Course Report 2015

Subject	Gàidhlig
Level	National 5

Section 1: Comments on the Assessment

Component 1: Question papers

Paper 1 — Reading and Writing

Reading

The performance of candidates in the Reading was good. The passage was topical and relevant to the candidates. Candidate performance confirmed that the paper was of an appropriate standard. The vast majority of questions were answered very well by candidates. There was a good range of questions which provided an appropriate challenge for all candidates. No issues were raised by centres with regard to the paper, and the marking process did not identify any specific issues.

There was a clear lead-in to the passage to assist candidates, and the title of the passage gave a clear indication of the content. While most of the questions were answered correctly and concisely by most candidates, inevitably some of the questions which required longer responses or which required candidates to give a personal reaction caused some candidates to lose marks. However, there always need to be some questions that will challenge the more able candidates.

Writing

The performance of the candidates in Writing was generally good, with a number of very good responses. The vast majority of candidates (91%) answered either question 1 (response on Poetry) or question 5 (response on Short Stories). Very few candidates answered questions 2 or 4 (Drama or Film). A number of candidates answered question 3 (response on Personal Study). Candidates can do a considerable amount of preparation on the questions on literature, and it is clear that the vast majority of candidates feel more comfortable answering these questions.

A number of candidates' responses were very good and achieved full marks. The performance of these candidates is to be commended.

Paper 2: Listening

The passage for Listening and the associated questions appeared to be appropriate. The quality of the recording was good, with very clear diction. The introductory lead-in to the passage gave candidates an indication about the content of the passage.

The performance of candidates was good. Most of the questions were answered clearly and concisely. No particular question was identified as being problematic for candidates.

Component 2: Performance — Talking

The performance of candidates was generally very good; the performance of many candidates was excellent. Most centres provided very clear and well-organised samples, which is to be commended. This has made the assessment process much easier and has been to the benefit of candidates overall.

While candidates in most centres were afforded scope to show their ability to converse freely, some centres used questions that appeared to be prescribed, which led to somewhat formal discussion.

Some centres also submitted evidence that was excessively lengthy, which does not necessarily benefit candidates. Evidence should adhere closely to the prescribed time recommendations.

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

Component 1: Question papers

Paper 1 — Reading and Writing

Reading

The examining team considered this a very good question paper which provided appropriate challenges for all candidates. The candidates showed clearly that they could cope with the different types of question in the paper, which indicates that candidates were well prepared for the exam. Candidates showed that they were able to get a good overall understanding of the passage, to identify specific information in the text and to give a personal reaction to aspects of the text.

There were no specific issues raised with regard to the questions; no question was deemed to be unsuitable or inappropriate. There was one 4-mark question; all other questions were either 2 or 3 marks. Many of the questions required specific answers from candidates; other questions gave candidates the opportunity to give correct answers from a range of possible responses. Other questions asked candidates to give a personal reaction to parts of the text.

While questions 2 and 3 were quite specific in what they required, some candidates failed to answer the questions correctly. Some candidates gave some of the information required in question 3 (eg 'Tha slighe na rèise gu math còmhnard') in question 2.

Question 7 was probably the question that elicited the greatest range of responses from candidates. Question 7(a) asked candidates to summarise the extent of Michael's injuries. The marking scheme provided considerable scope for candidates to give correct answers from a number of possible answers. There were 4 marks allocated to this question, and candidates were given credit if they provided relevant evidence. The marking scheme was specific about the responses required for question 7(b). However, some candidates provided answers to this question that would have been more relevant to 7(a). Some candidates also

offered 'bha e air a leòn' for 7(b), which was not sufficient to merit a mark. There were 3 marks allocated to question 7(c). However, many candidates failed to achieve the three parts of the answer, particularly 'ged a bha a h-uile co-fharpaiseach eile deiseil'. Question 7(d) required candidates to give a personal opinion. The marking scheme was sufficiently flexible to accommodate a range of responses. Most candidates gave good answers to this question.

Question 8 asked candidates to identify the main purposes of the passage. Many candidates gave answers that were not sufficiently detailed or sufficiently specific to this question. For example, some candidates simply offered 'innse dhuinn mu marathon Lunnainn', which did not include enough information to merit a mark.

Paper 2 — Listening

The performance of candidates in the Listening was good. The vast majority of the questions required candidates to identify detailed information in the text that was heard. The responses required were generally brief and very specific. Most candidates gave precise, comprehensive responses. The passage contained a lot of factual information and candidates found that information accessible.

Candidates dealt well with questions 1 and 2. The answers required were short, and most candidates were able to give correct answers. Some candidates found question 3 more challenging. There was more information required (3 marks) and it is possible that the word 'ealanta' in the question may have been confusing for some candidates. Some candidates failed to give full answers to this question.

Question 4 required a short concise response ('ann an seudan'). However, a number of candidates failed to get this question correct, offering a range of incorrect answers. It is probable that these candidates did not recognise the word 'seudan'.

Candidates coped well with questions 5, 6, 7 and 8. The information required was quite precise, and most candidates gave the information correctly.

Question 9 required candidates to identify the main purpose of the passage and to justify their answer with evidence from the passage. Most candidates achieved the mark in (a), clearly identifying the aim of the passage (to provide information about the Celtic people). The response to (b) was somewhat mixed. A number of candidates gave answers that were somewhat vague and did not directly relate to evidence found in the passage. Others simply repeated answers they had given earlier in other questions. Candidate responses to this type of question must relate directly to the passage.

Section 3: Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: Question papers

Paper 1 — Reading and Writing

Reading

Overall, candidates showed good understanding of the passage and an ability to give concise answers to most of the questions. Most candidates performed well in questions that asked for specific answers to be identified in the passage:

Questions 1(a) and (b):	The answers required were quite concise. It is important that candidates find the first question relatively uncomplicated. Candidates gave answers that were very closely related to the marking instruction.
Question 4:	This question required candidates to give two pieces of information about what Paula Radcliffe has achieved in 2003. The vast majority of candidates were able to identify the information correctly.
Question 6(a):	This question specifically asked candidates for two items of information about participants in the London marathon (Inns mu dhà rud). Most candidates were able to give the correct information (dùbhlan sònraichte and a dhol beagan nas luaithe na chaidh iad ron sin).

Paper 2 — Listening

The overall performance of candidates in the Listening was very good, and it is quite difficult to identify questions in which candidate performance was significantly better than in others. The answers required are generally quite short and concise, which leaves little scope for variation within the responses. However, the performance of candidates in the following questions was very good:

Questions 2(a) and (b):	Virtually all candidates were able to identify the correct answers to these questions. In question 2(a) the marking scheme gave candidates the option of offering either 'ann an cogaidhean' or 'nuair a bhiodh iad a' sabaid'. Almost all candidates got either answer.
Question 5:	There was a danger that candidates may have found the words 'sagartan draoigheil' confusing in question 5. However, candidates coped well with this question and gave the correct response. The marking scheme allowed flexibility for markers to

accept either 'bha urram aca dhaibh' or 'bha iad a' saoilsinn tòrr dhiubh' as correct responses. Most candidates gave either answer.

Question 8:
This question could have been difficult for candidates because possible answers could have been taken from the passage as a whole. The marking scheme identified five possible answers; candidates had to provide three of these to secure all the marks. Most candidates coped very well with this question and gave correct answers.

Section 4: Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: Question papers

Paper 1 — Reading and Writing

Reading
The two questions that proved most difficult for candidates were questions 7 and 8.

Question 7:
This question had four different parts to it and overall it required candidates to provide a lot of information and to think carefully about the answers they gave to each part of the question. Consequently, some candidates were unclear as to what information they should provide for each part of the question. There was, in particular, overlap between the answers candidates gave to 7(a) and to 7(b). Some candidates gave information in (b) which would have been more appropriate in (a). Many candidates also gave incomplete answers for question 7(c).

Question 8:
Some of the answers given to this question (where candidates were asked to identify the main purposes of the text) were rather brief and did not necessarily relate directly enough to the text as a whole. Quite often the comments related too directly to specific parts of the text and were merely a repetition of answers they had given earlier.

Paper 2: Listening
Candidates performed very well in the Listening and it is difficult to identify areas which candidates found demanding. Candidates showed good comprehension of the passage and

good understanding of what was required in the questions. However, some candidates found a couple of questions demanding:

Question 3:	A number of candidates failed to achieve all the marks in this question. Candidates had to understand what was meant by the phrase 'daoine ealanta' in the question (the phrase did not appear in the passage. This possibly caused confusion for some candidates. Some candidates also erroneously wrote that the Celts made elaborate tartans (which was not one of the acceptable answers).
Question 9:	In this question, the candidates' answer to (b) depended largely on the answer they gave to (a). This question is different from questions 1 – 8 since it does not require candidates to identify specific information in the text; candidates are asked to give their own opinion and to justify that opinion. It is possible that many candidates find it difficult to tackle this type of question in Listening; they are probably more comfort\able answering such a question in Reading. It is possible that the wording of question 9(b) could have been difficult for some candidates ('seall dè cho soirbheachail's a choilean e amas'). Teachers need to ensure that pupils become familiar with such wording and that pupils are aware of the requirements of such a question.

Section 5: Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Component 1: Question papers

Paper 1: Reading and Writing

Reading
Ensure that candidates are sufficiently prepared for answering questions that ask them to express their own opinions.

Ensure that candidates are aware that there will generally be a close relationship between the answers to questions that are split into (a), (b) or (c). However, candidates also need to make a distinction correctly between the answers they give to the different parts of such questions.

Paper 2: Listening
Remind candidates that their answers must be concise but that they must also be comprehensive. All the necessary information must be included.

Ensure that candidates are prepared adequately for answering questions that ask them to give a personal reaction to the text as a whole.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2014	175

Number of resulted entries in 2015	167

Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark – 100				
A	61.1%	61.1%	102	70
B	22.8%	83.8%	38	60
C	12.0%	95.8%	20	50
D	2.4%	98.2%	4	45
No award	1.8%	-	3	-

The Course assessment functioned as intended, therefore no adjustment to grade boundaries was required.