Course report 2024

National 5 Gàidhlig

This report provides information on candidates' performance. Teachers, lecturers and assessors may find it useful when preparing candidates for future assessment. The report is intended to be constructive and informative, and to promote better understanding. You should read the report in conjunction with the published assessment documents and marking instructions.

We compiled the statistics in this report before we completed the 2024 appeals process.

Grade boundary and statistical information

Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2023:   229

Number of resulted entries in 2024:   249

Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including minimum mark to achieve each grade

A	Number of candidates	134	Percentage	53.8	Cumulative percentage	53.8	Minimum mark required	84
B	Number of candidates	54	Percentage	21.7	Cumulative percentage	75.5	Minimum mark required	72
C	Number of candidates	39	Percentage	15.7	Cumulative percentage	91.2	Minimum mark required	60
D	Number of candidates	18	Percentage	7.2	Cumulative percentage	98.4	Minimum mark required	48
No award	Number of candidates	4	Percentage	1.6	Cumulative percentage	100	Minimum mark required	N/A

We have not applied rounding to these statistics.

You can read the general commentary on grade boundaries in the appendix.

In this report:

♦ 'most' means greater than 70%
♦ 'many' means 50% to 69%
♦ 'some' means 25% to 49%
♦ 'a few' means less than 25%

You can find statistical reports on the statistics and information page of our website.

Section 1: comments on the assessment

Question paper 1: Leughadh (Reading)

The question paper performed as expected. The passage was set at an appropriate level and was relevant to candidates. The text was a contemporary factual passage about wild swimming, including its history and benefits. The introduction and title of the passage made clear to candidates what the topic was, with appropriate language used throughout the passage.

The questions caused no issues and allowed candidates to show their understanding of the passage and carry out appropriate analysis of aspects of it. There were no questions that performed badly. Some candidates found a few of the questions challenging, but other candidates coped well with all questions.

Most candidates who failed to achieve full marks gave insufficient information rather than showing a lack of understanding. Markers felt there was a wide enough range of questions to enable candidates to demonstrate their ability.

Overall, candidates performed better in questions that required specific information taken directly from the passage than in questions that required analysis or a personal response. In conclusion, this was a good reading question paper and candidates performed well in it. There were no specific issues raised.

Question paper 1: Litreachas (Literature)

Questions, as always, focused on five genres: poetry, short story, novel, play, or film/TV. Most candidates chose to write about poetry or short stories and gave a wide range of responses. The best responses showed good familiarity with the chosen text and an explanation of the skills and techniques used by the writer, while adhering to the question asked.

Many candidates did not adhere to the specific question that was asked; for example, the question on short stories asked candidates to discuss an interesting character in a text, however some candidates provided a more generic response with little focus on an identified character. Candidates may have pre-learned these responses before the assessment and did not adapt them to fit the questions asked. Some of the stronger candidates showed good ability to carry out detailed analysis of the text, with relevant supporting evidence. The best responses demonstrated good use of quotations.

There were a number of responses that did not have much content and showed little evidence of an ability to carry out textual analysis or a personal response to the text. There was a wide range of texts used throughout. It was encouraging to see responses in reference to film/TV as candidates do not often attempt questions on this genre. Candidate performance was fairly strong here, however, there were fewer candidates who achieved full or almost full marks than last year.

Question paper 2: Èisteachd (Listening)

The listening question paper was set at an appropriate level and was in line with previous years. The passage was about dogs and their relationship with people.

The passage was relevant to the interests of teenagers, and the wording of questions was straightforward, presenting no difficulty for candidates. Many candidates gave full responses; however, some gave no response, or responses that were not of sufficient detail to achieve full marks. Markers commented on the significant number of spelling and grammar errors, which made it difficult to mark responses at times.

Questions 1(a) and 2 performed best. Many candidates achieved full marks in these questions.

Questions 6(b) and 7 were the most challenging and required candidates to recognise detailed language with more complex vocabulary. These were appropriate for this level. Most candidates attempted most questions.

The listening paper differs from the reading paper as candidates do not have the text as reference. However, markers noted the performance of candidates in the listening paper this year was quite strong. The illegibility of some candidates' handwriting caused difficulties during marking.

Obair shònraichte–sgrìobhadh (Assignment–writing)

This component was re-introduced this session and was done well by candidates.

The overall marks were strong, and candidates produced a wide range of evidence, including creative, personal reflective and discursive pieces of work.

Còmhradh (Performance–talking)

The performance–talking performed as expected. A wide range of topics was discussed, with an appropriate approach applied throughout the assessment sample.

Centres must ensure that they have strong internal verification processes. We encourage those with a small cohort to work collaboratively with other centres.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas that candidates performed well in

Question paper 1: Leughadh (Reading)

Candidates performed well in reading. Generally, candidates coped well with the reading question paper as they could refer to the text. This is particularly true of questions that required them to identify information in the text.

Some candidates struggled with questions that required them to make inferences based on information in the text or give their own opinions.

Question paper 1: Litreachas (Literature)

The overall performance of candidates in the literature question paper was average. Some of the stronger candidates gave good responses. These candidates answered the specific question that was asked. For poetry, the best candidates gave detailed evidence of the writer's skill along with supporting evidence and quotations. For short stories, the best candidates successfully identified a particular character in the story and explained the skills and techniques the writer used in the text. Good analysis of the texts was evident in the best responses.

Question paper 2: Èisteachd (Listening)

Candidates' performance in the listening question paper was fair. No questions performed better than others.

Obair shònraichte–sgrìobhadh (Assignment–writing)

Personal pieces of work achieved strong marks, as well as some strongly researched discursive essays that demonstrated strong arguments.

Còmhradh (Performance–talking)

Candidate interaction with the teacher or lecturer was an area of strength. Candidates selected a wide range of topics.

Areas that candidates found demanding

Question paper 1: Leughadh (Reading)

This paper was well done and there were no specific areas that candidates found demanding.

Candidates performed less well in a few questions where they had to provide explanation in their own words or where they had to give their opinion.

Question paper 1: Litreachas (Literature)

Some candidates did not answer the specific question asked.

Question paper 2: Èisteachd (Listening)

Overall, candidates found this question paper demanding. Some candidates found answering inferential questions challenging.

Obair shònraichte–sgrìobhadh (Assignment–writing)

There were inconsistencies in some pieces of work where the quality of the work varied throughout the piece of writing. This may be a result of candidates using a dictionary and inappropriately implementing vocabulary they are not familiar with.

Còmhradh (Performance–talking)

Candidates frequently found it demanding to make use of specialist vocabulary in the context of their chosen topic.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Question paper 1: Leughadh (Reading)

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

♦ check how many marks each question is worth and ensure that their response reflects the number of marks allocated
♦ pay attention to where questions specify how much information is required, for example, one piece of information or two pieces of evidence
♦ make use of support mechanisms that may be available to help improve their handwriting. Some candidates' handwriting was difficult to read
♦ make use of support mechanisms that may be available to help improve their spelling and grammar (candidates are not penalised for incorrect spelling and grammar, however, incorrect spelling and grammar may interfere with the marker's understanding of their responses)
♦ are presented at the correct level

Teachers, lecturers and candidates should make use of the materials on the [Understanding Standards website](#).

Question paper 1: Litreachas (Literature)

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

♦ read the question carefully and answer the question that is asked, rather than give a general response
♦ are prepared to adapt their essay in line with the specific questions asked in the assessment

Question paper 2: Èisteachd (Listening)

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

♦ do not write their answer in English first before writing it in Gàidhlig
♦ pay attention to their handwriting. They should take more time over their responses to ensure they are legible
♦ make use of support mechanisms that may be available to help improve their spelling and grammar (candidates are not penalised for incorrect spelling and grammar, however, incorrect spelling and grammar may interfere with the marker's understanding of their responses)
♦ are presented at the correct level

Obair shònraichte–sgrìobhadh (assignment–writing)

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

♦ have knowledge of and can apply detailed vocabulary that is specific to their chosen topic, in a natural manner
♦ choose topics that allow them to fully demonstrate their broad understanding of and ability to use the language
♦ write in a natural style and do not rely on unfamiliar vocabulary

Còmhradh (performance–talking)

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

♦ have knowledge of and can apply detailed vocabulary that is specific to their chosen topic, in a natural manner
♦ select topics that allow them to fully demonstrate their broad understanding of and ability to use the language

Appendix: general commentary on grade boundaries

SQA's main aim when setting grade boundaries is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.

For most National Courses, SQA aims to set examinations and other external assessments and create marking instructions that allow:

♦ a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional grade C boundary)
♦ a well-prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional grade A boundary)

It is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject, at every level. Therefore, SQA holds a grade boundary meeting for each course to bring together all the information available (statistical and qualitative) and to make final decisions on grade boundaries based on this information. Members of SQA's Executive Management Team normally chair these meetings.

Principal assessors utilise their subject expertise to evaluate the performance of the assessment and propose suitable grade boundaries based on the full range of evidence. SQA can adjust the grade boundaries as a result of the discussion at these meetings. This allows the pass rate to be unaffected in circumstances where there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been more, or less, difficult than usual.

♦ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been more difficult than usual.
♦ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been less difficult than usual.
♦ Where levels of difficulty are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.

Every year, we evaluate the performance of our assessments in a fair way, while ensuring standards are maintained so that our qualifications remain credible. To do this, we measure evidence of candidates' knowledge and skills against the national standard.

During the pandemic, we modified National Qualifications course assessments, for example we removed elements of coursework. We kept these modifications in place until the 2022–23 session. The education community agreed that retaining the modifications for longer than this could have a detrimental impact on learning and progression to the next stage of education, employment or training. After discussions with candidates, teachers, lecturers, parents, carers and others, we returned to full course assessment for the 2023–24 session.

SQA's approach to awarding was announced in March 2024 and explained that any impact on candidates completing coursework for the first time, as part of their SQA assessments, would be considered in our grading decisions and incorporated into our well-established

grading processes. This provides fairness and safeguards for candidates and helps to provide assurances across the wider education community as we return to established awarding.

Our approach to awarding is broadly aligned to other nations of the UK that have returned to normal grading arrangements.

For full details of the approach, please refer to the [National Qualifications 2024 Awarding — Methodology Report](#).