Higher Gàidhlig

Course code:	C832 76
Course assessment code:	X832 76
SCQF:	level 6 (24 SCQF credit points)
Valid from:	session 2018–19

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 you need to deliver the course.

Contents

Course overview

The course consists of 24 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 five components.

Component	Marks	Duration
Component 1: question paper 1: Leughadh (Reading)	30	1 hour and 50 minutes
Component 2: question paper 1: Litreachas (Literature)	20	
Component 3: question paper 2: Èisteachd (Listening)	20	40 minutes approximately
Component 4: Obair shònraichte–sgrìobhadh (assignment–writing)	20	see 'Course assessment' section
Component 5: Còmhradh (performance–talking)	30	10 minutes see 'Course assessment' section

Recommended entry	Progression
Entry to this course is at the discretion of the centre. Candidates should have achieved the National 5 Gàidhlig course or equivalent qualifications and/or experience prior to starting this course.	♦ 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 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.

This course has 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.

Candidates encounter a wide range of different types of texts in different media. They also develop an appreciation of Scotland's literary and linguistic heritage.

The course fosters language awareness and an appreciation of a wide range of literature and texts. 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.

Purpose and aims

The course provides 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 will be 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 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 gives candidates the opportunity to:

♦ develop an understanding of how language works
♦ communicate ideas and information in Gaelic
♦ use creative and critical thinking to synthesise ideas and arguments
♦ develop critical literacy skills and personal, interpersonal and team-working skills
♦ develop independent learning
♦ enhance their enjoyment and understanding of their own language and culture, and those 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 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 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 and complex texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in the contexts of literature, language, media and culture

♦ creating and producing detailed and complex texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in a wide 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 culture and heritage

♦ knowledge of literature, language, media and cultural contexts

♦ knowledge of literary and media 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 and creative writing

Candidates also demonstrate a command of grammatical knowledge and ability to understand:

♦ the 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/group
♦ conventions of written Gaelic language
♦ the critical terminology required to discuss 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, and can be found 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

4   Employability, enterprise and citizenship

4.6   Citizenship

5   Thinking skills

5.3   Applying
5.4   Analysing and evaluating

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

The course support notes contain further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

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 demonstrate:

♦ understanding, analysis and evaluation of detailed and complex unseen written texts in the contexts of literature, language, media or culture
♦ critical reading skills
♦ understanding, analysis and evaluation of detailed and complex unseen spoken texts in the contexts of literature, language, media or culture
♦ applying language skills to tasks

Course assessment structure: question paper

Question paper 1: Leughadh agus Litreachas (Reading and Literature)   50 marks

This question paper gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate:

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

This question paper has two sections.

The question paper has 50 marks out of a total of 120 marks for the course assessment.

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

Candidates gain marks for applying reading skills in understanding, analysis and evaluation to one detailed and complex unseen text. They answer questions to show these reading skills, including questions which involve inference making and summarising. The text is either fiction or non-fiction.

Section 2: Litreachas (Literature) 20 marks

Candidates gain marks for applying critical reading skills and knowledge in producing one critical essay drawn from the study of one Gaelic text from the following: poetry, prose, play or film/television. Candidates select one essay question from a choice of two for each genre.

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 have 1 hour and 50 minutes to complete this question paper.

Question paper 2: Èisteachd (Listening)   20 marks

This question paper gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate:

♦ listening for understanding, analysis and evaluation of a detailed and complex previously unheard spoken non-fiction Gaelic text

This question paper has one section.

The question paper has 20 marks out of a total of 120 marks for the course assessment.

Candidates gain marks for applying their listening skills in understanding, analysis and evaluation to a previously unheard detailed and complex 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 have 40 minutes to complete this question paper.

Specimen question papers for Higher 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

Obair shònraichte–sgrìobhadh (assignment–writing)   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 for the course assessment.

Assignment–writing overview

The assignment–writing consists of one written piece. Candidates choose to produce either a creative or discursive piece of writing. Teachers and lecturers support candidates to choose the focus, theme and genre for their writing.

Creative writing may include:

♦ a personal/reflective essay
♦ a piece of prose fiction (for example short story, episode from a novel)
♦ a poem or set of thematically linked poems
♦ a dramatic script (for example 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:

♦ planning and development
♦ writing

Candidates must take the initiative in planning, management and completion of the task. Teachers and lecturers have a supporting role only.

Setting, conducting and marking the assignment–writing

The assignment–writing is:

♦ set by centres within SQA guidelines
♦ conducted under some supervision and control
♦ produced 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 start at an appropriate point in the course. This is normally when they have completed most of the work on the course or when their writing skills reach the level of development and maturity required for Higher.

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 a piece of writing it must not be accepted for submission.

The final writing stage must 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 must 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.

Ways 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

Candidates should know exactly what is required for the assignment, as detailed in the *Stiùireadh nan oileanach* section of the assignment–writing assessment task. They should also have read and understood the SQA booklet *Your Coursework*.

Candidates must use quotation marks to clearly acknowledge any direct quotations from source material. They must give specific details of sources, for example 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 rewording or summarising information from another source and passing it off as the candidate's own, is plagiarism and this carries penalties.

Candidates must submit their piece of writing using the SQA template provided, either handwritten 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 prepare for 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 candidates require 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.

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 rephrase 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

Volume

The piece of writing must be of approximately 1,200–1,500 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 for the Higher Gàidhlig assignment–writing are addressed to the marker. They will also be helpful for those preparing candidates for course assessment.

Candidates' evidence is submitted to SQA for external marking.

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   If a candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.

c   The candidate's writing is 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 response. Award marks for the quality of the writing, and do not deduct for errors or omissions.

e   Writing does not have to be perfect to gain full marks.

Detailed marking instructions

The tables below describe features of a candidate's assignment–writing, in terms of two characteristics:

♦ content
♦ style

For the piece of writing, first select the appropriate table according to the type of writing submitted (discursive or creative), then select the range descriptor from the descriptors that most closely describes the candidate's work.

Once the best fit is decided:

♦ 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

Use professional judgement to decide allocation of the mark. For example, if the candidate's work is best described by 13–10: 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.

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

For the piece to meet the minimum requirements for the 13–10 range, it must display satisfactory technical accuracy. 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.

Creative

	20–17	16–14	13–10	9–5	4–1
Content	♦ strong attention to purpose and audience As appropriate to genre: ♦ strong creative qualities ♦ skilful command of the genre ♦ thematic concerns which are skilfully introduced and developed ♦ ideas/feelings/experiences which are explored with a strong degree of mature reflection/self-awareness/involvement/insight/sensitivity ♦ strong sense of the writer's personality and individuality	♦ clear attention to purpose and audience As appropriate to genre: ♦ clear creative qualities ♦ clear grasp of the genre ♦ thematic concerns which are clearly introduced and developed ♦ ideas/feelings/experiences are explored with a clear sense of reflection/self-awareness/involvement/insight/sensitivity ♦ clear sense of the writer's personality	♦ adequate attention to purpose and audience As appropriate to genre: ♦ adequate creative qualities ♦ understanding of the genre ♦ thematic concerns which are adequately introduced ♦ ideas/feelings/experiences which are explored with an adequate sense of reflection and involvement ♦ adequate sense of the writer's personality	♦ limited attention to purpose and audience As appropriate to genre: ♦ limited creative qualities ♦ limited use of conventions of genre ♦ limited thematic concerns ♦ limited ideas/feelings/experiences explored ♦ limited sense of the writer's personality	♦ very little attention to purpose and audience As appropriate to genre: ♦ very few creative qualities ♦ very little use of conventions of genre ♦ very few thematic concerns ♦ very little evidence of exploration of ideas or feelings ♦ very little sense of the writer's personality
Style	♦ linguistic features of the chosen genre used skilfully ♦ confident and varied expression ♦ effective structure which enhances the purpose/meaning	♦ linguistic features of the chosen genre used to create impact ♦ clear expression ♦ clear structure which enhances the purpose/meaning	♦ linguistic features of the chosen genre used adequately ♦ adequate expression ♦ adequate structure	♦ limited use of features of the chosen genre ♦ limited expression ♦ limited use of structure	♦ very little attempt at using language effectively ♦ very little use of structure

Discursive

	20–17	16–14	13–10	9–5	4–1
Content	♦ strong attention to purpose and audience ♦ strong understanding and engagement ♦ evidence of skilful research and selection ♦ strong and sustained line of thought/convincing stance	♦ clear attention to purpose and audience ♦ clear understanding and engagement ♦ evidence of careful research and selection ♦ clear line of thought/ engaged stance	♦ adequate attention to purpose and audience ♦ adequate understanding ♦ adequate evidence of research and selection ♦ adequate line of thought/stance	♦ limited attention to purpose and audience ♦ limited understanding ♦ limited evidence of research ♦ unclear line of thought	♦ very little attention to purpose and audience ♦ very little understanding ♦ very little evidence of research ♦ confused line of thought
Style	♦ linguistic features of the chosen genre used skilfully to inform/argue/ discuss/persuade and to convey depth and complexity of thought/ objectivity/insight/ persuasive force ♦ confident and varied expression ♦ effective structure which skilfully enhances the purpose/meaning	♦ linguistic features of the chosen genre used clearly to inform/argue/ discuss/persuade and to convey thought/ objectivity/insight/ persuasive force ♦ clear expression ♦ clear structure which enhances the purpose/meaning	♦ linguistic features of the chosen genre used adequately to inform/argue/ discuss/persuade and to convey thought/objectivity/ insight/persuasive force ♦ adequate expression ♦ adequate structure	♦ linguistic features of the chosen genre used in a limited way to inform/argue/ discuss/persuade and to convey thought/objectivity/ insight/persuasive force ♦ limited expression ♦ limited use of structure	♦ very little attempt at using language effectively ♦ very little use of structure

Course assessment structure: performance–talking

Còmhradh (performance–talking)   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 for the course assessment.

Performance–talking overview

The performance–talking is a conversation with the teacher or lecturer. Candidates identify the contexts/topics for the conversation beforehand and communicate these to the teacher or lecturer prior to the assessment taking place. The contexts/topics chosen for the conversation must be noted on the candidate assessment record (or equivalent). It is expected that candidates choose contexts/topics from those included in the course or which are part of the candidate's own research, and that preparation largely takes place as a normal part of learning and teaching.

Candidates may cover other contexts during the conversation if they wish, and also ask questions where appropriate. The exchange of information can include ideas and opinions and not be only of a factual nature.

Setting, conducting and marking the performance–talking

The performance–talking is:

♦ set by centres within SQA guidelines
♦ conducted under a high degree of supervision and control, marked in centres under the conditions specified by SQA

The performance–talking must be audio or video recorded.

Evidence is internally marked by teachers and lecturers in each centre in line with SQA marking instructions and externally verified by SQA in line with quality assurance procedures.

Assessment conditions

Time

The performance lasts approximately 10 minutes, allowing candidates to demonstrate their ability to take part in a conversation with their teacher or lecturer using detailed and complex Gaelic language in a chosen context.

Candidates take 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 Higher.

Supervision, control and authentication

The performance is conducted under a high degree of supervision and control.

It is important to conduct the performance in appropriate surroundings, eliminating the possibility of disruptions and background noise.

Teachers and lecturers should put candidates at ease throughout the conversation by being supportive and involved, allowing them to perform at a high level and demonstrate their ability to communicate in a natural manner on the chosen topic.

Teachers and lecturers should react to candidates' statements and encourage them to develop themes of interest, giving candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to communicate meaningfully in Gaelic.

It is important to avoid over-preparation of the conversation. If the performance 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 the candidate's ability to interact meaningfully.

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

Resources

During the performance candidates may use notes with up to five headings (of not more than eight words each) and/or visual aids to assist them, purely as an aid to memory. These notes do not need to be submitted to SQA for verification purposes.

Reasonable assistance

Candidates must prepare 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 candidates require 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.

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.

Candidates may ask for clarification 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.

Prior to the assessment teachers and lecturers may comment on whether the candidate's choice of topic is appropriate.

Input and advice from teachers and lecturers on the candidate's chosen topic 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 assessment:

♦ an audio or video recording of the performance, which must be retained by centres for verification purposes

♦ a candidate assessment record (or equivalent) detailing the context selected by the candidate and the marks for the performance. The candidate and teacher or lecturer sign this and the centre retains it

Volume

This does not apply to the Higher Gàidhlig performance.

Performance–talking marking instructions

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 every performance; assessment should focus as far as possible on the strengths, taking account of weaknesses only when they significantly detract from the overall performance. Award marks for the quality of the performance, and do not deduct for errors or omissions.

c The highest level mark can be awarded even if there are minor errors. These should not detract from the overall impression of the performance.

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 with teacher or lecturer

Once the best mark range has been selected by identifying where the candidate is placed, the teacher or lecturer 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 award the mark from the middle of the range

Use professional judgement to decide allocation of the mark. For example, if the candidate's performance is best described by 14–11: 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.

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						
	30–26	**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
Content	contributes a wide range of relevant ideas and opinions with appropriate linkage and which contain extensive development of the chosen topic	contributes a good range of relevant ideas and opinions with appropriate linkage and which contain development of the chosen topic	contributes a range of relevant ideas and opinions with appropriate linkage and which contain development of the chosen topic	contributes a sufficient range of relevant ideas and opinions with appropriate linkage and which contain some development of the chosen topic	contributes some relevant ideas and opinions with some linkage and some development of the chosen topic	struggles to give a sufficient range of relevant ideas and opinions which develop the chosen topic	struggles to give relevant ideas and opinions and to develop the chosen topic
Language resource	shows knowledge of a wide range of vocabulary for the chosen topic and uses this with ease	shows knowledge of a wide range of vocabulary for the chosen topic	shows knowledge of a sufficient range of vocabulary for the chosen topic to maintain the discussion	shows knowledge of a sufficient range of vocabulary for the chosen topic to maintain the discussion with some prompting	shows limited knowledge of vocabulary for the chosen topic which hinders communication at times	shows limited knowledge of vocabulary for the chosen topic which frequently hinders communication	has difficulty discussing the chosen topic due to limited vocabulary
	uses a wide range of structures, frequently including complex structures and idioms	uses a wide range of structures, which may include complex structures and idioms	uses a reasonably 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	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 and complex language with a high level of accuracy	uses detailed and complex language which is mostly accurate	uses detailed and complex language despite some grammatical errors	uses detailed and complex 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 with teacher or lecturer	engages with the teacher or lecturer and responds naturally, and with a level of spontaneity which develops the discussion effectively	engages with the teacher or lecturer and responds with a degree spontaneity which fully supports the discussion	engages with the teacher or lecturer and responds with a degree of spontaneity which supports the discussion, although may require minimal prompting	engages with the teacher or lecturer and maintains the discussion, although may require prompting	requires prompting, pays inconsistent attention to what is said by the teacher or lecturer, sometimes responding in a way that is not relevant	requires frequent prompting, pays little attention to what is said by the teacher or lecturer, often responding in a way that is not relevant	constantly requires prompting, pays little or no attention to what is said by the teacher or lecturer, 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 support from the teacher or lecturer
	may ask for clarification from the teacher or lecturer				does not ask for clarification from the teacher or lecturer or does ask for clarification from the teacher or lecturer but is unable to go forward with the performance		

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.

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.

♦ [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](#)

The SCQF framework, level descriptors and handbook are available on the SCQF website.

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. It must 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 teachers and lecturers could include in the course. Teachers and lecturers have considerable flexibility to select contexts that will stimulate and challenge 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 and complex texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in the contexts of literature, language, media and culture
♦ creating and producing detailed and complex texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience in a wide 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

Developing communication and literacy skills is fundamental to the Higher Gàidhlig course. To develop these skills, many of the teaching and learning activities chosen will be interrelated. There will be a crossover of skills, and teachers and lecturers should encourage candidates 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 give candidates material suitable as a basis for the performance–talking. Similarly, an exercise requiring the close and careful reading of a literary text may contribute towards the development of the key skills required for the Reading and Literature, and Listening question papers.

All aspects of the course assessment require candidates to think constructively, for example:

♦ dealing with an unfamiliar detailed and complex written text in the Reading question paper, and an unfamiliar detailed and complex spoken text in the Listening question paper

♦ dealing with Gaelic texts they have studied as part of their course 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

Developing the key skills of understanding, analysing and evaluating in both written and spoken Gaelic texts are integral to the course.

Understanding requires candidates to demonstrate their understanding of texts, identifying, isolating and explaining in their own words key ideas, information or points of view.

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 or 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 and/or 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 articulate the impact of a text (or parts of it), or provide a judgement on its effectiveness in terms of purpose.

Candidates must 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 response.

Creating and producing detailed and complex texts in a range of contexts

Teachers and lecturers should encourage candidates to write in different contexts, and for varying purposes, to give them the opportunity to apply the skills they learn throughout the course. Candidates need to produce one broadly creative piece or one broadly discursive piece for the assignment–writing. Before candidates chose what they want to produce, teachers and lecturers should explore the different types of genres with them.

Producing detailed and complex spoken Gaelic is an essential element of the Higher Gàidhlig course and should be developed through every activity in Gàidhlig and Gaelic-medium classes.

Knowledge and understanding of language

Candidates further develop their skills in knowledge and understanding and gain confidence through exposure to more complex language and texts. Producing their own written texts will allow candidates to apply their knowledge and understanding of how writers use detailed and complex language across various types, genres and purposes. In the candidates' spoken performance, this knowledge and understanding of language can support them in their own expression and help them build confidence in their command of language skills, and express ideas using a broad range of vocabulary.

Candidates need to have effective 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

Studying the ways in which language works should be 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 needed. 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.

Approaches to learning and teaching

Candidates should have the opportunity to build on prior learning and to increase their knowledge of Gaelic.

Learning about Scotland and Scottish culture enriches the candidates' learning experience and helps them to develop the skills for learning, life and work they 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 skills and approaches in the learning and teaching of the language in order to prepare for the various elements of the course assessment.

Supporting and developing candidates' talking and listening skills are integral to teaching and learning, and are fundamental to the subject, for example:

♦ using a range of literature, language, media and culture contexts to develop their oral and aural skills
♦ addressing discussion and individual talking skills through a fiction, non-fiction and/or media study where they can engage in critical listening or aural reading of texts
♦ developing talking and listening skills through group discussion activities, topics or literary studies (debates, interviewing characters) develops their questioning, summarising and rebuttal skills
♦ having opportunities to discuss their and others' reactions to texts as initial responses to critical tasks
♦ peer-assessing critical responses through active learning

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

Learning and teaching example activities

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

Activity	Reading and Literature	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/ feedback session afterwards	Write an alternative ending to the play/review of performance
Candidates study blogging	Read blogs for information to identify style and technique			Write a blog
Candidates conduct interviews	Candidates 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 teachers and lecturers could use the approaches detailed in the table above according to context and genre.

Approaches to literature

♦ Designing critical reading and listening activities to engage the candidate in a wide variety of written, visual and oral texts, including some of their own choice.

♦ Candidates should acquire the knowledge of a range of genre features through critical and imaginative exercises that allow them to analyse, evaluate and/or demonstrate a grasp of relevant literary forms.

♦ Varying responses to literary texts: discussion, critical essay, imagined response, transfer of genre.

Approaches to language

♦ Candidates could focus on register and appropriateness of language as used in available poetry or beul-aithris (traditional oral storytelling) recordings.

♦ Candidates could explore the importance of learning idioms and idiomatic structures in order to improve fluency and to give them a more natural expression in the language.

♦ As well as fiction texts, candidates should engage in close reading analysis of unseen non-fiction extracts for the analysis of argument and discourse; appreciation of some of the conventions of non-fiction writing, including travel writing and journalism.

Approaches to media

♦ Candidates could study media topics, for example Gaelic film; Gaelic radio and podcasts; Gaelic TV programmes for young people; sound recordings from online archives.

♦ Candidates could access news websites as a stimulus for class discussion and presentations.

Approaches to culture

♦ Themes could include Celtic and Gaelic history, other Celtic languages and cultures, Gaelic development, Gaelic arts and culture (for example music, drama, sport), Gaelic education, further study of a specific area of Gaelic literature, Gaelic language (for example dialectology), local studies in which Gaelic plays an integral part.

♦ Candidates could select and analyse texts focusing on a key historical or cultural event. They could then produce a creative or discursive piece of writing based on what they have found out. Literature could also link to this.

Examples

In the following two examples, candidates can develop all the skills assessed in the course assessment (understanding, analysis and evaluation) in written or oral form. This could take the form of a discussion with other candidates and/or the teacher or lecturer. It could also take the form of written responses in the form of a blog. Candidates can work independently or collaboratively to create learning games, quizzes, and posters to capture knowledge and develop analysis. Throughout the delivery of both examples, the skills of talking and writing develop naturally.

Example 1

Preparation for the course assessment of reading for understanding, analysis and evaluation, and/or literature

Hallaig by Sorley MacLean
Candidates read *Hallaig* and discuss the imagery in the poem.

Type of question in the course assessment	Possible learning and teaching activity
♦ understanding ♦ summarising	Candidates identify and explain the main ideas from the poem.
♦ analysis	Candidates explore imagery, using terminology appropriate to discussing poetry, and give detail about the ways in which features convey meaning. Candidates explore and explain why, and to who, the poem was written.
♦ evaluation	With reference to their analysis of language features, candidates discuss the impact the poem has had on them. Candidates explore what others have written or said about the poem, and come to an appreciation of its wider impact and effectiveness.

Example 2:

Preparation for the course assessment of listening

BBC Alba
Candidates watch a current affairs programme.

Type of question in the course assessment	Possible learning and teaching activity
♦ understanding	Candidates identify and explain the main ideas of the programme.
♦ analysis	Candidates explore the ways in which various speakers express their opinions and the language features they use in order to convey meaning. Candidates explore the audience and purpose of the programme and are encouraged to recognise balance and/or bias.

Type of question in the course assessment	Possible learning and teaching activity
♦ evaluation	With reference to their analysis of language features used in the programme, candidates discuss the impact that the arguments and/or accounts have had on them. Candidates explore what others, for example other candidates, have written or said about the programme and come to an understanding of its effectiveness.

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

♦ Personal reading is important and candidates' reading groups could support this. 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.

♦ Encouraging vocabulary learning develops candidates' ability to understand and enjoy what they read.

♦ Exposing candidates to a range of texts and become familiar with a range of genre features. They can then recognise and refer to these in other texts.

♦ Teaching methodology should embed 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.

♦ 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 (for example novel, short story, drama, poetry, journalism) and provide an extended critical response where key genre features are explored and evaluated.

Developing writing strategies for the range of written genres

♦ Candidates can build up an awareness of language register appropriate for purpose through the collection of writing types they enjoy and try.

♦ Candidates should create a folio of writing which displays an understanding and appreciation of a selection of genre forms and features.

♦ Developing planning, writing and editing texts as a set of integrated skills provides evidence that the candidates have employed, manipulated or transformed literary conventions for a particular purpose, for example monologue, drama script, short story, discursive or persuasive extended writing.

Preparing for course assessment

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

Section 1: Leughadh airson tuigsinn, mion-sgrùdadh agus luachadh (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, fiction or non-fiction detailed and complex Gaelic text. Non-fiction texts are from unseen sources, often from newspapers, and candidates should become familiar with this type of writing, alongside the fiction texts typically studied during the course. Candidates should study a wide range of non-fiction styles, for example discursive, persuasive, didactic, argumentative, personal, reflective, serious, humorous. Teachers and lecturers could ask candidates 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.

When studying both fiction and non-fiction texts, candidates should ask themselves the following questions:

♦ What are the writer's main ideas, and what language techniques do they use 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, to entertain, to highlight an issue?
♦ What impact did the writing have on me? Did it make me laugh? Was I sad or angry?
♦ Was it effective? What made it effective?

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

Teachers and lecturers should encourage candidates to practise using a dictionary to explore the origins and definitions, dialectal variations, core meanings and sub-senses of words, along with the skill of understanding meanings by recognising stems and roots.

Reading in context fosters the skill of understanding vocabulary. Teachers and lecturers should give candidates the opportunity to encounter unfamiliar vocabulary to allow them to use their inferencing skills to work out meaning from context. Encountering 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.

Teachers and lecturers should encourage candidates to:

♦ develop confidence in their knowledge of common language techniques, for example word choice, sentence structure, metaphor, punctuation, tone, contrast
♦ 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
♦ comment on how paragraphs are linked, and the effectiveness of opening and/or concluding sections, or paragraphs

Section 2: Litreachas (Literature)

The critical essay for the Literature paper 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, and structure it in such a way that their meaning is clear.

Critical essays must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the text, analysis of the writer's techniques, and evaluation, with candidates showing what they gain from, or enjoy about the text, and showing how successful writers have been in achieving their overall purpose. Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates are aware that while technical accuracy is not assessed in this section, their writing should be sufficiently accurate to convey meaning at first reading or else it may be self-penalising.

Teachers and lecturers should make candidates aware that they have to demonstrate analysis in their essay. Note: a technique might vary according to genre and candidates should know the difference.

For example, techniques might include:

♦ drama: key scene(s), structure, climax, plot, conflict, setting
♦ novel and short story: characterisation, setting, language, key incident(s), climax, turning point, plot, structure, narrative technique, description
♦ poetry: word choice, tone, imagery, structure, rhythm, rhyme, sound
♦ film and TV drama: studying important scenes or sequences, in addition to developing an awareness of the work as a whole. Developing an understanding of key film and TV drama aspects and techniques, for example use of camera, key sequence, characterisation, mise-en-scène, editing, setting, music/sound, special effects, plot, dialogue

Candidates can bring up to six clean copies of their chosen texts into the examination with them and should be encouraged to use these to support their responses with appropriate illustration of their analysis and evaluation. Teachers and lecturers should discourage candidates from merely copying large chunks of text.

Question paper 2: Èisteachd (Listening)

Here candidates address the challenge of applying their listening skills in understanding, analysis and evaluation to a detailed and complex previously unheard spoken non-fiction 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 ask themselves the following questions:

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

Coursework task: Obair shònraichte–sgrìobhadh (assignment–writing)

The assignment–writing consists of one piece of writing that is either broadly creative or broadly discursive. It is the culmination of the teaching and learning of the skills of writing conducted throughout the course. The assignment–writing assessment task outlines a number of possible approaches for candidates to consider.

As with preparing for the performance–talking, teachers and lecturers should offer as much personalisation and choice as possible regarding the selection of genre and topics. If candidates are fully involved with their tasks and topics, this generates a high level of engagement, and enhances the prospects of success. Tasks can be similar for candidates at different stages of development. Differentiation here largely comes from outcome, rather than built into the task itself.

Where candidates choose to produce a broadly creative piece of writing, teachers and lecturers should encourage them to make use of their imaginations and to explore of their own life experience.

When candidates are writing about their own experiences, they 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 need 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 is the candidates' ability in writing that is assessed in the assignment–writing, not the maturity of their content.

Where candidates choose to produce a broadly discursive piece, writing may be initially supported by discussion-based activities, particularly group discussion on topics selected by candidates as part of independent learning. Discussion can 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; teachers and lecturers should encourage candidates to include both in their 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 will likely involve candidates reading pieces of professionally written non-fiction or news articles or watching TV documentaries. A dual purpose can be achieved as candidates may have opportunities to improve their reading and listening skills while preparing for the assignment–writing. Further crossover may occur as 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. Teachers and lecturers must remind candidates that all sources consulted should be acknowledged.

Much of the above is also 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.

Teachers and lecturers must make candidates aware of the word range for the Higher Gàidhlig assignment–writing, which is approximately 1,200–1,500 words, as appropriate to genre (see below for note regarding poetry). This figure is intended to be task appropriate for candidates at this level. The skill of writing within a specified word range is a valuable skill for candidates progressing to further study.

The maximum length of 1,500 words applies to poetry too; however in terms of length, greater brevity could be expected given the concentration of language that is characteristic of this genre. The lower length of 1,200 words therefore does not apply, as the full range of marks is 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 must 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 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 ("…"),ensures 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 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*.

Coursework task: Còmhradh (performance–talking)

Candidates benefit from a range of opportunities to practise talking in a variety of formats, for example 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 allows them as much personalisation and choice as possible, but also lends itself well to a natural conversation.

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.

Specific examples of preparing for the course assessment

Using the two examples given earlier (*Hallaig* by Sorley MacLean, and a current affairs programme on BBC Alba), here are some further ways in which candidates can prepare for each assessment element of the Higher Gàidhlig course.

Example 1

Hallaig **by Sorely MacLean**

Course assessment element	Suggested learning and teaching activities
Reading question paper	Candidates answer a series of questions encouraging them to demonstrate their understanding, analysis and evaluation of the text. These could include asking them to summarise the text in their own words. Word questions to help candidates differentiate between question types: ♦ understanding (what the writer has stated) ♦ analysis (the way in which the writer does this) ♦ evaluation (how well the writer has done this)
Literature question paper	Candidates write an essay analysing the poem and explaining how successful the poet is in making the reader consider the impact of the events described.
Listening question paper	Candidates listen to Myles Campbell's recording of a section of the poem or the spoken thoughts of their teachers or lecturers on the poem, and answer questions similar to those mentioned in the 'Preparing for course assessment' section.
Assignment–writing	As a discursive piece, candidates could write a journalistic text on the impact the clearances had on Raasay and/or other areas. As a creative piece, candidates could write an extract from a play or a short story set on Raasay or another deserted area.
Performance–talking	Candidates discuss the impact of the clearances on rural Scotland and land ownership issues more generally.

Example 2

BBC Alba current affairs programme

Course assessment element	Suggested learning and teaching activities
Reading question paper	Candidates answer a series of questions encouraging them to demonstrate their understanding, analysis and evaluation of the programme. These could include asking them to evaluate if the views were balanced or biased. Word questions to help candidates differentiate between question types: ♦ understanding (what has been stated) ♦ analysis (the way in which it has been stated) ♦ evaluation (how well it has been stated)
Literature question paper	It is unlikely that a non-fiction based current affairs programme would have direct relevance to this question paper, however many of the skills mentioned above (especially analysis and evaluation) would be relevant here.
Listening question paper	Candidates listen to one of the interviews or monologues in the programme and answer questions similar to those mentioned in the 'Preparing for course assessment'' section.
Assignment–writing	As a discursive piece, candidates could write their own journalistic text on the issues raised in the programme. As a creative piece, candidates could write a poem, an extract from a play or a short story, which explores the themes raised in the programme.
Performance–talking	Candidates discuss the themes raised in the programme.

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

Some examples of potential opportunities to practise or improve these skills are provided in the following table.

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 information texts ♦ use discussion to help candidates engage with texts and identify the ideas within texts Activities to support candidates in identifying the ideas within texts include: ♦ asking and answering questions ♦ comparing and contrasting ♦ sorting and sequencing ♦ summarising, clarifying and predicting ♦ text completion Candidates also benefit from activities focusing on the audience and purpose of texts.

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Approaches for learning and teaching
	1.2 Writing Encourage candidates to plan their writing by: ♦ creating mind maps ♦ peer discussion where they consider the genre, audience and purpose for their writing Candidates' writing will benefit from: ♦ discussing structure and layout ♦ building up sentences by linking ♦ planning paragraphs ♦ using topic and concluding sentences ♦ developing vocabulary ♦ developing technical skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling ♦ using plans for writing **1.3 Listening and talking** Wherever appropriate, encourage candidates to use language skills in real language situations. In these situations, drawn from life and work, activities may involve: ♦ asking and answering questions ♦ listening for and making comparisons and/or contrasts ♦ summarising, clarifying and predicting

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Approaches for learning and teaching
4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship 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	**4.6 Citizenship** Candidates learn about contemporary culture and cultural heritage, and develop their Gaelic language skills and knowledge through the contexts of literature, language, media and culture. The course develops candidates' understanding of citizenship issues as well as encouraging understanding of their own culture and community.
5 Thinking skills	**5.3 Applying** This is the ability to use existing information to solve a problem in a different context. To plan, organise and complete a task that reflects what may be required by life or work situations. To help candidates do this, give them 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. **5.4 Analysing and evaluating** Wherever possible, give candidates the opportunity to practise developing these skills in real communicative contexts. A range of kinds of texts is vital in developing analysing and revaluating skills in listening and reading in order to develop candidates' awareness of such aspects as: ♦ 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

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	Course support notes added as appendix.	June 2018

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