



Scottish Funding Council  
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

**DRAFT**  
**SFC Gaelic Language Plan 2020-25**

**SFC Publication**

Issue Date: 3 November 2020

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Summary: This document is the draft, for public consultation, of SFC's Gaelic Language Plan 2020-25. It sets out for comment our proposed commitments in support of the National Gaelic Language Plan.

FAO: Principals of Scotland's colleges and universities

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## Foreword

To be completed by the Chief Executive following public consultation.

The foreword will set out our over-arching principles of the plan, for example:

- Equal respect.
- Active offer.
- The long-term vision Gaelic within your public authority.
- New strategic commitments in the plan and in support of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23.

National Gaelic Language Plan headings:

▪ Increasing the use of Gaelic

▪ Increasing the learning of Gaelic

▪ Promoting a positive image of Gaelic

## Introduction

### Description of SFC

1. The Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council (SFC) is the national, strategic body that is responsible for funding teaching and learning provision, research and other activities in Scotland's 26 colleges and 19 universities and higher education institutions (HEIs). We distribute around £1.8 billion each year in support of this work.
2. Our statutory duty is to secure coherent, high quality further and higher learning provision by colleges and universities in Scotland, and the undertaking of research, through funding of the Scottish college and university sectors.
3. The SFC Board consists of between 11 and 14 members, plus the Chair and Chief Executive. Members of the Council Board are appointed by the First Minister of Scotland and have a collective responsibility for the proper conduct of the Council's affairs. They are not appointed as representatives of individual organisations.
4. The Council Board is supported by around 115 staff (106 FTE) based in one location in Edinburgh. Work is arranged around four directorates: Research and Innovation; Access, Learning and Outcomes; Policy, Insights and Analytics; Finance; and Corporate Services..
5. In June 2020 SFC was asked by Scottish Ministers to review how best it could fulfil its mission of securing coherent provision by post-16 education bodies, and the undertaking of research, in these changing times. The review will consider the changes needed to existing funding, operations and accountability frameworks in order to respond effectively to the new challenges and opportunities brought by COVID-19. It will provide advice, where appropriate, to Ministers on relevant changes to policy funding for tertiary education and research. The review is being conducted over three phases and will complete by May 2021. SFC has utilised an Outcome Agreement process to ensure delivery of priority outputs and outcomes, for example in relation to Gaelic activity. This review may recommend a revised approach to accountability in future. . We will revisit our Language Plan commitments once this is complete to ensure we continue to support Bòrd na Gàidhlig high level aims and the National Gaelic Language Plan ambitions.

## Gaelic within SFC

6. SFC undertakes Gaelic activity in the following areas:
  - Core funding for Scotland’s colleges and universities: this is defined in negotiation of outcomes with individual institutions. This support includes funded student places for those studying Gaelic (including teacher education), funding that may be used to support staff undertaking Gaelic-relevant research and knowledge exchange, and support for other general functions of the institutions including their work with their staff, student and neighbouring communities.
  - Specific funding for targeted activities in the further and higher education sectors: such as support for Faclair na Gàidhlig, Bliadhna Bhogaidh Oilthigh Glaschu and Scotland’s Colleges’ Gaelic Immersion Residential Course.
  - Engagement and negotiation with partner bodies; for example, participation in the Scottish Government’s Faster Rate of Progress work on National Gaelic Language Plan targets.
  - Operational processes in support of the above policy work; such as translation, use of Gaelic in Communications activity and ensuring the inclusion of consideration of minority indigenous languages when conducting equality impact assessments.
  - As an employer, supporting staff engagement with Gaelic; such as staff training, Gaelic awareness courses, and ensuring the visibility of Gaelic in the working environment.

## *Our Vision for our work with Gaelic*

7. Our vision continues to be that of a Funding Council whose work in all areas supports the aims of the National Gaelic Language Plan, particularly the growth of opportunities within the Scottish college and university sectors to learn and to use Gaelic. Through this we hope to see our work also support the growth of opportunities to use and to learn Gaelic in Scottish communities, workplaces and learning environments which are beyond our immediate sphere of influence.
8. In our own workplace, we will show respect for and commitment to cultural and linguistic diversity, in our dealings with the public and in the opportunities provided for development for SFC staff. We will demonstrate by example the requirements for Gaelic placed on the institutions we fund.

### **Mainstreaming Gaelic in SFC's policies and core functions**

9. We recognise that opportunities will arise to promote and develop the Gaelic language through existing and future policy measures. We will examine current and emerging policy commitments to identify areas where Gaelic can be proactively incorporated and the priorities of the National Gaelic Language Plan addressed.
10. In the formation, renewal and monitoring of policies, we will work to ensure that the impacts on Gaelic will be in line with the National Gaelic Language Plan.

### **Gaelic in Scotland**

11. The 2011 Census showed that 57,375 people in Scotland speak Gaelic (1.08% of the population). This was a slight decline from the 58,652 (1.16%) recorded in the 2001 Census. Previous recent censuses showed more significant declines in numbers of speakers:

<b>Census</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2011</b>
Speakers	80,987	88,892	79,304	65,978	58,652	57,375
%	1.56%	1.70%	1.57%	1.32%	1.16%	1.08%
Change	-14,460	7,905	-9,588	-13,326	-7,326	-1,277

12. However, between 2001 and 2011, for every category for speakers under the age of 20 the numbers went up. And the numbers of children going through Gaelic medium education is increasing. Between census year 2011 and 2019 the numbers in GME increased by just over 1,700. Young people leaving school with Gaelic skills will come to look for a similar experience in further and higher education.
13. As a national body, all of Scotland's Gaelic learners, Gaelic speakers, those with other Gaelic language skills, Gaelic communities and Gaelic organisations are within our area of operation.

### **The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005**

14. The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 was passed by the Scottish Parliament with a view to securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language.
15. One of the key features of the 2005 Act is the provision enabling Bòrd na Gàidhlig to require a public authority to prepare a Gaelic Language Plan. This provision was designed to ensure that the public sector in Scotland plays its part in creating a sustainable future for Gaelic by raising the status and profile of the language and creating practical opportunities for its use.

16. This document is SFC's Gaelic Language Plan prepared within the framework of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005. It sets out how we will use Gaelic in the operation of our functions, how we will enable the use of Gaelic when communicating with the public and key partners, and how we will promote and develop Gaelic.
17. SFC's Gaelic Language Plan has been prepared in accordance with statutory criteria set out in the 2005 Act and having regard to the National Gaelic Language Plan and the Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans.
18. This is SFC's third Gaelic Language Plan. SFC's first Gaelic Language Plan was approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig on 15 December 2009 and published by SFC on 26 February 2010. Our second Gaelic Language Plan was approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig on 17 September 2015 and published on 28 October 2015.



## The National Gaelic Language Plan

19. SFC supports the aim of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23 that “Gaelic is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations.”
20. We are committed to the achieving this aim by focussing our work, on these three headings:
  - Increasing the use of Gaelic within our organisation and encouraging more people to use Gaelic, more often when they interact with us.
  - Increasing the opportunity for people to learn Gaelic as part of our day-to-day operations.
  - Promoting a positive image of Gaelic whenever we can as part of our day-to-day operations as an organisation.
21. In reviewing the National Gaelic Language Plan priorities, we identified areas where SFC has potential to make a contribution, as below:

Increasing the use of Gaelic	
NGLP priority	SFC potential
Initiatives which promote the use of Gaelic in homes and communities	[institutional communities]
Initiatives which promote the use of Gaelic by young people	[students]
Gaelic in traditional and new media	[skills]
Gaelic in the arts, publishing and creative industries	[skills]
Gaelic Language Plans	[SFC, partners, institutions]
Gaelic in the workplace	[SFC internally, institutions]
Gaelic use in heritage, tourism, food and drink, environment and leisure industries	[skills]
Initiatives which strengthen language richness, relevance and consistency	[eg Faclair na Gaidhlig]
Initiatives promoting links with Gaelic abroad and with minority languages	[eg Soillse, Language Sciences Institute]

Increasing the learning of Gaelic	
NGLP priority	SFC potential
Gaelic in the family	
Gaelic medium workforce recruitment, retention, training and supply	[institutions]
Resources and support for learning	[eg Faclair]
Gaelic in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)	[workforce training and places]
Gaelic medium education (GME) in primary and secondary schools	[workforce training]

Gaelic learner education (GLE) in primary and secondary schools	[workforce training]
Gaelic in Higher and Further Education	[institutions]
Adult Gaelic learning	[SFC internally, institutions]

<b>Promoting a positive image of Gaelic</b>	
<b>NGLP priority</b>	<b>SFC potential</b>
Support for Gaelic from the Scottish Government, Parliament and wider political support	
Gaelic Language Plans implemented by public authorities (local authorities and public bodies)	
Promoting a positive image of Gaelic and raising awareness through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gaelic media and other media</li> <li>▪ Gaelic education at all levels, and</li> <li>▪ Gaelic arts</li> </ul>	[SFC, institutions]
Promoting the social, economic and cultural value of Gaelic	
Positive messages about Gaelic, bilingualism, and about diversity and inclusion	[SFC, institutions]

22. There is also potential to work with institutions on responses to the National Gaelic Language Plan priorities for Gaelic in communities: island and rural; towns and cities; communities linked by technology.

### Internal Gaelic capacity audit

23. SFC conducts surveys of Gaelic skills among staff annually. The latest audit took place in March 2020, achieving a response rate of 86.8%.
24. Using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), 3% of respondents claim A2 levels of Gaelic ability. The vast majority of respondents (97%) claim little or no ability in Gaelic (although this includes 10.1% who “recognise, understand and, if pushed, use a few everyday expressions and very basic phrases” and a further 22.2% who “can recognise and understand a few everyday expressions and very basic phrases”). We have no fluent speakers of Gaelic but we have a number of active learners.
25. We will maintain up to date data on Gaelic skills among our staff.

### Consultation on the draft Gaelic language plan

26. Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on public sector operations in 2020, this draft is presented to Bòrd na Gàidhlig prior to consultation. We will consult publicly, and internally, on this draft and take into account

representations made to us before submitting a final draft to the Bòrd in early 2021.

## Key principles

### Equal respect

27. Under the terms of the 2005 Act, Bòrd na Gàidhlig works with a view to securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language.
28. SFC will ensure that where Gaelic is included as part of our operations and services, the offers made are of an equal standard and quality to those that we provide in English.

### Active offer

29. SFC will continue to make an active offer of our Gaelic services to our employees and the public. This will ensure that where Gaelic services are made available by us, Gaelic users are made aware of their existence, and are actively encouraged to use them.
30. This will take the responsibility away from the individual to ask for the service and will give Gaelic users the confidence to know that their needs will be met if that is their choice.
31. We will ensure that our Gaelic language services are as accessible as our English language services.

### Mainstreaming

32. SFC will ensure that opportunities for the public and our staff to use Gaelic are normalised, in support of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23 aim that Gaelic is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations.

## Plan commitments

### High-level aims

33. The four high-level aims identified by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, and agreed with the Scottish Government, for SFC's 2020-25 Gaelic Language Plan are:
  - Carry forward and include all commitments from the previous iteration of Scottish Funding Council's Gaelic Language Plan which are within Scottish Funding Council's remit.
  - Via membership of the Strategic Board for Enterprise and Skills, promote the

benefits that Gaelic has on the Scottish economy. Details of which can be found in the June 2018 'The Gaelic Language Labour Market' report by Skills Development Scotland and the May 2014 research, 'Ar Stòras Gàidhlig' by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and partners.

- Through our accountability frameworks, promote and encourage colleges and universities to introduce Gaelic language awareness and language learning opportunities for staff, and to report on progress made.
- Using our mechanisms which support quality and impact, ensure that colleges and universities adhere to the principle of equal respect for Gaelic throughout property, students and culture of the institution.
- The following sections set out SFC's proposed actions in relation to the high-level aims set for SFC by Bòrd na Gàidhlig in consultation with the Scottish Government. They also incorporate SFC policy aims for Gaelic in relation to its work with colleges and universities. Through this work SFC seeks to make a positive contribution to the National Gaelic Language Plan.

**Carry forward and include all commitments from the previous iteration of Scottish Funding Council's Gaelic Language Plan which are within Scottish Funding Council's remit.**

***Outcome:***

- Scottish Funding Council contributes to the achievement of the National Gaelic Language Plan.

***Currently:***

- SFC's Gaelic Language Plan 2014-19 and commitments are here ([English/ Gaelic](#)).
- All Gaelic services and resources demonstrate equal respect for Gaelic and English. There will be a continuous active offer for all Gaelic services and facilities.

***The SFC will:***

- Carry forward and deliver all commitments from our previous Gaelic Language Plan which remain within our remit.
- We will continue to monitor and to work towards commitments in our 2014-19 Gaelic Language Plan which have not yet been achieved and which remain within our remit.

**Via membership of the Strategic Board for Enterprise and Skills, promote the benefits that Gaelic has on the Scottish economy.**

***Outcome:***

- Provision responds to contemporary labour market intelligence including the June 2018 'The Gaelic Language Labour Market' report by Skills Development Scotland and the May 2014 research, 'Ar Stòras Gàidhlig' by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and partners.

**Currently:**

- SFC's Strategic Framework outlines our lead responsibility for a national policy perspective on coherent provision of subjects including Gaelic. Working with partners on the Strategic Board for Enterprise and Skills, the SFC liaises with specialists within the colleges and universities and with other bodies, such as Bòrd na Gàidhlig, which have related or overlapping responsibilities for these policy areas.
- SFC supports the Scottish universities in provision of teacher education courses, including ring-fenced places for Gaelic-medium education. SFC has been an active member of the Bòrd's Group's on Education, Teacher Education, and Adult Learning and is working with partner organisations on *Faster Rate of Progress* projects. SFC also participates in the Scottish Government's Teacher Workforce Planning Group which assesses the need for student teacher places.

**The SFC will:**

- Continue to be a constructive and collaborative partner with colleges, universities and specialist institutions, enterprise and skills agencies, Government, and others, recognising that a whole system approach – connecting school to post-school learning – is essential to the design of, and investment in, future learning provision.
- Ensure our funding for Gaelic provision – core, strategic and research – is aligned to ambitions with the NGLP and the aims of the Strategic Board, including:
  - Work with SDS to explore demand for Gaelic skills (for example in priority sectors such as social and health care services) and responses to this.
  - Continue to support research and innovation through the SFC strategic funded national research network for Gaelic, Soillse, to develop a sustainable business model.
  - Encourage institutions to work together to create pathways for supporting development of Gaelic skills to meet national need.
- Use the Scottish Government led initiative, *Gaelic – a Faster Rate of Progress*, priorities as a framework to contribute to the delivery of the national strategy for Gaelic teacher education.
  - Work with GTCS on a teacher-education recruitment strategy
  - Work with FROP partners to ensure alignment of teacher education provision and employer needs.
  - Monitor use of targeted and ring-fenced places on Gaelic teacher education courses.
- Ensure coherent provision of Gaelic and Gaelic Medium pathways.
  - Challenge and support institutions in identifying gaps in provision, and in increasing the numbers of courses available and the number of learners in response to demand.
  - We will work with Bòrd na Gàidhlig to identify priorities and targets for the college and university sectors, in the context of the National Gaelic Language Plan.
  - Identify how expansion in Childcare provision is taking account of Gaelic Medium Education.

- Working with Local Authorities, the Convention of Highlands and Islands and HIE to ensure provision responds to demand.
- SFC acknowledges the success and impact of work being carried out on community engagement with and participation in the Gaelic language across Scotland, such as “Gaelic First” in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CNES). SFC also acknowledges the findings in the recently published report *The Gaelic Crisis in the Vernacular Community* on the crisis in language transmission within communities. SFC will work with institutions to develop a strategy to support community language transmission through their work. We recognise the place based nature of that crisis in Gaelic heartland (vernacular) communities. We will look for opportunities for greatest impact and seek to work with institutions active within those communities in the first instance. We recognise that a strong Gaelic speaking environment has the potential to support a platform for inclusive economic growth in those regions.
- Work with Strategic Board partners to ensure a full contribution of Gaelic to inclusive economic growth. For example, opportunities to align international marketing strategies with Gaelic learning recruitment strategies, for example through Scotland CAN DO.

**Through our accountability frameworks, promote and encourage colleges and universities to introduce Gaelic language awareness and language learning opportunities for staff, and to report on progress made.**

***Outcome:***

- Increased awareness among college and university staff of the aims of the National Gaelic Language Plan.

***Currently:***

- Institutions’ current Outcome Agreements should reference the National Gaelic Language Plan for 2018-23, and include actions in support of parity of esteem for Gaelic and to encourage its visibility and use by speakers among their staff, students and others with whom they engage, as well as maintenance and development of their provision, where relevant, for Gaelic learners. SFC is currently (2020) reviewing the Outcome Agreement process.

***The SFC will:***

- Ensure the aims of the National Gaelic Language Plan are addressed by each institution on an annual basis through an accountability framework.
- Work with Universities Scotland and Colleges Scotland to encourage Gaelic awareness training for college and university Board members and senior management.
- Work with institutions and their Gaelic language officers to facilitate their Gaelic initiatives. Encourage colleges and universities to raise the profile of Gaelic language officers and institutional Gaelic language plans.
- Work to share good practice among institutions.
- Host a national tertiary education meeting in academic year 2021-22 to discuss Gaelic policy issues to support delivery.

- Ensure local and national demand/community figures are explicit, examined and addressed with universities and colleges, including Local Authority language plans.

**Using our mechanisms which support quality and impact, ensure that colleges and universities adhere to the principle of equal respect for Gaelic throughout property, students and culture of the institution**

**Outcome:**

- The accountability process ensures that the aims of the National Gaelic Language Plan are actively considered and appropriately addressed by all colleges and universities.

**Currently:**

- Institutions' Outcome agreements should reference the National Gaelic Language Plan for 2018-23, and include actions in support of parity of esteem for Gaelic and to encourage its visibility and use by speakers among their staff, students and others with whom they engage, as well as maintenance and development of their provision, where relevant, for Gaelic learners.

**The SFC will:**

- Through the appropriate accountability mechanism, brief institutions on the role the principle of "equal respect" plays within Gaelic language policy.
- Encourage all colleges and universities to commit to including Gaelic awareness in induction processes.
- Encourage all colleges and universities to commit to a bilingual corporate identity with equal respect for Gaelic and English for use as standard when rebranding next occurs.
- Encourage all colleges and universities to develop service delivery and resources which demonstrate equal respect for Gaelic and English and promote a continuous active offer for all Gaelic services and facilities.
- Ask all colleges and universities to make explicit on a prominent part of their website that requests for services in Gaelic are welcome.

We note here our ongoing policy commitment to Gaelic corpus development, in addition to Corporate Service Aims in the following section.

**Support Gaelic Corpus development**

**Outcome:**

- Ensure a resource is available to record the Gaelic language corpus and support a high level speech community and a research capability.

**Currently:**

- SFC funds the multi-university *Faclair na Gàidhlig/Dictionary of the Scottish Gaelic language* project over five years to academic year 2022-23.
- SFC funds a Gaelic Research and Innovation Network – Soillse.

***The SFC will:***

- Monitor and advise the Faclair na Gàidhlig project during the period of SFC support.
- Work with Soillse, during the period of SFC support, to develop a sustainable business model.
- Work with institutions and other public bodies to expand and to mainstream immersion opportunities for Gaelic language students.

**Corporate service aims**

34. As well as the High-level Aims, Bòrd na Gàidhlig issued standardised Corporate Service Aims as part of the formal notice.
35. The following section sets out SFC’s proposed actions in relation to our internal workplace and customer-facing activities. In doing so it addresses each of the five core areas of service delivery that public authorities should address in their preparing Gaelic Language Plans identified by the Bòrd:
1. Status.
  2. Communicating with the public.
  3. Information.
  4. Staff.
  5. Corpus.

1. Status

**The Scottish Funding Council recognises the importance of extending the visibility of Gaelic and enhancing its status.**

***Outcome:***

- Our corporate identity supports the visibility of Gaelic.

***Currently:***

- SFC’s logo is available bilingually, in Gaelic, and in English. The bilingual logo is the default option, used on our publications, templates and stationery.
- There is bilingual signage throughout SFC’s office, and in our shared meeting space.
- Staff email signatures and including business cards are bilingual.

***The SFC will:***

- Maintain current levels of Gaelic visibility.
- Review opportunities to increase Gaelic visibility.



## 2. Communicating with the Public

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**The Scottish Funding Council recognises the importance of creating opportunities for the practical use of Gaelic in a wide range of everyday situations and is committed to increasing its level of provision in this area.**

***Outcome:***

- Use of Gaelic is encouraged and supported in SFC's day-to-day operations. Staff are confident and positive in responding to approaches in Gaelic.

***Currently:***

- All emails from SFC contain standard text in Gaelic, including a message welcoming correspondence in Gaelic. The SFC website also welcomes correspondence in Gaelic.
- Reception staff have been familiarised with Gaelic in their context and are encouraged to respond to and use Gaelic greetings as appropriate. We currently have no fluent Gaelic speakers.

***The SFC will:***

- Refresh procedures to support translation of telephone conversations.
- Provide periodic briefings to staff on use of Gaelic in our dealings with the public.

## 3. Information

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**The Scottish Funding Council is committed to increasing the use of Gaelic in these areas where the subject matter is of most interest to the general public or relates specifically to Gaelic issues.**

***Outcome:***

- Our use of Gaelic through external communications, particularly when dealing with the public, is maintained or improved

***Currently:***

- Key corporate publications are made available in both Gaelic and English.
- Where content is of specific interest to Gaelic speaking communities or areas, media releases are prepared in both Gaelic and English, and BBC Alba is included on distribution lists.
- Information on and in Gaelic (including our Gaelic language plan) is available on our website in both Gaelic and English.
- SFC's Gaelic materials are provided by translators (see Corpus section below).

***The SFC will:***

- Continue to review and identify opportunities for the use of Gaelic in media and public relations and in printed materials.
- On our website, refresh Gaelic-related material and enhance Gaelic presentation of content.
- Continue to build on our successful use of Gaelic in social media.

#### 4. Staff

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**The Scottish Funding Council recognises the importance of seeing Gaelic as an important job skill and of identifying situations in which its use is essential or desirable. The Scottish Funding Council also recognises the importance of enabling staff to develop their Gaelic skills if they wish to do so.**

***Outcome:***

- The level of Gaelic skills and knowledge among SFC's staff improves

***Currently:***

- SFC reviews Gaelic skills among staff annually to inform implementation of our Gaelic language plan, including training needs.
- Inductions for new staff cover SFC's Gaelic Language Plan.
- SFC offers support to staff for Lifelong Learning. Gaelic language skills are cited as a potential activity, and these resources are often used for this.
- SFC also supports work-related Gaelic language training where appropriate.
- Gaelic awareness training is offered periodically, primarily for staff, but also available to Board and Committee members.
- Gaelic is cited among 'additional skills' in SFC's job application form.
- SFC does not currently have any 'Gaelic essential' posts. We have existing commitments to appropriate advertising and testing of skills should 'Gaelic essential' or 'Gaelic desirable' vacancies arise.

***The SFC will:***

- Maintain current commitments to recruitment, and staff training and development.
- Continue to identify and act on opportunities to promote familiarity with Gaelic among staff, including opportunities for use of Gaelic in the workplace.

#### 5. Gaelic language corpus

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**The Scottish Funding Council recognises the importance of developing the Gaelic language to ensure that it is fit for all appropriate purposes and for use in the growing range of contexts in which it features.**

***Outcome:***

- There is consistent use of national standards in our use of Gaelic, including those of the Gaelic Orthographic Conventions (GOC) and Ainmean Àite na h-Alba (AAA).

***Currently:***

- SFC requires the use of GOC and AAA standards in services provided by translators.

***The SFC will:***

- We will continue to require use of the current Gaelic Orthographic Conventions and Ainmean Àite na h-Alba place-naming conventions.

## Links to the National Performance Framework

36. The National Performance Framework outcomes are that Scotland's people:
- Grow up loved, safe and respected so that they realise their full potential.
  - Live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.
  - Are creative and their vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely.
  - Have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy.
  - Are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society.
  - Value, enjoy, protect and enhance their environment.
  - Have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone.
  - Are healthy and active.
  - Respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination.
  - Are open, connected and make a positive contribution internationally.
  - Tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally.
37. We are a national body whose statutory duty is "to secure coherent, high quality further and higher learning provision by colleges and universities in Scotland, and the undertaking of research". This includes ensuring Scotland can provide the skills and knowledge to develop our economy and society. Therefore the vision and objectives of the following NPF outcomes have particular resonance with SFC and are reflected in approach to our Gaelic Language Plan.

### Children and Young People

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Our schools are loving, respectful and encouraging places where everyone can learn, play and flourish. We provide children and young people with hope for the future and create opportunities for them to fulfil their dreams.

### Communities

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... to be healthy and happy as a nation we must nurture and protect our local resources, environments and all who live in them.

We have high quality, affordable and accessible public services and facilities that positively enhance our lives. ... We live in friendly, vibrant and cohesive communities which value diversity and support those in need.

## Culture

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We cherish and protect our history, traditional and rural cultures, and embrace those from elsewhere.

## Economy

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Our economy is inclusive and focused on improving the lives of all our people. We ensure the benefits of economic growth, wealth and opportunities are fairly shared.

## Education

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We have an education system we can all take part in and which inspires us to reach our potential whatever that may be. ... We value our teachers, educators and academics and do all we can to achieve the highest standards across our learning and research. We work with partners in business, industry, science and academia to ensure we lead the world in new thinking and have the talents and abilities to flourish in future.

## Fair Work and Business

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We take seriously the wellbeing and skills of our workforce and provide good quality, fair work, training and employment support for all.

## Human Rights

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We recognise the fundamental equality of all humans and strive to reflect this in our day to day functioning as a nation.

## International (including population)

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Our family, communities and people are important to us and we are committed to being fair and socially just.

38. NPF outcomes are aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. The following SDG targets are particularly relevant:

By 2030, ... ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including ... indigenous peoples ...

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for ... human rights, ... appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status

## Publication

### Publishing and publicising the plan

#### *Internal*

39. Colleagues will have been involved in the consultation on the draft plan. Once finalised they will be notified of its publication and its relevance to their areas of work through internal processes, including email, and links on relevant parts of our intranet.

#### *External*

40. SFC's Gaelic Language Plan will be published in Gaelic and in English on our website. In addition, we will:
- Issue a bilingual press release announcing the plan.
  - Publicise the plan through a variety of social media platforms.
  - Draw the plan to the attention of:
    - Arms-length organisations and other third-party organisations, explaining their role in the delivery of the plan.
    - Key stakeholders in the public, private and third sectors.
    - Relevant Gaelic organisations and other interested bodies.
  - Make hard copies available on request.

## Resourcing the plan

41. We commit to maintaining appropriate resourcing within running costs for staff training, translation and other Gaelic-related activities.
42. Resources demands for Gaelic-related activity in our statutory functions will be considered as part of our normal procedures, taking into account Scottish Government and National Performance Framework objectives, National Gaelic Language Plan objectives and commitments within this plan.

## Monitoring the plan

43. SFC will compile an annual progress report that will be provided to Bòrd na Gàidhlig and made available to the public.

## The Gaelic Language Plan in SFC

### Overall responsibility for the plan

44. The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for preparation, delivery and monitoring of SFC's Gaelic Language Plan. The Chief Executive can be contacted as follows:

Karen Watt  
Chief Executive, SFC  
0131 313 6646  
[ChiefExecsOffice@sfc.ac.uk](mailto:ChiefExecsOffice@sfc.ac.uk)

### Day-to-day responsibility for the plan

45. The Assistant Director, Research and Innovation has day-to-day responsibility for the delivery and monitoring of SFC's Gaelic Language Plan. Queries regarding the day-to-day operation of the plan should be addressed to:

Morag Campbell  
Assistant Director, Research and Innovation, SFC  
0131 313 6530  
[mcampbell@sfc.ac.uk](mailto:mcampbell@sfc.ac.uk)

### Gaelic language plan implementation and monitoring group

46. The Scottish Funding Council has an internal implementation and monitoring group. This group is made up from representation across our policy directorates and works with operational colleagues. In addition to focussing on activities to maintain Gaelic awareness among staff, this group has facilitated drafting of our third Gaelic language plan.

47. As we move into implementation, we will continue to ensure representation across the organisation and combine staff engagement and critical monitoring of the plan in its responsibilities.

### **Engaging with staff**

48. See above.

### **Arm's length organisations and third parties**

49. SFC's standard terms and conditions of contract require "reasonable endeavours to support the Gaelic language in accordance with the SFC's obligations under the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and SFC's Gaelic Language Plan. If requested by the SFC as part of the Services, the Contractor will provide materials in Gaelic to the standards operated by SFC."

## Internal Gaelic Capacity Audit

1. SFC conducts surveys of Gaelic skills among staff annually. The latest audit took place in March 2020, achieving a response rate of 86.8%.
2. Using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) 3% of respondents claim A2 levels of Gaelic ability. The vast majority of respondents (97%) claim little or no ability in Gaelic (although this includes 10.1% who admit to being able to “recognise, understand and, if pushed, use a few everyday expressions and very basic phrases” and a further 22.2% who “can recognise and understand a few everyday expressions and very basic phrases”). We have no fluent speakers of Gaelic.

	Category	Respondents	% of resps	% of total	Previously	2018	2019
	1	5	5.1%	4.4%	No ability		
	2	59	59.6%	51.8%	No ability		
	3	22	22.2%	19.3%	Preliminary	30	30
	4	10	10.1%	8.8%	Preliminary		
	5	3	3.0%	2.6%	Novice	4	7
Total	114	99	100.0%	86.8%		62.6%	61.5%

3. Options offered:
  - 1: No idea what Gaelic looks or sounds like.
  - 2: Can recognise Gaelic.
  - 3: Can recognise and understand a few everyday expressions and very basic phrases.
  - 4: Can recognise, understand and, if pushed, use a few everyday expressions and very basic phrases. **(A1-)**
  - 5: Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal information) Can communicate in simple and routine matters. **(A2)**
  - 6: Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters. Can deal with most common situations likely to arise where the language is spoken. **(B1)**
  - 7: Can express ideas fluently and spontaneously. Can interact in Gaelic with Gaelic speakers without strain for either party. **(B2/C1)**
  - 8: Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can express ideas precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning. **(C2)**



4. At the point of the above survey, one staff member was undertaking An Cùrsa Inntrigidh and two further staff were using their lifelong learning allowance for Gaelic evening classes. Other staff were known to be using Gaelic Duolingo.
5. Two posts are identified as 'Gaelic desirable'. No posts are 'Gaelic essential'.

**Public consultation**

1. A statutory requirement of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 is that public authorities must consult persons appearing to it to have an interest.
2. Whilst a summary of the public consultation findings should be provided in the Introduction section of the plan, a more detailed report should be included as Appendix 2.

*To be completed following public consultation.*