



National 5 Gàidhlig

Course code:	C832 75
Course assessment code:	X832 75
SCQF:	level 5 (24 SCQF credit points)
Valid from:	session 2017–18

The course specification 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 you need to deliver the course.

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Course overview

The course consists of 24 SCQF credit points which includes time for preparation for course assessment. The notional length of time for a candidate to complete the course is 160 hours.

The course assessment has five components.

Component	Marks	Duration
Component 1: question paper 1: Leughadh (Reading)	30	1 hour and 40 minutes
Component 2: question paper 1: Litreachas (Literature)	20	
Component 3: question paper 2: Èisteachd (Listening)	20	25 minutes
Component 4: Obair shònraichte–sgrìobhadh (Assignment–writing)	20	See course assessment section
Component 5: Còmhradh (Performance–talking)	30	6–8 minutes See course assessment section

Recommended entry	Progression
Entry to this course is at the discretion of the centre. Candidates should have achieved the fourth curriculum level or the National 4 Gàidhlig course or equivalent qualifications and/or experience prior to starting this course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ other qualifications in Gàidhlig or related areas◆ 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 5

Course rationale

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

In the National 5 Gàidhlig course, there is an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches are proportionate, fit for purpose and promote best practice, enabling candidates to achieve the highest standards they can.

The course provides candidates with opportunities to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities, as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

Candidates encounter a wide range of different types of texts in different media. Building on the four capacities, the course enables candidates to communicate, be critical thinkers, develop cultural awareness and be creative. Candidates also develop an appreciation of Scotland's literary and linguistic heritage.

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 thinking, learning and sense of personal identity.

The course also provides candidates with the opportunity to develop an understanding of how language works, and use language to communicate ideas and information in Gaelic: to use creative and critical thinking to synthesise ideas and arguments; to develop critical literacy skills and personal, interpersonal and team-working skills; to develop independent learning; to enhance their enjoyment and understanding of their own language and culture, and those of others.

The course fosters language awareness and an appreciation 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.

Purpose and aims

The main purpose of the course is to provide candidates with the opportunity to develop the skills of reading, critical reading, listening, talking and writing in order to understand and use Gaelic language.

As candidates develop their literacy skills, they are able to process information more easily, apply knowledge of language in practical and relevant contexts, and gain confidence to undertake new and more challenging tasks in a variety of situations.

Building on literacy skills, the course develops an understanding of the complexities of language, including through the study of a wide range of texts. The course develops high levels of analytical thinking and understanding of the impact of language.

The course offers candidates opportunities to develop and extend a wide range of skills. In particular, the course aims to enable candidates to develop:

- ◆ the ability to listen, read, talk and write in Gaelic, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ the ability to understand, analyse and evaluate texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in the contexts of literature, language, media and culture
- ◆ the ability to create and produce texts, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ the ability to apply knowledge of language
- ◆ their knowledge and understanding of Gaelic cultural heritage and the cultural heritage of others

Who is this course for?

The course provides opportunities for candidates who have experienced a broad general education or Gàidhlig qualifications at a lower SCQF level or from a Gaelic (Learners) qualification. Please refer to SQA's *Guidance on Allocation to Gàidhlig or Gaelic (Candidates) Programmes of Study and Qualifications*.

Course content

The course provides candidates with the opportunity to develop their reading, critical reading, listening, 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, 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:

- ◆ reading, critical reading, listening, talking and writing skills, as appropriate to purpose and audience
- ◆ understanding, analysing and evaluating detailed written and spoken texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in the contexts of literature, language, media and culture
- ◆ creating and producing detailed texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in a range of contexts
- ◆ using knowledge and understanding of language
- ◆ using knowledge and understanding of Gaelic cultural heritage and the cultural heritage of others

Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment

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

- ◆ skills of inference-making and summarising
- ◆ knowledge of literary forms and genres, including aspects of heritage
- ◆ knowledge of literature, language and media contexts
- ◆ 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 and/or contemporary culture
- ◆ skills required for discursive or creative writing

Candidates will also demonstrate a command of grammatical knowledge and be able to understand:

- ◆ the distinction between connotative and denotative uses of language
- ◆ the names and uses of the main word classes — noun, pronoun, adjective, article, verb, adverb, preposition and conjunction
- ◆ the names and uses of the basic syntactic units — sentence, clause, phrase/group
- ◆ the more commonly used conventions of written Gaelic language
- ◆ critical terminology for discussing a wide range of texts

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 (www.scqf.org.uk).

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

4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship

- 4.6 Citizenship

5 Thinking skills

- 5.3 Applying
- 5.4 Analysing and evaluating

These skills must be built into the course where there are appropriate opportunities and the level should be appropriate to the level of the course.

Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is given in the course support notes.

Course assessment

Course assessment is based on the information provided in this document.

The course assessment meets the key 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 provide evidence of:

- ◆ understanding, analysis and evaluation of unseen written and spoken texts
- ◆ critical reading skills
- ◆ discursive or creative writing skills
- ◆ applying language skills

Course assessment structure: question paper

Question paper 1: Reading and Literature (Leughadh agus Litreachas)

50 marks

The question paper gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills:

- ◆ reading for understanding, analysis and evaluation of an unseen written Gaelic text
- ◆ critical reading skills of a familiar Gaelic text with reference to appropriate literary context, form and genre

This question paper has a combined total mark allocation of 50 marks out of a total of 120 marks.

This question paper has two sections.

Section 1, titled 'Reading for understanding, analysis and evaluation' (Leughadh airson tuigsinn, mion-sgrùdadh agus luachadh), has 30 marks.

Marks are awarded for applying reading skills in understanding, analysis and evaluation to one unseen non-fiction text. Assessment involves answering questions to show these reading skills and completing a task that involves inference-making and summarising.

Section 2, titled 'Literature' (Litreachas), has 20 marks.

Marks are awarded for applying critical-reading skills and knowledge in producing one critical essay drawn from the study of one Gaelic text from the following: poetry, short story, novel, play or film/TV.

Setting, conducting and marking the question paper

This question paper is set and marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA.

Candidates complete this question paper in 1 hour and 40 minutes.

Question paper 2: Listening (Èisteachd)

20 marks

The question paper gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills:

- ◆ listening for understanding, analysis and evaluation of a spoken Gaelic text

This question paper has 20 marks out of a total of 120 marks.

This question paper has one section.

Marks are awarded to candidates for applying their listening skills in understanding, analysis and evaluation to a previously unheard detailed non-fiction spoken Gaelic text.

Setting, conducting and marking the question paper

This question paper is set and marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA.

Candidates complete this question paper in approximately 25 minutes.

Specimen question papers for National 5 courses are published on SQA's website. These illustrate the standard, structure and requirements of the question papers candidates sit. The specimen papers also include marking instructions.

Course assessment structure: assignment–writing

Assignment–writing (Obair shònraichte–sgrìobhadh) 20 marks

The assignment–writing gives candidates the opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding in Gaelic, through either creative or discursive writing:

- ◆ writing in a chosen genre
- ◆ writing for a chosen purpose and audience

The assignment–writing has 20 marks out of a total of 120 marks.

The assignment–writing has one section.

Assignment–writing overview

The assignment–writing consists of one written piece. The candidate chooses to produce either a creative or discursive text. The teacher or lecturer will support the candidate to choose the focus, theme and genre for their writing.

Creative writing may include:

- ◆ a personal/reflective essay
- ◆ a piece of prose fiction (eg short story, episode from a novel)
- ◆ a poem or set of thematically linked poems
- ◆ a dramatic script (eg scene, monologue, sketch)

Discursive writing may include:

- ◆ a persuasive essay
- ◆ an argumentative essay
- ◆ a report for a specified purpose
- ◆ a piece of transactional writing

This is not an exhaustive list but gives an indication of possible approaches which candidates may use.

The assignment–writing has two stages:

- ◆ the planning and development stage
- ◆ the writing stage

While the teacher or lecturer will have a supporting role, the candidates should take the initiative in the planning, management and completion of the task.

Setting, conducting and marking the assignment–writing

The assignment–writing is:

- ◆ set by centres within SQA guidelines
- ◆ conducted under some supervision and control
- ◆ created independently by the candidate

Evidence is submitted to SQA for external marking. All marking is quality assured by SQA.

Assessment conditions

Time

The assessment is carried out over a period of time. Candidates should start at an appropriate point in the course. This will normally be when they have completed most of the work on the course or when their writing skills have reached the level of development and maturity required for National 5 Gàidhlig.

Supervision, control and authentication

Teachers and lecturers must exercise their professional responsibility in ensuring that evidence submitted by a candidate is the candidate's own work. Where there is doubt over the authenticity of the piece of writing it should not be accepted for submission.

The final writing stage should be conducted under some supervision and control. This means that although candidates may complete part of the work outwith the learning and teaching setting, teachers and lecturers should put in place processes for monitoring progress to ensure that the work is the candidate's own, and that plagiarism has not taken place. However, this need not entail formal, timed and supervised conditions, but at all stages of the preparation for and the production of the piece there should be careful monitoring to ensure that it is entirely the candidate's own work.

Mechanisms to authenticate candidate evidence could include:

- ◆ regular checkpoint/progress meetings with candidates
- ◆ short spot-check personal interviews
- ◆ checklists which record activity/progress
- ◆ an accurate record of sources consulted
- ◆ ensuring that candidates know exactly what is required for the assignment, and that they have read and understood the SQA booklet *Your Coursework*

Any direct quotations from source material used in discursive writing must be clearly acknowledged through the use of quotation marks. Specific details of sources must be given, eg dates and writers of newspaper articles, specific web pages, titles and dates of publication of books; it is not acceptable to say, for example 'mar a chanas artaigilean phàipearan-naidheachd' or 'a leugh mi air an Eadar-lìon'. Unacknowledged use of others' material such as copying and pasting from the internet or any other source, or re-wording or summarising

information from another source and passing it off as the candidate's own, is plagiarism and this carries severe penalties.

Candidates must submit their piece of writing using the SQA template devised for this purpose, either hand-written or word-processed. Candidates must confirm by a signature that the submission is their own work, provide a title for the submission and indicate the genre they have chosen. Candidate submissions must be legible and free from teacher or lecturer annotations.

Resources

There are no restrictions on the resources to which candidates may have access, for example, stimulus texts, grammar reference books and dictionaries.

Reasonable assistance

Candidates must undertake preparation of their assignment–writing independently. Reasonable assistance may be provided prior to the formal assessment process taking place. The term 'reasonable assistance' is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. If any candidates require more than what is deemed to be 'reasonable assistance', they may not be ready for assessment or it may be that they have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

Reasonable assistance may be given on a generic basis to a class or group of candidates, for example, advice on how to find information for a discursive essay. It may also be given to candidates on an individual basis. Candidates may wish to write about a topic of particular interest and may create a stimulus in collaboration with their teacher or lecturer.

It is acceptable for the teacher or lecturer to provide:

- ◆ an initial discussion with the candidates on the selection of the genre and topic leading to an outline plan
- ◆ oral or written suggestions for improvements to a first draft

It is not acceptable for a teacher or lecturer to provide:

- ◆ model answers which are specific to a candidate's task
- ◆ specific advice on how to re-phrase wording
- ◆ key ideas, or a specific structure or plan
- ◆ corrections of errors in spelling and punctuation
- ◆ feedback on more than one draft of writing

Evidence to be gathered

The following candidate evidence is required for this assignment–writing:

- ◆ one piece of writing which is either creative or discursive
- ◆ flyleaf or equivalent signed by the candidate

Volume

The written text must be of approximately 700–1,000 words, but full marks can be achieved in a shorter piece, if appropriate to purpose.

If the word count exceeds the maximum by more than 10%, a penalty will be applied.

Assignment–writing marking instructions

In line with SQA’s normal practice, the following marking instructions are addressed to the marker. They will also be helpful for those preparing candidates for course assessment.

General marking principles for National 5 Gàidhlig: assignment–writing

This information is provided to help you understand the general principles you must apply when marking candidates’ submissions for this assignment–writing. These principles must be read in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates’ responses.

- a Marks for each candidate response must **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the detailed marking instructions for this assessment.
- b Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.
- c The candidate’s writing will be marked in terms of content and style.
- d Assessment should be holistic. There will be strengths and weaknesses in every piece of writing; assessment should focus as far as possible on the strengths, taking account of weaknesses only when they significantly detract from the overall performance. Marks should be awarded for the quality of the writing, and not deducted for errors or omissions.
- e Writing does not have to be perfect to gain full marks.

Detailed marking instructions for National 5 Gàidhlig: assignment–writing

The candidate’s assignment is described in terms of the following two characteristics in tables below for writing:

- ◆ content
- ◆ style

For the piece of writing submitted, the marker should select the range descriptor from the descriptors below that most closely describes the candidate’s work.

Once the best fit has been decided, then:

- ◆ Where the evidence almost matches the level above, the highest available mark from the range should be awarded.
- ◆ Where the candidate’s work just meets the standard described, the lowest mark from the range should be awarded.

Otherwise assessors should use their professional judgement to decide allocation of the mark. For example 13–10: assessors should reconsider the candidate’s abilities in the two areas, content and style. If the candidate just misses a 13, award 12. If the candidate is slightly above a 10, award 11.

Zero (0) marks should be awarded where no evidence is produced by the candidate that matches the descriptions of performance.

Satisfactory technical accuracy is a requirement for the piece to meet the minimum requirements for the 13–10 range. Writing may contain errors, but these will not be significant. Paragraphing, sentence construction, spelling and punctuation should be sufficiently accurate so that meaning is clear at the first reading.

The following tables for each genre of writing should be used to help assessors arrive at a mark.

Creative

	20–17	16–14	13–10	9–5	4–1
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ attention to purpose and audience is consistent <p>As appropriate to genre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the piece displays very good creativity ◆ feelings/reactions/experiences are expressed/explored with a very good degree of self-awareness/involvement/insight/sensitivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ attention to purpose and audience is consistent in the main <p>As appropriate to genre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the piece displays good creativity ◆ feelings/reactions/experiences are expressed/explored with a good degree of self-awareness/involvement/insight/sensitivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ attention to purpose and audience is reasonably well sustained <p>As appropriate to genre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the piece shows some creativity ◆ feelings/reactions/experiences are explored with a sense of involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ attention to purpose and audience is not always sustained <p>As appropriate to genre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the piece has little evidence of creativity ◆ experiences are expressed, but not always convincingly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ little attention to purpose and audience ◆ lacking content ◆ no attempt at using language effectively ◆ brevity of response ◆ irrelevance
Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ features of the chosen genre are deployed effectively ◆ language is varied and often used to create particular effects ◆ structure of the piece enhances the purpose/meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ features of the chosen genre are deployed, mostly successfully ◆ language is apposite and used at times to create an effect ◆ structure of the piece supports the purpose/meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ features of the chosen genre are deployed with a degree of success ◆ language is effective in the main ◆ structure of the piece is appropriate to purpose/meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ there is an attempt to deploy the features of the chosen genre ◆ language lacks variety ◆ structure of the piece is not appropriate to purpose/meaning ◆ significant errors in sentence construction/paragraphing/spelling 	

Discursive

	20–17	16–14	13–10	9–5	4–1
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ attention to purpose and audience is consistent ◆ information shows evidence of careful research, is presented to maximise impact and is sequenced to highlight key points ◆ ideas/techniques deployed to inform/argue/discuss/persuade have a very good degree of objectivity/depth/insight/persuasive force and are used to convey a clear line of thought/appropriate stance/point of view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ attention to purpose and audience is consistent in the main ◆ information shows evidence of relevant research and is presented in a clear sequence ◆ ideas/techniques deployed to inform/argue/discuss/persuade have a good degree of objectivity/depth/insight/persuasive force and are used to convey a clear line of thought/stance/point of view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ attention to purpose and audience is reasonably well sustained ◆ information shows evidence of some research and is presented in a clear sequence ◆ ideas/techniques deployed to inform/argue/discuss/persuade convey a line of thought/stance/point of view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ attention to purpose and audience is not always sustained ◆ information shows a little relevant research but is not always presented in a manner that enhances meaning ◆ ideas/techniques used to inform/ argue, discuss/persuade are not always convincing and the line of thought is not consistently clear. The stance may tend towards the personal or anecdotal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ little attention to purpose and audience ◆ lacking content ◆ no attempt at using language effectively ◆ brevity of response ◆ irrelevance
Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ features of the chosen genre are deployed effectively ◆ language is varied and often used to create particular effects ◆ structure of the piece enhances the purpose/meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ features of the chosen genre are deployed, mostly successfully ◆ language is apposite and used at times to create an effect ◆ structure of the piece supports the purpose/meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ features of the chosen genre are deployed with a degree of success ◆ language is effective in the main ◆ structure of the piece is appropriate to purpose/meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ there is an attempt to deploy the features of the chosen genre ◆ language lacks variety ◆ structure of the piece is not appropriate to purpose/meaning ◆ significant errors in sentence construction/paragraphing/spelling 	

Course assessment structure: performance–talking

Performance–talking (Còmhradh)

30 marks

The performance–talking gives candidates the opportunity to demonstrate challenge and application in the skill of talking by applying language skills, knowledge and understanding in a conversation in Gaelic on a topic chosen by the candidate.

The performance-talking has 30 marks out of a total of 120 marks.

The performance-talking has one section.

Performance–talking overview

Candidates will identify the contexts/topics for the conversation beforehand and will have communicated these to the teacher or lecturer before taking part in the performance–talking. The contexts/topics chosen for the conversation must be noted on the candidate assessment record or equivalent. It is expected that the contexts/topics chosen have been included in the course or are part of the candidate’s own research and that preparation largely takes place as a normal part of learning and teaching.

Candidates may go into other contexts if they wish and also ask questions where appropriate. The information to be exchanged should include ideas and opinions and not be merely of a factual nature.

Setting, conducting and marking the performance–talking

The performance–talking is:

- ◆ set and externally verified by SQA
- ◆ conducted, marked and internally verified in centres under the conditions specified by SQA

Marks for internally-assessed components must be submitted to SQA.

The performance–talking will be subject to external verification by SQA. Evidence generated by the assessment task will be internally assessed and verified by centre staff in line with SQA marking instructions. Separate information will be given on arrangements for submission of evidence for external verification purposes.

Assessment conditions

Time

The performance should last approximately 6–8 minutes to allow candidates to demonstrate their ability to take part in a conversation with their teacher or lecturer using detailed Gaelic language in a chosen context.

Candidates should undertake the assessment at an appropriate point in the course. This is usually when they have completed most of the work on the course or when their skills have reached the level of development and maturity required for National 5 Gàidhlig.

Supervision, control and authentication

The teacher or lecturer must exercise their professional responsibility in ensuring that evidence submitted is the candidate's own work.

It is important to take steps to ensure that the performance is conducted in appropriate surroundings, eliminating the possibility of disruptions and background noise in the course of the assessment.

A supportive and involved approach by the interlocutor puts candidates at ease, allowing them to perform at a high level and demonstrate their ability to communicate in a natural manner on the chosen topic. When there is real interaction between interlocutors and candidates and the interlocutor reacts to the candidates' statements and encourages them to develop themes of interest, candidates benefit by having the opportunity to demonstrate the ability to communicate meaningfully in Gaelic.

The best performances are therefore those which involve candidates in a natural conversation where the interlocutor reacts to candidate responses and encourages meaningful and positive dialogue.

It is important to avoid over-preparation of the conversation. If the conversation is nothing other than a list of prepared questions and answers, or a series of rehearsed monologues with minimum intervention or comment from the interlocutor, this limits each candidate's ability to interact meaningfully.

Resources

Candidates may use up to five headings (each of eight words or fewer) to assist them, purely as an aid to memory, during the conversation. These headings do not need to be submitted to SQA for verification purposes.

Reasonable assistance

Candidates must undertake their preparation for the assessment independently. However, reasonable assistance may be provided prior to the formal assessment process taking place. The term 'reasonable assistance' is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. If any candidates require more than what is deemed to be 'reasonable assistance', they may not be ready for assessment or it may be that they have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

Reasonable assistance may be given on a generic basis to a class or group of candidates. It may also be given to candidates on an individual basis. When reasonable assistance is given on a one-to-one basis in the context of something the candidate has already produced or demonstrated, there is a danger that it becomes support for assessment and teachers and lecturers need to be aware that this may be going beyond reasonable assistance.

Teachers and lecturers should comment on whether the proposed area of discussion is appropriate before the candidate starts the task.

Clarification may be sought by candidates regarding the wording of a brief or specification or instructions for the assessment if they find them unclear. In this case, the clarification should normally be given to the whole class.

Teacher and lecturer input and advice on the candidate's chosen area of discussion is acceptable in order to allow the candidate to progress to the next stages of the assessment. The assistance provided must be recorded so that the candidate's own planning work can be marked/judged fairly.

Evidence to be gathered

The following candidate evidence is required for this performance–talking:

- ◆ an audio or video recording of the performance, which should be retained by centres for verification purposes
- ◆ a summary record of attainment completed by assessors

Volume

This does not apply to the performance–talking.

Performance–talking marking instructions

In line with SQA’s normal practice, the following marking instructions are addressed to the marker. They will also be helpful for those preparing candidates for course assessment.

General marking principles for National 5 Gàidhlig: performance–talking

This information is provided to help you understand the general principles you must apply when marking candidate responses to this performance. These principles must be read in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidate responses.

- a Marks for each candidate response must **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the detailed marking instructions for this assessment.
- b Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.
- c Assessment should be holistic. There will be 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. Marks should be awarded for the quality of the performance, and not deducted for errors or omissions.
- d Assessors can award the highest level mark even if there are minor errors. These should not detract from the assessor’s overall impression of the performance.

Detailed marking instructions for National 5 Gàidhlig: performance–talking

The candidate’s performance is described in terms of the following five main characteristics for talking:

- ◆ style and structure
- ◆ ideas and opinions
- ◆ language resource
- ◆ accuracy
- ◆ interaction with assessor

Assessors should allocate a mark by following the instructions given below, and record this mark on the candidate assessment record, with a comment justifying why the mark was awarded.

Once the best mark range has been selected by identifying where the candidate is placed, the assessor should follow this guidance:

- ◆ Where the evidence almost matches the level above, award the highest available mark from the range.
- ◆ Where the candidate’s work just meets the standard described, award the lowest mark from the range.

Otherwise the mark should be awarded from the middle of the range.

Where the number of marks in the band selected is four, assessors should use their professional judgement to decide allocation of the mark. For example 14–11: assessors should reconsider the candidate’s abilities in the five main characteristics. If the candidate just misses a 14, award 13. If the candidate is slightly above a 10, award 11.

Zero (0) marks should be awarded where no evidence is produced by the candidate that matches the descriptions of performance.

	Description of performance and mark						
	30–26	25–21	20–18	17–15	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
Ideas and opinions	contributes a wide range of relevant ideas and opinions with appropriate linkage and which contain development of the area of discussion	contributes a good range of relevant ideas and opinions with appropriate linkage and which contain development of the area of discussion	contributes a range of relevant ideas and opinions with appropriate linkage and which contain development of the area of discussion	contributes a sufficient range of relevant ideas and opinions with appropriate linkage and which contain some development of the area of discussion	contributes some relevant ideas and opinions with some linkage and some development of the area of discussion	struggles to give a sufficient range of relevant ideas and opinions which develop the area of discussion	struggles to give relevant ideas and opinions and to develop the area of discussion
Language resource	shows knowledge of a wide range of vocabulary for the area of discussion and uses this with ease	shows knowledge of a wide range of vocabulary for the area of discussion	shows knowledge of a sufficient range of vocabulary to maintain the discussion	shows knowledge of a sufficient range of vocabulary to maintain the discussion with some prompting	shows limited knowledge of vocabulary for the area of discussion which hinders communication at times	shows limited knowledge of vocabulary for the area of discussion which frequently hinders communication	has difficulty with the area of discussion due to limited vocabulary
	uses a wide range of structures, frequently including idioms	uses a wide range of structures, which may include idioms	uses a reasonably wide range of structures, which may include some attempts at idiomatic language	uses a range of structures which may include some attempts at idiomatic language	uses a limited range of structures with little or no use of idiomatic language	uses an insufficient range of structures	uses structures which impede communication

		Description of performance and mark						
		30–26	25–21	20–18	17–15	14–11	10–6	5–1
		The candidate:						
Accuracy		uses detailed language with a high degree of accuracy	uses detailed language which is mostly accurate	uses detailed language despite some grammatical errors	uses detailed 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
		engages with the assessor and responds naturally, and with a level of spontaneity which develops the discussion	engages with the assessor and responds with a degree of spontaneity which supports the discussion	engages with the assessor and responds with a degree of spontaneity which supports the discussion, although may require minimal prompting	engages with the assessor and maintains the discussion, although may require prompting	requires prompting, pays inconsistent attention to what is said by the assessor, sometimes responding in a way that is not relevant	requires frequent prompting, pays little attention to what is said by the assessor, often responding in a way that is not relevant	constantly requires prompting, pays little or no attention to what is said by the assessor, and responds in a way that is not relevant
Interaction with assessor		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
		may ask for clarification from the assessor, if required				when required does not ask for clarification from the assessor OR does ask for clarification from the assessor but is unable to go forward with the performance		

Grading

A candidate's overall grade is 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.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the assessment arrangements web page: www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Further information

The following reference documents provide useful information and background.

- ◆ [National 5 Gàidhlig subject page](#)
- ◆ [Assessment arrangements web page](#)
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 3–5](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment](#)
- ◆ [SCQF Framework and SCQF level descriptors](#)
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook](#)
- ◆ [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](#)

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. They should be read in conjunction with this course specification and the specimen question paper and/or coursework.

Developing skills, knowledge and understanding

This section provides further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding that could be included in the course. Teachers and lecturers should refer to this course specification for the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment. Course planners have considerable flexibility to select coherent contexts which will stimulate and challenge their candidates, offering both breadth and depth.

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

- ◆ reading, critical reading, listening, talking and writing skills, as appropriate to purpose and audience
- ◆ understanding, analysing and evaluating detailed written and spoken texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in the contexts of literature, language, media and culture
- ◆ creating and producing detailed texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in a range of contexts
- ◆ using knowledge and understanding of language
- ◆ using knowledge and understanding of Gaelic cultural heritage, and the cultural heritage of others

Communication and literacy skills

The acquisition and development of communication and literacy skills are fundamental to the course in National 5 Gàidhlig. To address the development of these skills, many of the teaching and learning activities chosen should be inter-related. There is a cross-over of skills, and candidates are to be encouraged to make connections in their learning across different aspects of the course.

For example, it is very likely that preparation work for the Reading and Literature question paper and the Listening question paper, or for the assignment–writing, may well give candidates material suitable as a basis for the performance–talking. Similarly, an exercise which requires the close and careful reading of a literary text will likely contribute towards the development of the key skills required for the Reading and Literature, and Listening question papers.

It is important to stress the significance of thinking skills. Candidates are to be given the freedom and opportunity to think for themselves. Thinking skills are significant to success in National 5 Gàidhlig. All course assessment components require candidates to think, for example:

- ◆ dealing with an unfamiliar written or spoken text in the Reading, and Listening question papers
- ◆ dealing with the literature they have read and applying their skills, knowledge and understanding to the chosen question in the Literature question paper
- ◆ thinking about ideas raised as part of a conversation in the performance–talking
- ◆ thinking through issues as part of discursive or creative writing for the assignment–writing

Understanding, analysis and evaluation

Development of the key skills of understanding, analysing and evaluating in both written and spoken Gaelic texts will be integral to the course.

Candidates should aim to demonstrate their understanding of texts by identifying, isolating and explaining in their own words, key ideas, information, points of view, etc.

Analysis involves focusing on specific parts of a text, and looking closely at how they operate, in order to consider their effect on the text as a whole. Analysis may vary depending on the text. For a smaller text, such as a poem or a journalistic article, it would be appropriate to consider a line-by-line examination to focus on word choice, figurative language, such as metaphors, sound. A focus on poetic form would also be meaningful — the structure and layout of a sonnet, for example. For a larger text, such as a novel or a play, it would be appropriate to broaden analysis to consider characterisation/character development, narration or stage directions, or a pivotal scene. This is not an exhaustive list. In short, analysis should be focused, detailed evidence which shows an awareness of literary techniques and explains their impact on understanding the text as a whole.

Evaluation requires candidates to engage fully with the texts that they are studying. Candidates should be in a position to provide an articulation of the impact of a text (or parts of it), or a judgement on its effectiveness in terms of purpose.

The creation and production of detailed texts in a range of contexts

Candidates are to be encouraged to write in different contexts, and for varying purposes, to give them the opportunity to apply the skills they have learned throughout the course. Candidates need to produce one broadly creative piece or one broadly discursive piece for the assignment–writing; however, several explorations could be made across types and genres before selection is made for the assignment–writing submission.

Candidates should learn the skills and techniques necessary for the production of critical essays for the Literature question paper. This includes being able to present a clear line of thought which addresses and answers a specific question, which is sustained across an extended piece of writing.

The production of detailed spoken Gaelic language is an essential element of the National 5 Gàidhlig course. This is to be seen as a daily, ongoing process which is developed through every activity in Gàidhlig and Gaelic-medium classes.

Knowledge and understanding of language

Knowledge and understanding of language will involve candidates becoming better skilled and equipped in the use of language for the purposes of their own written and spoken expression. It will also take the form of an exploration of the language which is specific to the texts they are studying in preparation for the Literature question paper, as well as for the Reading question paper.

The production of their own texts will see candidates applying their knowledge and understanding of how detailed language is used by writers across various types, genres and purposes.

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

- ◆ the ways in which sentences are constructed and punctuated
- ◆ how words and expressions can have denotative meaning and connotative meaning
- ◆ the main principles and patterns of spelling
- ◆ how structure and style can be used for meaning and effect
- ◆ how language can be manipulated for different purposes
- ◆ the significance of register
- ◆ the differences between spoken language and written language

It is anticipated that the study of the ways in which language works would operate as part of teaching and learning in other aspects of the course, rather than as a stand-alone element. However, direct treatment of these aspects may be appropriate, where necessary. Language exploration need not stop here. Other areas worthy of study might include etymological considerations, the sound of words, dialect, the effects of Gaelic on English and vice versa, etc.

Approaches to learning and teaching

Candidates are to be given the opportunity to build on prior learning and to increase their knowledge of Gaelic.

Learning about Scotland and Scottish culture will enrich the candidates' learning experience and help them to develop the skills for learning, life and work they will need to prepare them for taking their place in a diverse, inclusive and participative Scotland and beyond. Where there are opportunities to contextualise approaches to learning and teaching to Scottish contexts, teachers and lecturers should consider this.

There are opportunities to combine the learning and teaching in order to prepare for the various elements of the course assessment.

The following examples provide teachers and lecturers with possible approaches to learning and teaching which could help prepare candidates for course assessment, and activities that can help candidates develop their skills, knowledge and understanding.

A literature study example approach — *Ri Aghaidh na Creig* by Myles Campbell

Description

Candidates analyse the text and the themes that are raised in the text, looking at how the author describes the friendship between the three central characters and the key aspects of language used. Candidates consider their own attitudes to friendship and loyalty.

Texts/sources

Ri Aghaidh na Creig by Myles Campbell from Eadar Dà Sgeul. A play is also available.

Reading question paper

Candidates answer a series of questions on a short section of the text or play which elicit their understanding by, for example requiring them to summarise in their own words. Questions are worded to help candidates differentiate between question types: straightforward understanding (what the writer has stated), analysis (how he does this) and evaluation (how well he has done this).

Literature question paper

Candidates write an essay analysing the story and explaining how the author shows the reader what type of friendship the three main characters had.

Listening question paper

Candidates listen to Myles Campbell's recording of a section of the story (available at www.storlann.co.uk) or the spoken thoughts of their teachers or lecturers on the story, and answer questions similar to those mentioned above for the Reading question paper.

Assignment–writing

As a creative approach, candidates could write an alternative ending.

Performance–talking

Candidates could perform the play of the story.

A language study example approach

Description

Candidates read an extract from a travel blog and write their own, with a focus on use of the past tenses and descriptive vocabulary.

Texts/sources

Travel blog.

Reading question paper and Listening question paper

Candidates answer a series of questions as outlined above in the literary study example approach.

Assignment-writing

Candidates produce their own blog.

Performance-talking

Candidates record an interview where they question one another and/or their teacher or lecturer about their blogs, experiences and plans for future travel.

Learning and teaching example activities

The following table gives examples of learning and teaching activities across the skills that offer opportunities to prepare candidates for course assessment.

Activity	Reading	Listening	Performance-talking	Assignment-writing
Candidates research topic then present orally	Make notes, extracts or underline findings from a source	Respond to questions after the talk presentation	Present an individual talk on the topic	Use selected information to write discursively
Candidates read text(s) followed by a group discussion	Answer questions on the text(s)	Listen and respond in group discussion	Contribute to group discussion	Write responses to issues raised in the text
Candidates discuss a topic, listen to a talk on the topic and write about it	Read texts related to the discussion topic	Listen and respond in the group discussion	Contribute to group discussion	Write about the topic
Candidates study dramatisation of a short story	Read the script	Listen to each other's lines and responding to these	Perform the play, group discussion/feed back session afterwards	Write an alternative ending to the play/review of performance

Activity	Reading	Listening	Performance–talking	Assignment–writing
Candidates study blogging	Read blogs for information to identify style and technique			Write a blog
Candidates conduct Interviews	Pupils read each other’s notes on the interviews for information	Respond to question and answer	Practise interviewing skills	Write questions

The following examples show how the approaches detailed in the table above could be used according to theme and genre.

Approaches to literature

- ◆ Critical reading and listening activities may be designed to engage candidates in a wide variety of written, visual and spoken texts, including some of their own choice.
- ◆ Candidates should study a range of genres features through critical and imaginative exercises that allow them to analyse, evaluate and/or demonstrate a grasp of relevant literary forms.
- ◆ Responses to literary texts can be varied: discussion, critical essay, imagined response, transfer of genre.

Approaches to language

Through the study of local history, using available poetry or beul-aithris (traditional oral storytelling) recordings, for example:

- ◆ register and appropriate language
- ◆ importance of learning idioms and idiomatic structures in order to sound fluent and express themselves accurately
- ◆ news websites as a stimulus for class discussion and presentations

Approaches to media

- ◆ Gaelic film
- ◆ Gaelic TV programmes for young people

Candidates may use websites to enhance research skills and the ability to identify useful information.

Approaches to culture

Topics might include:

- ◆ Celtic and Gaelic history
- ◆ other Celtic languages and cultures
- ◆ Gaelic development
- ◆ Gaelic arts and culture (eg music, drama, sport)
- ◆ Gaelic education
- ◆ further study of a specific area of Gaelic literature
- ◆ Gaelic language (eg dialectology), local studies in which Gaelic plays an integral part

Joint topics that link the five skills (reading, critical reading, listening, talking and writing) are recommended.

Approaches to developing and encouraging candidates to engage in independent study in relation to their own reading programme

- ◆ Personal reading is important and could be supported through candidates' reading groups. This could also take the form of online meetings.
- ◆ Project research during which candidates use their own initiative, researching topics and subjects of particular interest to them.
- ◆ Candidates' ability to understand and enjoy what they read will be supported by vocabulary learning.
- ◆ Candidates should be exposed to a range of texts and become familiar with a range of genre features which they can then recognise and refer to in other texts.
- ◆ Tasks that encourage candidates to understand key ideas, analyse literary techniques (punctuation, sentence structure, imagery, tone), consider the writer's attitude, and which evaluate the effectiveness of a text, should be embedded in teaching methodology.
- ◆ Building on a knowledge of the conventions of written language, candidates can apply their knowledge to the study of short unseen texts and to extended texts (eg novel, short story, drama, poetry, journalism) and provide an extended critical response where key genre features are explored and evaluated.

Approaches to developing and encouraging candidates to engage in independent study in relation to their own writing programme

- ◆ Candidates should be encouraged to create pieces of writing which display an understanding and appreciation of a selection of genre forms and features.
- ◆ Planning, writing and editing texts may be developed as a set of integrated skills and provide evidence that the candidate has employed, manipulated or transformed literary conventions for a particular purpose, eg monologue, drama script, short story, discursive or persuasive extended writing.

Developing writing strategies for the range of written genres

- ◆ Candidates' awareness of language register appropriate for purpose may be built up through the collection of writing types they enjoy and have themselves tried.

Preparing for course assessment

Each course has additional time which may be used at the discretion of teachers or lecturers to enable candidates to prepare for course assessment. This time may be used near the start of the course and at various points throughout the course for consolidation and support. It may also be used towards the end of the course, for further integration, revision and preparation for course assessment.

Question paper 1: Reading and Literature

Section 1: Reading for understanding, analysis and evaluation

This section requires candidates to pay close attention to both the ideas and the language used in an unseen, non-fiction text. These are taken from sources such as newspapers, and it is recommended that candidates become familiar with this type of writing. A wide range of styles should be studied: discursive, persuasive, didactic, argumentative, personal, reflective, serious, humorous, etc. Candidates could be asked to source and then to share texts of sufficient linguistic complexity. Discussion of main ideas and writers' use of language could then follow. In this way the performance–talking could be integrated into teaching and learning approaches for the Reading question paper.

Candidates are to be encouraged to ask themselves:

- ◆ What are the writer's main ideas and what language techniques are used to get these ideas across?
- ◆ What is the target audience?
- ◆ What is the writer trying to do with this piece of writing? To persuade, to provoke?
- ◆ Did it make me laugh? Was I sad, angry, etc?
- ◆ What impact did the writing have on me?
- ◆ Was it effective?

Candidates should aim to isolate main ideas, trying to separate these from examples, expansion, anecdote, etc and be able to identify, isolate, extract, and render into their own words and summarise a writer's key ideas from reasonably large sections of the text.

The practice of using a dictionary to explore the origins and definitions, dialectal variations, core meanings and sub-senses of words should be encouraged, along with the skill of understanding meanings by recognising stems and roots. The skill of understanding vocabulary by reading in context should be fostered.

Candidates are to be given the opportunity to encounter unfamiliar vocabulary to allow them to use their inferencing skills to work out meaning from context. Having the opportunity to encounter unfamiliar vocabulary helps candidates think independently and builds their confidence by providing preparation for facing, and responding to, unknown material. In addition, this develops the skill of being able to identify which words are central to understanding the ideas of the passage, and which are not.

Candidates should:

- ◆ develop confidence in their knowledge of common language techniques for example word choice, sentence structure, metaphor, punctuation, tone, contrast
- ◆ be able to provide analytical comments which focus on and accompany identified examples of a writer's use of language
- ◆ be aware of, and be able to recognise, common patterns of structure within pieces of writing
- ◆ be able to comment on how paragraphs are linked, and the effectiveness of opening and/or concluding sections, or paragraphs

Section 2: Literature

The critical essay for the Literature section requires candidates to choose one question and provide a focused response which is directly relevant to the question. It is important that candidates use a consistent line of thought in their essay.

This should be closely relevant to the question, and should be structured in such a way that their meaning is clear. Critical essays should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the text, analysis of the writer's techniques, and evaluation, with candidates showing what has been gained from, or enjoyed about the text. Candidates should be aware that while technical accuracy is not being assessed in this section, their writing should be sufficiently accurate to convey meaning at first reading or else it may well be self-penalising if it is unclear.

Candidates should be aware that they have to demonstrate analysis in their essay. It should be remembered that a technique might be appropriate for drama, but not for poetry, etc and candidates should know the difference:

- ◆ For drama, key techniques might be characterisation, key scene(s), structure, climax, plot, conflict, setting, etc.
- ◆ For the novel and short story questions, the main techniques for exploration might be characterisation, setting, language, key incident(s), climax, turning point, plot, structure, narrative technique, description, etc.
- ◆ For poetry, techniques or features worthy of consideration might be word choice, tone, imagery, structure, rhythm, rhyme, sound, etc.
- ◆ For film and TV drama, candidates should study important scenes or sequences from the film or TV drama which they are studying, in addition to developing an awareness of the work as a whole. They should also develop an understanding of key film and TV drama aspects and techniques, such as: use of camera, key sequence, characterisation, mise-en-scène, editing, setting, music/sound, special effects, plot, dialogue.

Candidates are allowed to bring up to six clean copies of their chosen texts into the examination with them and should therefore be encouraged to use these to support their responses with appropriate illustration of their analysis and evaluation. Candidates should be discouraged from merely copying large chunks of text.

Question paper 2: Listening

Here candidates address the challenge of applying their listening skills in understanding, analysis and evaluation to a previously unheard detailed non-fiction spoken Gaelic text.

It is important for candidates to be aware of the purpose and audience of spoken texts they hear. It may help them to have had experience of using organisers and active listening strategies which involve them bringing their own questions to any listening activity, similar to the advice mentioned above in the Reading for understanding, analysis and evaluation section. Candidates should be encouraged to ask themselves:

- ◆ What are the speaker's main ideas and what language techniques are used to get these ideas across?
- ◆ What is the target audience?
- ◆ What is the speaker trying to do? To persuade, to provoke or to inform?
- ◆ Did it make me laugh? Was I sad, angry, etc?
- ◆ What impact did the speaker have on me?
- ◆ Was it effective?

Assignment-writing

The assignment-writing will comprise one piece of writing that is either broadly creative or broadly discursive. The assignment-writing should be seen as the culmination of the teaching and learning of the skills of writing conducted throughout the course. It is worth emphasising the value of approaches which encourage a range of different kinds of writing. The assignment-writing assessment task outlines a number of possible approaches for candidates to consider.

As with preparing for the performance-talking, there should be as much personalisation and choice as possible offered to candidates regarding the selection of genre and topics. If candidates are fully involved with their tasks and topics, a high level of engagement will be generated, and this will enhance the prospects of success. Tasks can be similar for candidates at different stages of development. Differentiation here largely comes from outcome, rather than being built into the task itself.

Where candidates have chosen to produce a broadly creative piece of writing, they should be encouraged to make use of their imaginations and to explore of their own life experience.

When candidates are writing about their own experiences, it has to be acknowledged that candidates will approach this task with differing degrees of personal maturity or self-awareness. It is sufficient for candidates to deal with thoughts, feelings and reactions; there is no necessity for a sense of distanced reflection to be present in the writing, unless it happens to emerge naturally from a piece of writing, or a candidate has the personal maturity for that kind of expression. It should be stressed that it is the candidates' ability in writing that is assessed in the assignment-writing, not the maturity of their content.

Where candidates have chosen to produce a broadly discursive piece, writing might be initially supported by discussion-based activities, particularly group discussion on topics selected by candidates as part of independent learning. Discussion could help to deepen candidates' understanding of the issues they are investigating and exploring, with peers often

best placed at offering advice on what does or does not work. Discursive writing is typically a mixture of facts and opinions. Candidates should be encouraged to include both in their own discursive writing. Discursive writing should not be too anecdotal and there should be as full an exploration of the relevant arguments as possible.

Research for discursive pieces may well involve candidates reading pieces of professionally-written non-fiction or news articles or watching TV documentaries. A dual purpose can be achieved here in that candidates may well have opportunities to improve their reading and listening skills while preparing for the assignment–writing. Further cross-over may occur in that the need for candidates to use their own words in the handling of ideas for discursive writing, will mirror the requirement for summarising and demonstrating understanding in the Reading question paper. Candidates should be reminded that all sources consulted should be acknowledged.

Much of the above would also be true for pieces of writing which are information-based, such as reports, blogs, and biographies. Pieces of writing which are primarily concerned with conveying information are perfectly acceptable for the assignment–writing.

Candidates should also be made aware of the length of the National 5 Gàidhlig assignment–writing, which is approximately 700–1,000 words, as appropriate to genre (see below for note regarding poetry). This figure is intended to be task appropriate for candidates at this level. Being able to write within a given word limit is a valuable skill for candidates progressing to further study.

A poem should be treated in exactly the same way as any broadly creative piece of writing. The maximum length of 1,000 words applies to poetry too, however in terms of length, brevity would be expected given the concentration of language that is characteristic of the genre. The lower length of 700 therefore does not apply, as the full range of marks will be available to pieces submitted which are considerably shorter.

Advice on authenticity/plagiarism

The following comments are intended as advice only, and are not prescriptive.

Most candidates will know that taking (or purchasing) an essay from an internet site, or submitting work that is not their own is plagiarism. It is also worth emphasising that the following are also examples of plagiarism:

- ◆ copying and pasting from the internet without citing the source
- ◆ copying directly from a textbook without citing the source
- ◆ omitting quotation marks from quotations

Candidates' assignment–writing should be written in their own words, unless they are quoting from a referenced source. If candidates are asked to explain what they mean by a certain expression or sentence, they should be able to do so.

It is important that candidates understand that, when they sign the authentication statement on the flyleaf, they are confirming that the work is their own and that any ideas or language belonging to someone else are properly acknowledged.

Encouraging candidates to choose their own subject matter for pieces of writing not only encourages personalisation, choice and independent learning, but also reduces the chances of plagiarism between groups of candidates all tackling the same topic. For broadly discursive writing, insisting on the use of at least one source written within the past year will outdate most online essay bank materials.

A marked change in writing style could be an indicator of plagiarism. Using an advanced search in an internet search engine, and enclosing suspect phrases in double quotation marks (“...”), will ensure that pages with this particular sequence are returned.

The most effective way to help candidates avoid plagiarism is to spend time discussing the issue (including the risks and pitfalls), and by teaching basic research skills along with the teaching and learning of writing. A good starting point might be with the definition of plagiarism which is used by SQA: ‘Failing to acknowledge sources properly and/or submitting another person’s work as if it were your own.’

Candidates should have read and understood the rules surrounding the construction of an assignment–writing, contained in the SQA booklet *Your Coursework*.

Performance–talking

Candidates generally benefit from a range of opportunities to practise talking in a variety of formats, such as presentations, conversations and discussions, leading up to the formally assessed conversation with the teacher or lecturer.

The best performances are those which allow candidates to focus on an area or theme which interests them and which allows them as much personalisation and choice as possible, but which lends itself well to a natural conversation.

Candidates should be aware that the best performances are not merely factual presentations, or question-and-answer interviews, but are genuine two-way conversations between them and their teacher or lecturer. 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 would be an ideal way to develop the skills for the performance–talking.

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

Course planners 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 approaches being used to deliver the course in each centre. This is for individual teachers and lecturers to manage.

The table below provides some suggested opportunities of how these skills can be further developed within the course.

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Approaches for learning and teaching
<p>1 Literacy</p>	<p>1.1 Reading</p> <p>This may be usefully developed by activities that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ involve fiction and information texts ◆ use discussion to help candidates engage with texts and identify the ideas within texts <p>Activities to support them in identifying the ideas within texts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ asking and answering questions ◆ comparing and contrasting ◆ sorting and sequencing ◆ summarising clarifying and predicting ◆ text completion <p>Candidates will also benefit from activities focusing on the audience and purpose of texts.</p>

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Approaches for learning and teaching
<p>1 Literacy</p>	<p>1.2 Writing</p> <p>Candidates may be encouraged to plan their writing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ creating mind maps ◆ peer discussion where they consider the genre, audience and purpose for their writing <p>Candidates' writing will benefit from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ discussing structure and layout ◆ building up sentences, by linking ◆ planning paragraphs ◆ use of topic sentences ◆ developing vocabulary ◆ developing technical skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling ◆ using plans for writing <p>1.3 Listening and talking</p> <p>Wherever appropriate, candidates should be encouraged to use the language skills in real language situations.</p> <p>In such situations, particularly drawn from life and work, activities may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ asking and answering questions ◆ listening for and making comparisons/contrasts ◆ summarising, clarifying and predicting

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Approaches for learning and teaching
<p>4 Enterprise, employability and citizenship</p> <p>Citizenship includes having concern for the environment and for others; being aware of rights and responsibilities; being aware of the democratic society; being outward looking towards society; being able to recognise one's personal role in this context; and being aware of global issues, understanding one's responsibilities within these, and acting responsibly</p>	<p>4.6 Citizenship</p> <p>Candidates should learn about contemporary culture and cultural heritage, and develop their Gaelic language skills and knowledge through the contexts of literature, language, media and culture.</p> <p>The course should develop candidates' understanding of citizenship issues as well as encouraging understanding of their own culture and community.</p>
<p>5 Thinking skills</p>	<p>5.3 Applying</p> <p>This is the ability to use existing information to solve a problem in a different context, and to plan, organise and complete a task that reflects what may be required by life or work situations.</p> <p>In order to do this in a supported way at this level, candidates should be given the chance to work at language tasks which are carefully stepped and, sequenced, allowing them to work from what they know and to apply it to different situations.</p> <p>5.4 Analysing and evaluating</p> <p>Wherever possible, candidates should be given the opportunity to practise developing these skills in real communicative contexts.</p> <p>A range of kinds of texts is vital to developing analysing and revaluating skills in listening and reading in order to develop candidates' awareness of such aspects as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ gist and effect on audience ◆ distinguishing fact and opinion ◆ discussing bias, balance and point of view

Administrative information

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History of changes to course specification

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	Course support notes added as appendix.	September 2017

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