



## Course Report 2016

Subject	Gàidhlig
Level	Advanced Higher

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

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers, lecturers and assessors in their preparation of candidates for future assessment. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published assessment documents and marking instructions.

## **Section 1: Comments on the Assessment**

### **Component 1: question paper – Sgrùdadh**

The question paper performed in line with expectations, and feedback from the marking team and from practitioners suggested that the question paper was fair in terms of overall level of demand. All questions functioned as hoped with individual specific questions functioning appropriately to differentiate candidates.

### **Component 2: question paper – Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh**

The question paper fully performed in line with expectations, and again, feedback from the marking team and from practitioners suggested that the question paper was fair in terms of overall level of demand, providing plenty opportunities for candidates to select two appropriate questions.

### **Component 3: performance – Bruidhinn**

Visiting assessors carried out the performance assessment and all commented on the ability of candidates to conduct conversations with them on a range of topics including the focus of their Specialist Study.

## **Section 2: Comments on candidate performance**

### **Areas in which candidates performed well**

#### **Component 1: question paper – Sgrùdadh**

Most candidates performed quite well in answering the questions based on the prose passage and the poem. There were some good answers which showed depth of reflection on the poem such as in question 13.

#### **Component 2: question paper – Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh**

In the literature section, quite a number of candidates wrote lengthy responses on their chosen text(s) and effectively used evidence to back up points within their essays. In writing, candidates wrote in a variety of different ways based on the titles offered in the question paper. Some were more successful than others.

#### **Component 3: performance – Bruidhinn**

Most candidates performed well in this component. Visiting assessors commented on the preparedness of candidates and commended their conversation skills and their positive connection with Gaelic.

### **Areas which candidates found demanding**

#### **Component 1: question paper – Sgrùdadh**

For some of the questions in the prose section, some candidates found it challenging to paraphrase and demonstrate understanding in their own words. Some also found it more

difficult to evaluate and provide evidence of the writer's balance or bias in question 6. In both the prose and poetry sections some candidates could have made more reference to particular techniques and could have been more detailed in their analysis.

### **Component 2: question paper – Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh**

Some candidates found it demanding to write at sufficient length and in sufficient, 'comprehensive' detail about their chosen text(s). In connection to this, a small number used texts that did not lend themselves well to literature essays at this level. Some responses to literature lacked detailed analysis or reference to critical techniques.

In writing, some found it difficult to write on their topic in some depth. A small number of candidates found the time constraint for covering the two essays in the paper quite challenging.

### **Component 3: performance – Bruidhinn**

Some candidates were a little vague in their discussion of literature covered in their courses and were unable to discuss these pieces in any great depth.

## **Section 3: Advice for the preparation of future candidates**

### **Component 1: question paper – Sgrùdadh**

Candidates should be aware of the number of marks awarded for questions and the need for the appropriate number of points and/or examples. They should also give sufficient explanation/analysis in their answers. Candidates need sufficient practice in analysing texts throughout the year and should ensure they have a thorough knowledge of the different techniques used by writers.

### **Component 2: question paper – Litreachas agus Sgrìobhadh**

In responses to texts, candidates need to ensure they demonstrate some depth of analysis and evaluation in their answers, backed up by sufficient textual evidence. They should also show their own personal response to texts. A good knowledge of critical terminology should also be evident in responses. Teachers, lecturers and assessors should ensure the suitability of texts in terms of demand and scope for candidates to construct good quality answers.

In writing, while recognising the pressure of the exam, candidates should avoid simple accounts and ensure that there is some depth to their response. To this end they should gain sufficient practice on an ongoing basis to develop their writing skills. Their own experience of literature and reading will also benefit their depth of vocabulary and writing style.

Candidates should be aware of the need for carefully managing time in this paper.

### **Component 3: performance – Bruidhinn**

Candidates should ensure they have a thorough knowledge of the topics they have entered on the form for the Visiting Assessor and be able to converse with the Visiting Assessor on these in sufficient depth.

Teachers, lecturers and assessors are encouraged to make use of exemplar papers and associated marking instructions to help with all areas of the course assessment. Understanding Standards materials will also soon be available.

## Grade Boundary and Statistical information:

### Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2015	0
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Number of resulted entries in 2016	31
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### Statistical information: Performance of candidates

#### Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark -				
A	51.6%	51.6%	16	70
B	25.8%	77.4%	8	60
C	12.9%	90.3%	4	50
D	9.7%	100.0%	3	45
No award	0.0%	-	0	0

## General commentary on grade boundaries

- ◆ While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and a well prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary), it is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.
- ◆ Each year, SQA therefore holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Business Manager and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the management team at SQA.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.
- ◆ An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in, say, Higher Chemistry, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related, as they do not contain identical questions.
- ◆ SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.