



Scots Language Award overview

Introduction

Scots is the language of lowland Scotland, the Orkney and Shetland islands, and parts of Northern Ireland. Its origins lie in the unique historical mixture of Old English, Old Norse, Latin, French, Dutch, and the Gaelic that was spoken by settlers and immigrants in lowland Scotland and the Northern Isles. It is a sister language to English (sharing its Germanic roots) and it has close affinities with Scandinavian languages, for example Norwegian and Danish. Scots, along with Cornish, Irish, Scottish Gaelic and Welsh, is one of the distinct regional languages of the United Kingdom; as recognised by the Scottish and UK Governments and the Council of Europe.

The Scots Language Award is available at SCQF levels 3, 4, 5 and 6. It gives learners the opportunity to study the history and development of the Scots language and to develop their ability to understand and communicate in Scots.

Purpose and aims

For those using the language today, studying Scots (including its history, development and contemporary use) develops their ability to communicate, think critically and use their own language creatively. They will gain a deeper insight into their own history and cultural heritage.

For those who do not already use the language, studying Scots enhances their understanding of how language works and their ability to communicate and use language creatively. They will gain an understanding of Scotland's history, people and culture.

Who is this award for?

This award is suitable for learners who have an interest in language in general and/or an interest in the Scots language.

Learners studying in Scotland (in secondary schools, further education institutions or community learning and development settings) may find this award of particular interest. It provides opportunities for learners to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, the Scots language in a contemporary context. This enhances their understanding of the cultural, linguistic and literary heritage of Scotland.

Recommended entry

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. However, relevant experiences and outcomes in languages and/or social studies may provide an appropriate learning and experience for this award.

Progression

The award or units may provide progression to:

- ◆ English courses or units
- ◆ Modern Languages course or units
- ◆ History courses or units
- ◆ Scottish Studies Award or units
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Approval

The award is auto-approved for secondary schools. Centres with devolved authority may seek approval through their own internal approval process. Centres that do not have devolved authority need to come forward for approval and contact [SQA's Business Development team](#) for guidance on completing the combined approval application form.

Structure

At each SCQF level, the award consists of two mandatory units. The requirements for each unit are detailed in the relevant unit specifications, available on the [Scots Language Award web page](#).

Scots Language: History and Development (SCQF levels 3, 4, 5 and 6)

The aim of this unit is to develop learners' understanding of the history and development of the Scots language, from its origins to the present day. This includes knowledge of its relationship to other languages.

Scots Language: Understanding and Communicating (SCQF levels 3, 4, 5 and 6)

The aim of this unit is to develop learners' ability to understand and communicate in the Scots language. This involves listening to or reading texts in Scots, and creating and producing written or oral communications in Scots.