Research Reports
- SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools
- SQA e-assessment web page
- SCQF website: framework, level descriptors and SCQF Handbook

Appendix: course support notes

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance to teachers and lecturers on approaches to delivering the course. Please read these course support notes in conjunction with the course specification and the specimen question paper(s) and coursework.

Developing skills, knowledge and understanding

This section provides advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding that can be included in the course. Teachers and lecturers have considerable flexibility to select contexts that stimulate and challenge candidates, offering both breadth and depth.

Teachers and lecturers should refer to the course specification for the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course and course assessment.

Teachers and lecturers should make candidates aware that developing these skills provides important transferable skills that can help with further study, and enhances their personal effectiveness.

Advanced communication skills

The course provides candidates with opportunities for intellectual growth and development of self-expression. Candidates' engagement with complex and sophisticated fiction and non-fiction texts develops their advanced communication skills.

Candidates have many opportunities to respond to texts, initially through a personal response to reading and then talking and listening in discussion with teachers, lecturers and/or peers. Written responses arising from this allow candidates to develop their critical essay writing skills in preparation for the literature section of the question paper. Similarly, it provides opportunities for candidates to prepare for their performance–talking.

Understanding, critical analysis and evaluation

The development of critical reading skills is a principal aim of the course. Candidates are encouraged to be serious readers: reading with thought and care, with engagement and commitment. Reading should be an active, not a passive, pursuit.

Candidates should interrogate texts, adopting a questioning approach, looking for similarities and differences across texts, and for a writer's style and central concerns. They are encouraged to do this with growing confidence and independence. Candidates should carefully consider and reflect on the central concerns of texts, selecting and analysing the contribution of, for example, literary techniques or the impact of significant moments. They should adopt an evaluative approach to their reading of texts, both literary and non-fiction, and their responses must be evidenced and analytical.

Production of complex and sophisticated written texts

In the writing section of the question paper, candidates can choose title, genre and purpose. To prepare for this, candidates could make several explorations across types and genres.

For the literature section of the question paper, candidates should develop the skills and techniques needed to produce critical essays: significantly, creating a reasoned argument which addresses and answers a specific question, and is sustained across an extended piece of writing.

Production of complex and sophisticated written texts in Gaelic, translated from English

Teachers and lecturers should prepare candidates to identify the audience, purpose and tone of the English text they are translating, as well as ensuring that their Gaelic rendering of the text is technically accurate. The focus should be on dynamic, rather than formal, equivalence so that the text produced would have the same effect on the Gaelic reader as it would have had on its original English reader.

Production of complex and sophisticated spoken language

In the performance–talking, candidates can choose the focus of the discussion. To prepare for this, candidates would benefit from doing their research on a particular element of Gaelic language, literature, media or culture which interests them, and would be suitable for a meaningful discussion at this level. During the performance, candidates should take the initiative to ensure that they sustain the discussion and not rely on rehearsed material.

Knowledge and understanding of language

This involves candidates becoming better skilled and equipped in the use of Gaelic for the purposes of their own written and spoken expression. It also takes the form of an exploration of the language which is specific to the writers and literary genres they are studying. This includes, where appropriate, the language of literary criticism.

When producing their own texts candidates should consider, select and apply these skills from their knowledge and understanding of how writers use complex literary language across various genres and purposes.

Candidates need to have some knowledge of the main ways in which literary language works, for example:

♦ poetry: form, structure, stanza pattern, poetic voice or persona, word choice, imagery, metaphor, rhyme, rhythm and meter, stress, sound, mood, tone

♦ prose fiction: narrative voice, evocation of setting, mood, characterisation, use of metaphor, imagery, sentence structure, repetition, symbol, contrast, tone, structure

♦ prose non-fiction: word choice, use of metaphor, comparison, sensory detail, imagery and analogy, sentence structure, repetition, symbol, contrast, tone, structure or pattern, balance

♦ drama: mood and tone, contrast, characterisation, stereotype, parody, monologue, dialogue, pathos, timing/pauses/rhythm, stage directions, word choice, imagery, use of metaphor structure, narrator/chorus, stylised elements, significance of props, music and song, cliché, humour, irony

Approaches to learning and teaching

Advanced Higher places more demands on candidates, as there is a higher proportion of independent study and less direct supervision. Teachers and lecturers should encourage candidates to use an enquiring, critical and problem-solving approach to their learning.

Candidates should also have the opportunity to practise and develop research and investigation skills, and high-order evaluation and analytical skills. Some of the approaches to learning and teaching suggested for other levels (in particular, Higher) may also apply at Advanced Higher, but there must be a stronger emphasis on independent learning. As research and investigation activities become more sophisticated, the use of information and communications technology (ICT) can contribute to the development of these skills.

The course offers many opportunities for personalisation and choice, for example:

Candidates can:

♦ choose contexts and topics which may help them prepare for the performance–talking

♦ have opportunities for choice and delivery of the course, where appropriate (for example choosing to respond orally or in writing)

♦ create their own learning targets and plans for their language learning

Teachers and lecturers can:

♦ give individual feedback to candidates

♦ provide differentiated materials and approaches

♦ select the most appropriate assessment methods, taking into account individual needs of candidates

During the course, teachers and lecturers should give candidates the opportunity to:

♦ enhance their communication skills by developing the skills of listening, talking, reading and writing and translating from English to Gaelic
♦ develop a knowledge of the structures of Gaelic
♦ develop generic skills such as working with others, research skills, skills in presenting information and ICT

Where resources permit, technology can support learning, teaching and assessment, for example:

♦ compiling and maintaining e-portfolios
♦ web-based research (for example in preparation for the performance–talking)
♦ listening and responding to and/or creating podcasts
♦ using online forums for discussion
♦ using virtual learning environments (VLE)
♦ video conferencing
♦ using Gaelic online facilities and archives
♦ submitting assessed work through VLE and/or email
♦ using social media
♦ using media such as television, radio and websites in Gaelic

Candidates should engage in a variety of learning activities, for example:

♦ researching information rather than receiving information from their teacher or lecturer
♦ using active and open-ended learning activities, such as research and presentation tasks
♦ using the internet to investigate specific issues and draw conclusions
♦ engaging in wide-ranging independent reading
♦ systematically recording the results of research and independent investigation from different sources
♦ presenting findings and conclusions of research and investigation activities in a presentation
♦ group work with peers, where appropriate, and using collaborative learning opportunities to develop team working
♦ informed debate and discussion with peers where they can demonstrate skills in constructing and sustaining lines of argument to provide challenge and enjoyment, breadth, and depth to learning
♦ drawing conclusions from complex and sophisticated information
♦ using complex and sophisticated written and/or oral communication and presentation skills to present information
♦ using appropriate technological resources (for example web-based resources)
♦ using appropriate media resources (for example video clips, archived sound files, recordings of songs, bards or story tellers)
♦ demonstrating development, improvement and refinement of techniques and practices

- using real-life contexts and experiences familiar and relevant to candidates to develop skills, knowledge and understanding
- field trips and visits

Teachers and lecturers should support candidates by having regular discussions with them and giving regular feedback. Some learning and teaching activities can be on a group basis and, where this applies, candidates could receive feedback from their peers.

Teachers and lecturers should provide opportunities to personalise learning where possible. The flexibility in Advanced Higher courses, and the independence with which candidates carry out the work, lend themselves to this. Teachers and lecturers should create opportunities for, and use, inclusive approaches to learning and teaching by encouraging a variety of learning and teaching strategies which suit the needs of all candidates.

Approaches to producing complex and sophisticated written texts
Candidates should:

- experience many different genres including fiction and non-fiction, and read with discernment
- develop independent, analytical evaluation skills by discussing the connotations of the words that convey a relationship with the reader and/or listener
- meet professional writers, where possible

Approaches to literature
Candidates should:

- encounter a wide variety of literature and respond individually
- explore areas of personal interest and share these with their peers and teacher or lecturer
- learn about a range of genre features through both critical and imaginative exercises that allow them to analyse, evaluate and demonstrate an understanding of relevant literary forms
- work independently and collaboratively to create learning materials which involve reading and critical analysis of a literary text, and enable further extended critical response
- take part in tutorial-type activities to prepare them for further education or employment

Approaches to translating
Candidates should:

- explore a wide variety of types of written and spoken texts (for example discursive, functional, informative, persuasive), identifying the significance of audience and purpose and developing techniques to maintain the tenor of the original text in the target language
- examine written texts that have already been translated, and evaluate the accuracy and effectiveness of these translations

Preparing for course assessment

Activities which may help candidates prepare for course assessment could include:

♦ selecting topics, gathering and researching information, evaluating and analysing findings, developing and justifying conclusions, and presenting the information
♦ reviewing specimen question papers and/or coursework
♦ practising question paper techniques, and revising for the question paper
♦ clarifying requirements of the performance and the support that they can expect

Question paper: Sgrùdadh (Practical Criticism)

The Sgrùdadh (Practical Criticism) question paper is essentially a test of reading. It is an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their skills of critical analysis on two complex and sophisticated unseen written Gaelic texts: one fiction and one non-fiction.

In preparation for this question paper, teachers and lecturers should give candidates opportunities to read widely across different genres, styles and periods. Teachers and lecturers can do this in a regular, informal way by introducing candidates to discursive newspaper articles, as well as literary texts. Candidates could respond to these in group discussion, or in short time-limited written responses. After initial teacher or lecturer-led activities, candidates could source and suggest their own extracts for discussion and analysis.

Candidates should try to engage fully with the text chosen, approaching it in a spirit of curiosity, and using critical thinking skills and critical vocabulary necessary to analyse what they have noticed. Direct annotation (for example underlining, highlighting or circling) of the extract printed in the question paper is recommended. This helps with making selections from the text for analysis. A set of common analytical questions, or prompts, as a starting point might be useful to candidates as they begin to engage with the text, for example:

Poetry
♦ What is the form of the poem? Is there a recognisable shape or pattern? Is rhythm linked to this?
♦ Is there a speaker or persona? What is the poetic voice?
♦ Is there a clear tone, or does this shift and change? If so, where, and why?
♦ Is sound a prominent feature?
♦ Is imagery used? Is there a central image that runs through the poem, and is this image changed or developed?
♦ What are the key words of the poem? Which words are emphasised?
♦ What are the central concerns or ideas explored in the text?

Prose non-fiction

- ♦ What genre is the text from?
- ♦ What is the situation or issue described in the text? What is being described or discussed?
- ♦ When is this taking place?
- ♦ Who is the narrator? Is it the writer or a persona? Is the point of view first person?
- ♦ Who is the intended audience?
- ♦ What tone is used? Does this change at all? Why?
- ♦ Are there any interesting points of structure? Does it follow time sequence? Is there significance in the paragraphing used?
- ♦ Does the writer use a particular style? Is imagery used, or particular word choice? Is there anything interesting about the sentence structure?
- ♦ Is the writer trying to put across a clear argument or point of view?

For the assessment, candidates' analysis should be selective and evidence-based, showing an awareness of how the writer actively and deliberately uses techniques to maximise impact, and to communicate central concerns. Candidates should use the key focus of the questions as an aid for what to look for, and for the content of a relevant line of response. Candidates should address the questions, and aim to demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of a range of literary techniques, where required. For example, a response on poetry should discuss more than word choice and imagery.

In their responses, candidates should take an evaluative stance (pointing out the significance and effectiveness of techniques or aspects), and use critical vocabulary confidently. Candidates should answer in coherent, continuous prose, or in extended bullet points. Responses should be genuine analytical explorations of the texts, discussing, for example, a range of potential meanings or questions posed by a writer. There is a possibility that candidates try to narrow meaning down to a single statement; meaning may consist of complex layers, and candidates should feel comfortable acknowledging a range of possible meanings.

Question paper: Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh (Literature and Writing)

Section 1: Litreachas (Literature)

Candidates write one critical essay in response to one question selected from a range of optional questions on the genres of drama, prose and poetry. A range of questions across the genres allows candidates to specialise in their study of texts and/or writers.

Candidates should explore the literary techniques of writing, in particular the genre-specific techniques used by the writers and texts studied as part of the course. Teachers and lecturers should encourage an awareness of a writer's style, allowing candidates to conduct analysis of the techniques of their chosen writers. Candidates should explore the complexities of narrative, structure and connotative, metaphorical language; how writers use these to deepen meaning and effect, and how they relate to thematic concerns.

Teachers and lecturers should encourage candidates to look for connections between texts studied. Candidates could ask themselves questions, for example:

♦ Are there common central concerns running through a series of poems, or across two novels or plays?
♦ Are there common, or differing aspects of style?
♦ Are characters treated, or drawn, in similar ways in two novels or two plays?
♦ Is symbolism a common feature? Or irony?
♦ Is the method of narration the same?
♦ Does a poet adopt or use a persona? Why?

When writing a critical essay, candidates should plan their response, considering structure while determining a clear line of thought or argument. Within the essay, analysis should predominate: the candidate's argument should consist of a discussion of the key terms of the question, and contain a thread of relevant critical analysis. It should not be a series of unconnected opinions on the texts. In order to do this successfully, planning is required.

The first stage of planning might be jotting down thoughts in reaction to the demands of the question. Candidates could then make notes about how they will select appropriate evidence (for example key moments of conflict or tension, characterisation, key images or symbols), and how these relate to central concerns. In the Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh (Literature and Writing) question paper there is sufficient time to do this.

Essay structure	Candidates should:
Introduction	♦ address (and possibly explain) the key terms of the question, explaining relevance to the texts selected ♦ make connections with central concerns or themes ♦ outline the content or indication of the proposed argument or line of thought
Body of the essay	♦ identify and explore the points or aspects raised in the introduction, most likely in separate paragraphs ♦ make sure all paragraphs are relevant to the line of thought and consist of relevant critical analysis ♦ draw direct evidence from the texts and analyse it in a way that is relevant to the argument ♦ avoid statements of unsupported asserted opinion, and establish links between paragraphs
Conclusion	♦ make a suitable conclusion, which brings together the various aspects of the argument or line of thought, including: — reference to the terms of the question — reflection or further considerations or scope for discussion

Section 2: Sgrìobhadh (Writing)

The writing section assesses candidates' ability to produce complex and sophisticated written texts. Candidates write one essay, choosing one title from a choice of eight. Candidates can respond using any genre, which allows them significant personalisation and choice.

Candidates should look for opportunities to practise the skills of writing, and attempt to apply and link the skills they learn from their studies of specific writers, and literary genres, in their own writing.

The teaching and learning of writing skills can be integrated into the work of other aspects of the course. Some genre specialism can help candidates here. For example, if candidates intend to write poetry, they should be studying poetry in other areas of the course in preparation for the literature section and for the Practical Criticism question paper.

Candidates could work towards the discovery of their own written style by attempts to imitate the style of a writer they have read closely. Experimentation in terms of purposes, genres, and contexts is desirable in order that candidates can discover types of writing best suited to their needs and development.

All writing must show an awareness of shape, form and structure. In its most simple form this involves an opening, main body, and conclusion. Shape, form and structure are, and should be, important aspects of the process of constructing a written text, and their effects can be significant.

In broadly creative writing, teachers and lecturers should encourage candidates to use their imagination, both for imaginative writing and in their exploration of their own life experience. When writing about their personal experience, candidates should show they have engaged with, and reflected on, the experience. Reflection should be clearly apparent: the writing should not just be an account of events.

For non-fiction, it is essential that candidates become familiar with non-fiction writing where they have the opportunity to explore issues of local, national or international importance, or issues which have personal resonance. As with critical writing in the literature section of the question paper, a line of thought or argument is again important, and candidates may benefit from choosing titles which they have an interest in or prior knowledge of, for example based on research they have carried out for their performance–talking.

There may be some 'blurring' between the specified sub-genres: informative, argumentative and persuasive. For example, a piece of writing which has an essentially informative purpose might include argumentative or persuasive elements; personal reflection might also be appropriate. This is often true of feature writing, which tends to have an individual slant or style: here the candidate might vary the register, tone and voice in order to communicate nuances of meaning.

In preparation for this section of the question paper, teachers and lecturers should encourage candidates to look critically at their own writing and redraft or rework parts of their writing. Evaluative responses to complex and sophisticated literature for the Literature and Practical Criticism question papers help candidates to form considered critical judgements on

their own writing. The following examples of reflective questions might be helpful to candidates:

♦ Is there a clear shape, form, structure?
♦ Does the language reflect central concerns, for example line of thought?
♦ Is language used effectively?
♦ Is the choice of language interesting and engaging for the reader?
♦ Does the opening sufficiently capture the reader's interest and attention?
♦ Is technical accuracy sustained throughout the piece?

Question paper: Eadar-theangachadh (Translating)

The Eadar-theangachadh (Translating) question paper assesses the candidates' ability to translate a non-fiction written English text into written Gaelic. As part of the question paper candidates identify and replicate the writer's audience, purpose and tone.

Candidates should practise translating texts from sources in English, for example:

♦ leaflets
♦ extracts from newspaper stories
♦ extracts from articles
♦ instructions

For any technical or text-specific vocabulary, there is a glossary for candidates, with items in their root form. Candidates should practise using and modifying these glossed terms where necessary, to fit in with the grammar of the sentence.

Much of the preparation for the prose section of the Practical Criticism question paper is relevant here too. To help identify the English text's audience, purpose and tone, candidates should ask themselves questions such as the following:

♦ What is the situation? What is being described or discussed?
♦ When is this taking place?
♦ Who is the writer? Is it written in first person?
♦ What tone is used? Does this change at all? Why?
♦ Are there any interesting points of structure?
♦ Does the writer use a particular style? Is imagery used, or particular word choice? Is there anything interesting about the sentence structure?
♦ Is the writer trying to put across a clear argument or point of view, or is it more subtle?

While checking their translation in Gaelic, candidates should ask themselves:

♦ Have I replicated the same layout, sentence and paragraph structure?
♦ Have tenses and voice (active and passive) been faithfully maintained where appropriate?
♦ Does the formal and/or informal language replicate the tone and register of the original?
♦ Have I used equivalent, not literal, idioms and expressions where appropriate?
♦ Would the translation have the same impact on the reader of the Gaelic version as the original would have had?
♦ Have I used any glossed terms appropriately?

Technical accuracy is a crucial element in the marking instructions and candidates should pay close attention to:

♦ spelling
♦ punctuation, particularly accents and apostrophes
♦ gender
♦ plural formation
♦ adjectival agreement, where necessary
♦ case modifications and inflections, for example genitive and prepositional
♦ correct use of modal verbs and inversion, where appropriate

Coursework: Còmhradh (performance–talking)

Candidates should be used to speaking with their teachers or lecturers in Gaelic, and so the performance should come naturally to them. The focus should be on genuine discussion with the visiting assessor, rather than a series of short prepared presentations.

The topics for the discussion are largely for individual candidates to decide, but broadly, they should be prepared to discuss in detail:

♦ any literature they studied as part of the course, focusing not only on content but on particular language features of the literature
♦ any personal research they have carried out during the course
♦ any other issues which lend themselves well to speaking at length, using complex and sophisticated language

Candidates need to know their chosen topics and literature well. They should develop the confidence to be proactive in discussions, leading them into areas they feel more comfortable with, rather than struggling to demonstrate their linguistic abilities if the topic is not familiar to them.

While there is no requirement in Advanced Higher Gàidhlig for candidates to carry out a personal research project, it is one of the best ways for candidates to be well prepared for their performance. A topic which is of personal interest, and the knowledge, content, and associated vocabulary and linguistic structures will allow candidates to feel confident, and at ease, when speaking with the visiting assessor.

Teachers and lecturers should make candidates aware that the best performances are not merely factual presentations or question-and-answer interviews, but are genuine two-way conversations. The focus should be on exchanging ideas and opinions, with the candidates taking the initiative and leading as much of the conversation as possible. Giving candidates regular practice in leading or chairing group discussions is an ideal way to develop the skills for the performance–talking.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Teachers and lecturers should identify opportunities throughout the course for candidates to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

Candidates should be aware of the skills they are developing and teachers and lecturers can provide advice on opportunities to practise and improve them.

SQA does not formally assess skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

There may also be opportunities to develop additional skills depending on the approach centres use to deliver the course. This is for individual teachers and lecturers to manage.

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Approaches for learning and teaching
1 Literacy	**1.1 Reading** Develop this skill by using activities that: ♦ involve fiction and non-fiction texts ♦ use discussion to help candidates engage with texts and identify and explore the ideas and themes in texts, and analyse and evaluate language used Activities to support candidates to identify and explore the ideas and themes in texts, and analyse and evaluate the language used, include: ♦ asking and answering questions ♦ comparing and contrasting texts, both within and across genres ♦ commenting on language features ♦ summarising, clarifying and predicting ♦ text completion ♦ focusing on the audience and purpose of texts

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Approaches for learning and teaching
1 Literacy	**1.2 Writing** Encourage candidates to plan and to reflect on their writing by: ♦ creating diagrammatic responses ♦ peer discussion where they consider the genre, audience and purpose for their writing To improve their writing, candidates should: ♦ discuss structure and layout ♦ build up sentences, by linking ♦ plan paragraphs ♦ use topic and concluding sentences ♦ develop vocabulary ♦ develop technical skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling ♦ use plans for writing ♦ create, as required, Gaelic versions of texts related to their research to prepare for the performance–talking ♦ compare and contrast texts that have already been translated **1.3 Listening and talking** Wherever appropriate, encourage candidates to use spoken language skills, particularly from life and work situations. Activities may involve: ♦ asking and answering questions ♦ listening for, and making, comparisons or contrasts ♦ summarising, clarifying and predicting ♦ note-taking ♦ subtitling broadcasts, or comparing and contrasting broadcasts which have already been subtitled ♦ summarising speeches

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Approaches for learning and teaching
5 Thinking skills	**5.3 Applying** Encourage candidates to apply the above skills in order to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of language and literature. Strategies include: ♦ the application of such literary terms as genre, form, structure, stance, tone, mood, voice, persona to a wide variety of texts ♦ practice in exploring the relationships between text and context using appropriate literary theory **5.4 Analysing and evaluating** Encourage candidates to make the skills of analysing and evaluating part of their everyday activities. These include: ♦ tutorial-type discussion on the effectiveness of different types of writing ♦ comparative and peer assessment exercises on the development of their own and others' writing ♦ analysing and evaluating data collected as part of their preparation for the performance–talking **5.5 Creating** Encourage candidates to study the range of strategies used by writers to create meaning, and to aspire to this creativity in their own writing.

Administrative information

History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	Update to Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh (Literature and Writing) question paper to 1 hour and 40 minutes.	May 2019
3.0	Course support notes added as appendix.	September 2019

Note: please check SQA's website to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this document.