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# UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

## GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN [2019-2024]



This plan has been prepared under Section 3 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and was approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig on 6 June 2019

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## FOREWORD

Welcome to our Gaelic Language Plan, where we outline our continued commitment to promoting the Gaelic language and culture and doing our part to support the national aim of increasing the number of Gaelic-speakers in Scotland and increasing our community's exposure to Gaelic language and culture. The University of Aberdeen has, of course, a statutory duty under the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 to play its part in supporting the language.

With the second edition of our Gaelic Language Plan we have developed a clear, strategic response that builds on what we believe to be already significant achievements in supporting the development of Gaelic language acquisition, status, and usage. We have developed our priorities and commitments following a review of our first plan (available at [www.abdn.ac.uk/gaelicplan](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/gaelicplan)), taking into consideration successes and challenges, as well as feedback from Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

We have given meaningful thought to what our key priorities should be over the next five years, and the actions included in our plan are directly linked to the priorities outlined in the pages which follow. With this second iteration of the plan, we have chosen to focus more so on Gaelic commitments that form part of our core business, and where we believe that we can play a significant role in supporting the aims of the National Plan. That includes actions related to our Gaelic language courses, which provide learners and native speakers alike with the chance to improve their skills in the language. The other main focus of this second plan has been to develop commitments that map directly onto the University's vision and key activities over the next five years. This is to further support integration of Gaelic policy throughout the organisation to ensure that Gaelic is embedded within all of our primary processes and procedures and our Plan is sustainably delivered.

As a Higher Education Institution, we understand the important role we play in supporting the use and learning of Gaelic, and we look forward to working with partners to build upon the successes of our first plan through this new five-year strategy.

***Professor George Boyne***

*Principal and Vice-Chancellor*

## ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

The University of Aberdeen, founded in 1495, is one of the UK's most internationally distinguished universities. It is Scotland's third oldest and the UK's fifth most ancient University. We have a student population of around 14,500 that includes a large number of part-time students and an international community of students drawn from 120 different countries.

Our vision is “transforming the world through greater knowledge and learning”.<sup>1</sup> We aim to enrich people's lives through our research, teaching, learning and sharing of knowledge to push boundaries and deliver success.

Teaching and research is primarily based at our Old Aberdeen and Foresterhill campuses. Teaching is organised across 12 schools which encompass a broad range of disciplines.

### **Gaelic in Aberdeen**

#### *Education*

Aberdeen continues to offer Gaelic education opportunities for people of all ages. In the city there is a parent and child group (ages 0-5), a Gaelic medium primary school and nursery, as well as a secondary school offering pupils the opportunity to undertake Standard, Higher and Advanced Highers in Gaelic. According to the 2017 Pupil census, there were 36 Gaelic Medium Education pupils in Aberdeen, along with a further 6 pupils studying Gaelic at secondary school level.<sup>2</sup> More information about Gaelic education provision in Aberdeen is available on the Aberdeen City Council [website](#) and in our first [Gaelic Language Plan](#).

#### *Language & Culture*

Aberdeen City has a Gaelic club, which offers language and cultural events where speakers can use their Gaelic as well as evening and weekend language tuition for all levels of abilities. Aberdeen also has a Gaelic Choir and a *Fèis*, which is part of a wider network of Gaelic arts festivals. Details about local and national Gaelic organisations, including where to find Gaelic resources and classes is available on our [Gaelic Language Plan webpage](#).

#### *Census Data*

Since the launch of our first Gaelic Language Plan, census data from 2011 was released, providing new insight into the number of Gaelic-speakers in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

Since 2001, the number of persons in Aberdeen with abilities in the language rose from 2,554 to 3,174. In Aberdeenshire, 2,721 people reported an ability in the language, which is an increase since 2001. The number of Gaelic speakers has also increased to 1,636 speakers in Aberdeen City and from 890 to 1,400 speakers in Aberdeenshire. The growth in the number of Aberdeenshire speakers is one of the largest in the 2011 census.

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<sup>1</sup> University of Aberdeen Strategic Plan 2015-2020

<sup>2</sup> Supplementary statistics from the 2017 Pupil Census, <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/dspupcensus/dspupcensus17>

## **Gaelic at the University of Aberdeen**

The University of Aberdeen has a long, rich Gaelic history, which is continued through our provision of a broad range of courses relating to Gaelic language, culture, and literature. We provide opportunities for students to undertake a degree in Gaelic, or to learn the language through two years of Sustained Study. The option to learn Gaelic alongside most degree programmes (a result of our highly flexible curriculum) enables the University to bring the language to a wider audience. Our Gaelic courses and degree programmes are supported by the University's Gaelic Department, which is part of the School of Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture.

Teaching the Gaelic language is the most significant way in which we support the national aim of increasing the number of Gaelic speakers. On average, 1.7% of our undergraduate intake each year register for Gaelic language courses. We offer Gaelic courses for learners and native speakers alike and provide the opportunity for complete beginners to undertake a degree in the language and graduate as fluent Gaelic speakers. This gives graduates the linguistic skills to confidently use the language and provides them a wider background in the literature and culture, which has inspired many graduates to move into careers where they can use and support the language's development.

There are opportunities for staff to join a Gaelic undergraduate course, and information about Gaelic classes and learning resources (outwith the University) are promoted on the University's Gaelic Plan website.

Our Gaelic Academics in the School are leading researchers in their fields and have significant links with Gaelic stakeholders. Whilst previously being the co-lead and initiator of the *Soillse Research Network*, researchers are now developing a specialism in improving adult language teaching and have recently cooperated with a private multinational company to launch a new Gaelic learning app for intermediate learners (<https://ai.glossika.com/>): the design and roll-out of this app, which is free of charge to all, is indicative of the University's commitment to the core aim of the National Plan in creating new speakers of Gaelic. The University also publishes the leading journal in the field: *Scottish Gaelic Studies*.

The University also regularly delivers Gaelic activities for staff, students and the wider public. One of the University's flagship events, May Festival, includes a strand of Gaelic-related events for both Gaelic-speakers and non-Gaelic-speakers alike. The festival celebrates research, creativity and engagement, and in previous years has attracted over 14,000 people onto campus. The Gaelic strand of the festival is organised in partnership with local and national stakeholders, and has proven popular, with the Gaelic events frequently being over-subscribed.

### *Gaelic abilities at the University*

The University routinely includes questions about Gaelic in staff surveys. The 2018 staff survey asked staff if they spoke Gaelic, and 1.5% of respondents claimed this ability. The survey had a response rate of 39%.

*Our first Gaelic Language Plan*

The University launched its first Gaelic Language Plan in 2013, and in that document set out a number of ambitious commitments to increase Gaelic provision and support for staff, students, and the wider community. The vision for this first Plan was to build on existing Gaelic provision (like language tuition), by introducing several base actions to increase the language's visibility and use across the University, such as: producing some bilingual materials, and website content, use of a Gaelic-medium logo; and providing a dedicated Gaelic space for staff and students. We also used this period to trial a number of activities, such as a Gaelic residential scheme for students, and our Students' Association trialled the inclusion of some Gaelic content in the student newspaper. In addition, we successfully delivered several high-impact projects, such as launching May Festival and its strand of Gaelic events; including spoken Gaelic in all of our graduation ceremonies; and introducing bilingual campus signage on both of our main campuses.

Delivering the first plan also had its challenges, and over the past five years there have been significant changes at the institution and ongoing challenges within the Higher Education sector. As a result, not all of our commitments were delivered as anticipated, and we have given thoughtful consideration to our institutional strategic priorities and targets to inform the development of this second plan. As we implement our Gaelic Plan, we will continue to review existing commitments, and where there are challenges, continue to consider how alternative delivery methods could be employed.

This second plan aims to build on the success of the first but is a more focussed document that concentrates on our current and future activities and aims and, more importantly, how we believe we are best placed to successfully support the delivery of the National Gaelic Language Plan. The actions we have developed represent what we believe are both desirable, impactful, and achievable and can be sustainably delivered and embedded within institutional procedures.

## OUR PRIORITIES FOR GAELIC

The University of Aberdeen recognises that Gaelic is an integral part of Scotland's heritage, national identity and cultural life. Through this Plan, and in delivering our priorities for Gaelic, we aim to create an enabling environment that provides opportunities for our community to see and interact with Gaelic on a routine basis. In support of this, we aim to further embed Gaelic activities into our routine business practices to ensure that their delivery is sustainable, and we will build on our relationships with other public bodies to support the wider implementation of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2017-2022. Our priorities below outline the areas that we believe we are best placed to deliver and which we will focus on over the next five years.

### **Supporting the National Gaelic Language Plan 2017-2022**

We have developed the priorities and actions for the University of Aberdeen to ensure that our Gaelic support is routinely embedded within our organisational culture and processes in a way that supports the aims of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2017-2022 which includes:

- Promoting a positive image of Gaelic
- Increasing the learning of Gaelic
- Increasing the use of Gaelic

#### **1. Increasing the number of students learning Gaelic**

Our vision is to transform the world through greater knowledge and learning. One of the most significant ways in which we can support the National Gaelic Language Plan is through our range of Gaelic courses and degree programmes. We acknowledge the place of Gaelic language and culture as a distinct and unique part of Scotland's history and living culture and are committed to continuing to work with partners to promote the variety of learning opportunities offered at the University of Aberdeen. We will continue to encourage applicants to consider a Gaelic language course as part of their studies.

#### **2. Improving the Gaelic-experience for staff and students and embedding Gaelic into routine processes**

Our aim for the second iteration of our Gaelic Language Plan is to create an enabling environment that provides opportunities for our community to more

frequently see and interact with Gaelic on a routine basis. In providing such an environment, we aim to increase the language's visibility, and also to increase the opportunities for Gaelic-speakers to use Gaelic. In turn, this will assist with the national effort to promote a positive image of the language.

#### **3. Delivering high-quality Gaelic events in partnership with other agencies**

The University's range of public engagement activities and events and festivals provide opportunities to raise Gaelic's profile in the wider community and increases opportunities to use and learn the language. The inclusion of Gaelic in our flagship event (May Festival) has proven popular, and through the delivery of our second plan, we aim to build on the delivery of high quality Gaelic events for the community in partnership with other agencies. This will provide additional opportunities to use and learn the language, as well as promote a positive image of Gaelic.

# UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN GAELIC LANGUAGE COMMITMENTS 2019-2024

## *High-Level Aims*

Bòrd na Gàidhlig issued a set of high-level aims approved by Scottish Ministers for the University's second iteration of its Gaelic Language Plan. In developing our new Plan, close attention has been paid to these recommendations, and the actions set out below all contribute to those aims, as well as the four main aspects of language development: acquisition, corpus, status, and usage.

## **Continuation of actions from University of Aberdeen Gaelic Language Plan 2013-18**

The first of these high-level aims was to carry forward and deliver all commitments from the first iteration of the University's Gaelic Language Plan which remain within its remit. These commitments, as set out in the Gaelic Language Plan 2013-2018 ([www.abdn.ac.uk/gaelicplan](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/gaelicplan)), include our bilingual offer of public services (including signage), commitments regarding our corporate identity, and a number of initiatives for staff and students to use the language or to increase the number of students enrolling in a Gaelic language course. The actions in that Plan will continue as we look to approve and implement the second iteration of our Gaelic Plan. In some instances, as has been the case throughout the life of our first Plan, commitment delivery may be adapted (within the spirit of the intended outcome) to ensure that the action can be sustainably embedded within the relevant institutional procedure or process. Progress will continue to be monitored by the University's Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group alongside the actions which follow.

The high-level aims also included some specific service delivery actions which we have taken into consideration in drafting our plan. This includes the commitment to identifying opportunities for students to interact with and learn about Gaelic and Gaelic education. We have thoughtfully reviewed what we believe can be achieved over the life of the second iteration of our Gaelic Plan and have set this out in the pages which follow.

Our actions have been structured according to the priorities we have committed to for the second iteration of our Plan.



<b>OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES</b>		
<b>Aim:</b> Gaelic services and resources demonstrate equal respect for Gaelic and English.		
<b>Current Practice:</b> Bilingual materials are developed making use of both the English and Gaelic versions of the institutional logo. In the absence of a bilingual logo, in some instances (i.e. signage), the English logo is in use with added Gaelic text. For the vast majority of services and resources, we aim to produce and offer these in a like for like manner.		
<b>Actions required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School / Directorate:</b>
Monitor action development/delivery in respective areas to ensure equal respect is demonstrated.	Throughout the life of the Plan	All Directorates/Schools involved
<b>Aim:</b> Gaelic services and facilities are actively offered and promoted.		
<b>Current Practice:</b> Some services/resources are actively offered, but there is scope to improve this.		
<b>Actions required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School / Directorate:</b>
Consider active offer in any new action development and implementation, and review implementation of existing actions to ensure that these are actively promoted, making use of support from other areas (i.e. Communications).	Throughout the life of the Plan	All Directorates/Schools involved.
<b>Aim:</b> Uptake of Gaelic facilities and services is monitored and promotion is increased where this is low.		
<b>Current Practice:</b> The uptake of some Gaelic facilities and services is monitored.		
<b>Actions required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School / Directorate:</b>
Monitor uptake of services and increase promotion where uptake is low, making use of existing communications channels and support from other areas (i.e. Communications).	Throughout the life of the Plan	All Directorates/Schools involved.

<b>Aim:</b> The University creates a Gaelic language policy if it does not already have one.		
<b>Current Practice:</b> University Court approved a Gaelic Policy in 2013 which is available on the University's website.		
<b>Actions required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School / Directorate:</b>
Review the policy and update when the second Gaelic Language Plan is approved.	Year 1	Estates and Facilities
<b>Aim:</b> Continued effort to ensure consistency in use of Gaelic terminology.		
<b>Current Practice:</b> The majority of Gaelic-medium information available at the University of Aberdeen is translated by an external organisation. On the rare occasion when information is translated in-house by the University of Aberdeen, consideration is given to terminology used by other agencies.		
<b>Actions Required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School / Directorate:</b>
Continue to work with a reputable translator and, where short translations are produced in house, continue to seek these from fluent, in-house Gaelic-speaking members of staff. Translations will be spell-checked to ensure adherence to Gaelic orthographic conventions.	Throughout the life of the Plan	All Directorates and Schools involved

<b>Gaelic Priority 1: Increasing the Number of Students Learning Gaelic</b>		
<b>Aim:</b> Include information in Gaelic and about Gaelic in publications, website content and social media aimed at the public, educational bodies and partner organisations.		
<b>Current Practice:</b> There are a limited number of bilingual forms, webpages, and publications. Social media has also been used from time to time to communicate in Gaelic with the public, including prospective students.		
<b>Actions required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School / Directorate:</b>
Produce several Gaelic themed social media broadcasts which will explore different aspects of Gaelic, its heritage, study, research and use at and around the University of Aberdeen.	Biannually (May and Sept)	Marketing and Student Recruitment with Support from Research and Innovation
<b>Aim:</b> That the number of students enrolling is increased through actively promoting the full range of existing Gaelic courses and developing new Gaelic courses and means of delivery. Also, that uptake is monitored, and promotion increased where this is low.		
<b>Current Practice:</b> Places on Gaelic courses are monitored annually to track progress against our action to increase recruitment to Gaelic language classes by 1% annually, as outlined in our first Plan. Gaelic is advertised at institutional recruitment events, like Open Days. The Gaelic Department also liaises with local organisations to promote the courses, and a Gaelic Ambassador scheme sees students visiting local schools. Bilingual adverts have also been produced from time to time for Gaelic-related publications to promote our Gaelic courses. Information about the range of courses we offer at undergraduate and postgraduate levels is available in our <a href="#">online Prospectus</a> .		
<b>Actions required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School / Directorate:</b>
Promote Gaelic Medium Education PgCert (STREAP) within online learning. (STREAP is an online programme developed by the University of Aberdeen and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig for teachers who are already fluent in Gaelic to enhance their professional practice in the teaching of a subject or stage through the medium of Gaelic.)	Throughout the life of the Plan	Marketing and Student Recruitment
Promote Gaelic as an enhanced study option to prospective undergraduate students– open days/ offer holder events, e-zines to prospective students	Throughout the life of the Plan	Marketing and Student Recruitment

<b>Actions required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School / Directorate:</b>
Enhance online prospectus with Gaelic content- inclusion of bilingual content on Gaelic Studies pages, inclusion of a student profile within “Study here” pages	Year 1	Marketing and Student Recruitment
Student Recruitment have an up to date list of schools with Gaelic provision from Bòrd na Gàidhlig- during visits to these schools promote Gaelic study options when talking to pupils/ teachers	Throughout the life of the Plan	Marketing and Student Recruitment
Provide training/briefings to Gaelic academics/ language ambassadors / student reps undertaking recruitment activity e.g. school visits	Throughout the life of the Plan	Marketing and Student Recruitment
Send information about Gaelic study options to undergraduate offer holders	Throughout the life of the Plan	Marketing and Student Recruitment
Investigate new market opportunities to promote Gaelic Studies e.g. North America	Throughout the life of the Plan	Marketing and Student Recruitment with support from School of LLMVC
Develop new marketing materials to promote Gaelic study opportunities	Year 1	Marketing and Student Recruitment with support from School of LLMVC
Encourage students on the MA Education programme to enrol on Gaelic courses during year one and year two of the undergraduate MA programme	Throughout the life of the Plan	School of Education
Work with our Gaelic Students Taking Active Roles (STAR) Ambassadors to trial a Gaelic Languages ‘mini-open day’ event for pupils in the North East region. The delivery of this event will be subject to the number of Gaelic STAR ambassadors and interest from local schools	Once during the life of this Plan	Marketing and Student Recruitment

<p><b>Aim:</b> Create a long-term strategy for sustaining and developing Gaelic education provision in partnership with other universities, the Scottish Funding Council, Education Scotland, and Bòrd na Gàidhlig.</p>		
<p><b>Current Practice:</b> The University currently delivers in the region of 25 courses in Gaelic language and Gaelic-related cultural courses with options available for students to take stand-alone courses; a programme of Sustained Studies; MA (Ordinary) Gaelic Studies; MA Hons (Single) Gaelic Studies and MA (Joint) Gaelic Studies with a second subject. The University also offers supervision in post-graduate research degrees and in the MSc in Translation Studies.</p>		
<p><b>Actions required:</b></p>	<p><b>Target Date:</b></p>	<p><b>Lead School/Directorate:</b></p>
<p>Deliver courses in Gaelic language and culture at SCQF level 7-10</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>School of LLMVC</p>
<p>Offer supervision in Gaelic-related post-graduate studies</p>	<p>Throughout the lifetime of the Plan (when there is demand)</p>	<p>School of LLMVC</p>
<p>Endeavour to give Gaelic ITE programme due consideration within the School of Educations' Strategic plan. In supporting ITE with Gaelic the School is demonstrating its commitment to working collaboratively with other Universities, the Scottish Funding Council, Education Scotland and Bòrd na Gàidhlig to support any forthcoming initiatives for Gaelic Medium Education</p>	<p>Throughout the lifetime of the Plan</p>	<p>School of Education</p>

<b>Gaelic Priority 2: Improving the Gaelic-experience for staff and students and embedding Gaelic into routine processes</b>		
<p><b>Aims:</b> Increase our ability to communicate with staff and students through the medium of Gaelic to create more opportunities for Gaelic-speakers to use the language.</p> <p>Develop initiatives to support use of Gaelic within our Gaelic speaking community (staff and students)</p> <p>Regularly and frequently publicise our Gaelic Language Plan within the organisation.</p>		
<p><b>Current Practice:</b> We acknowledge receipt of formal institutional correspondence in Gaelic; include some Gaelic in our graduation ceremonies and other exhibitions and events; and provide an initial response in Gaelic to any formal complaints received in Gaelic, as well as routinely responding to communications received in Gaelic.</p> <p>We also deliver a number of initiatives to support the use of Gaelic on campus, such as the Gaelic common room, Gaelic singing circles, and the creation of Gaelic STAR (students taking active roles) awards.</p> <p>Internal communications have been used to promote Gaelic and the Gaelic Plan. This includes use of the Staff Ezine, plasma screens across campus, and from time to time, the use of social media to promote the Gaelic Plan and its initiatives.</p> <p>The University has some Gaelic essential posts, and these are advertised in both Gaelic and English. Our Recruitment &amp; Selection Policy has formalised this practice and also sets out that where posts identify Gaelic as a desirable quality, adverts and further particulars must reflect this.</p>		
<b>Actions required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School/Directorate:</b>
Create Gaelic versions of the four University power point templates. These are currently only available in English with the University's English-medium logo	Year 1	External Relations with support from Digital & Information Services
Make the question about requesting to stay in the Gaelic flat bilingual on the accommodation form	Year 2 (for 2019 entry)	Estates and Facilities
Add a slide in Gaelic welcoming students to the Infohub	Year 1	People Directorate
Pilot a careers event for Gaelic speakers to allow them to speak with alumni who are in careers which require Gaelic on a day to day basis	Year 1	People Directorate

<b>Actions required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School/Directorate:</b>
Use internal communications to invite Gaelic-speaking members of staff to come forward so that the University has an idea of where some of its Gaelic-speakers work. The GLPAG will then consider how best to work with these staff to increase opportunities to use Gaelic around campus.	Year 1	External Relations
Trial events incorporating Gaelic within the activities programme offered for students at the Halls of Residence	Year 1	People Directorate
Raise awareness of the opportunity for students to select a Gaelic speaking Personal Tutor	Year 1	People Directorate
Encourage staff/students who are liaising with politicians/and Gaelic influencers to use the bilingual logo	Throughout the Life of the Plan	External Relations
Encourage use of Gaelic letterhead	Throughout the Life of the Plan	External Relations
Create a list of Gaelic speaking academics and distribute this to Gaelic media, so that they can add them to their contacts list	Year 1	External Relations
Make Gaelic a 'desirable' characteristic in new appointments to External Relations (where appropriate)	Throughout the Life of the Plan	External Relations
Create new page in branding guidelines and a 'mission statement' setting out the importance of bilingual logos, letterheads etc. to further encourage their use and to promote this provision	Year 1	External Relations

<b>Actions required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School/Directorate:</b>
Continue to use internal publications to promote the Gaelic Plan and the work of the Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group (GLPAG)	At least 2 articles per year	External Relations
Increase the visibility of Gaelic content on the University's digital channels e.g. video clips such as "How to pronounce our name on our new signage", fast facts etc.	Throughout the life of the Plan	Marketing and Student Recruitment
Prepare tweets in Gaelic for pre-planned key events – e.g Open Day and Graduations	Throughout the life of the Plan	External Relations
Liaise with the Gaelic Department and Bòrd na Gàidhlig to inform students of opportunities to partake in events to promote and support Gaelic Language and Culture be these formal or informal events	Throughout the life of the Plan	School of Education
Encourage external Gaelic partners to participate with Initial Teacher Education via the student conferences and creativity workshops	Throughout the life of the Plan	School of Education
Encourage students who are undertaking English-medium school experience to observe the pedagogical approach to bilingual education in Schools that have Gaelic units	Throughout the life of the Plan	School of Education



<p><b>Aim:</b> Provide Gaelic awareness induction and training to key staff, including admissions and enrolment staff; and to staff involved in publicising and promoting courses. Ensure that the students' admissions team and other key staff are aware of Gaelic courses being delivered and the importance of promoting these in a minoritised language context.</p>		
<p><b>Current Practice:</b> Staff Development, where appropriate, include a slide within induction programmes and management training programmes on raising awareness of the Gaelic language plan, and the opportunities for staff to participate in Gaelic related activities.</p>		
<p><b>Actions required:</b></p>	<p><b>Target Date:</b></p>	<p><b>Lead School / Directorate:</b></p>
<p>Identify key groups of staff who should receive further information about Gaelic and the University's Gaelic Language Plan and create a core message and a plan for its dissemination amongst these staff</p>	<p>Year 1</p>	<p>Chair and Clerk of GLPAG with External Relations</p>
<p>Interact with a wider range of Schools at the University to raise awareness of the Gaelic Language Plan and provision of Gaelic support and activities</p>	<p>Throughout the life of the Plan</p>	<p>Chair and Clerk of Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group</p>

<b>Gaelic Priority 3: Delivering High-Quality Gaelic Events and Projects in Partnership with Other Agencies</b>		
<p><b>Aims:</b> These aims relate to research, public engagement, and working in partnership with other agencies. We aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work closely with Gaelic community initiatives in and around Aberdeen.</li> <li>• Support Gaelic activities or projects which could bring wider economic benefit and added value to the University of Aberdeen and the region.</li> <li>• Work in partnership with other agencies and public authorities identified in the National Gaelic Language Plan as having a key role in delivering on arts, media, heritage &amp; tourism. This includes Bòrd na Gàidhlig / Creative Scotland Gaelic Arts and Culture Officer in order to advance and enhance Gaelic arts and culture within the University of Aberdeen.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Current Practice:</b> The University has supported a number of community initiatives in and around Aberdeen, either through promoting events, providing facilities, or working with other agencies to organise and deliver initiatives. The University also delivers a high-profile festival (May Festival), in which there are Gaelic events delivered and promoted in partnership with other organisations.</p>		
<b>Actions required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School / Directorate:</b>
<p>Develop links with local Gaelic speaking religious services within Aberdeen and the surrounding areas.</p> <p>Advertise these opportunities across the University of Aberdeen community, through existing mailing lists and social media</p>	Year 1	People Directorate
<p>Seek to include a Gaelic element in the Word Centre’s literary strand of the May Festival</p>	Annually	School of LLMVC
<p>Consider the option to host Gaelic events at University properties, potentially at a subsidised rate</p>	Year 3	Estates and Facilities
<p>Include some Gaelic in our events as part of the annual, city-wide Doors Open Day event (where appropriate)</p>	Annually, throughout the life of the plan	Research & Innovation

<b>Actions required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School / Directorate:</b>
Review our public engagement with research activities and identify opportunities (such as Explorathon, subject to funding) to include Gaelic	Annually, throughout the life of the Plan	Research & Innovation
Contribute (via committee membership) to major relevant inter-university research projects e.g. the Historical Dictionary project and Soillse 2	Throughout the Life of the Plan	School of LLMVC
Publish the pre-eminent Gaelic academic journal <i>Scottish Gaelic Studies</i>	Once during the life of this Plan	School of LLMVC
Deliver at least one exhibition every second year that has a Gaelic focus	Year 1 and Year 3	Digital & Information Services
Explore the feasibility of undertaking a project to identify material in the Collections that relates to Gaelic language and culture. (This will support the development of exhibitions and events in the Library and Museums, but will also identify stories that can be used on the University webpages and in social media etc. This project will be subject to securing funding to enable the appointment of an intern or equivalent post.)	Year 2	Digital & Information Services
Increase focus on events for children	Initially in Year 1 to establish and then throughout the life of the Plan	External Relations
Continue to provide bilingual information at Gaelic-related events	Throughout the life of the Plan	External Relations

<b>Actions required:</b>	<b>Target Date:</b>	<b>Lead School / Directorate:</b>
Encourage Gaelic media to use the University as a location for filming/recording and help them to find interviewees	At least 2 programmes per year using us as a location. At least 4 staff/students interviews per year.	External Relations
Liaise with the Gaelic Development Officer for Aberdeen City to inform students of events that promote Gaelic such as the Fèis	Throughout the life of the Plan	School of Education

# MONITORING & IMPLEMENTING OUR PLAN

## **Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group**

The University's Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group will continue to:

- Advise the University on matters relating to the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005
- Develop and oversee the implementation of the Gaelic Plan
- Promote Gaelic language and culture across the University and local community
- Monitor the use and reporting on any Gaelic grants
- Report to University Management Group.

The Group consists of representatives from Directorates and Schools that are involved in implementing the Gaelic Plan. Its membership will continue to be monitored to ensure that relevant stakeholders are represented.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

An annual monitoring report will be completed by the Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group (GLPAG) and sent to Bòrd na Gàidhlig. This will assess progress of the plan against our actions, and against our timetable for delivery. In addition, the GLPAG will also receive a midterm implementation review to track progress.

Updates on Gaelic Plan implementation will also be embedded within the Strategic Planning process, to support the aim of embedding Gaelic into our policies and procedures, and to provide the Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group with more routine updates. The University considers this Plan to be a high-level strategy document, and a number of additional, operational documents will be produced to assist the GLPAG to monitor Gaelic Plan implementation.

## **Resourcing the Plan**

All Schools and Directorates involved in implementing the Plan will share the responsibility for plan resourcing by using administrative budgets. When additional funds are required to achieve project goals or bolster the ambition of our Gaelic projects, the Policy & Planning Adviser can assist with advice on external sources of funding.

## **Publicising the Plan**

The University of Aberdeen's Gaelic Language Plan will be published bilingually on our website. In addition, we shall:

- issue a press release announcing the Plan;
- make the Plan known to employees via internal communications systems such as Staffnet, 'all staff' communications;
- make hard copies of the Plan available on request.

This activity will be overseen by the Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group.

## **Services Delivered by third parties**

We will seek to ensure that, where appropriate, agreements or arrangements made with third parties which relate to the delivery of its services to the public follow the terms of this Plan. This commitment includes services that may be contracted out. Where the third party does not have a Gaelic Language Plan in place, we shall encourage them to follow the terms of the Gaelic Language Plan and to ensure that their staff are informed of the terms of the Plan.

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

The senior officer with responsibility for overseeing preparation, delivery and monitoring of the University of Aberdeen's Gaelic Language Plan is:

### **Professor Marion Campbell**

Convener of the Gaelic Language Plan  
Advisory Group and Vice-Principal for  
Research

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Queries about the day-to-day operation of the Plan should, in the first instance, be addressed to:

### **Mrs Lindsey Hamilton**

Equality and Diversity Advisor

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University of Aberdeen  
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## Gaelic Language Plan Consultation Report

### BACKGROUND

The University of Aberdeen is required to prepare a second Gaelic Language Plan (GLP) as the first Gaelic Plan (2013-18) expired on 5 March 2018. As part of this process, the University undertook a consultation exercise on its Draft Plan.

In line with the recommendations provided by Bòrd na Gàidhlig in *Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans*, this period lasted for six weeks from the 28<sup>th</sup> March – 9<sup>th</sup> May (inclusive). The consultation allowed the University to publicise its GLP internally and externally, and gain feedback to incorporate into the Final Draft Plan.

### PUBLICISING THE PLAN

During consultation, the Plan was made available online on the University's website (<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/gaelicplan>). These dedicated GLP pages included bilingual information about the Plan, consultation meetings, and the University's Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group (GLPAG). A link to a bilingual consultation survey was also included, inviting readers to submit feedback on the Draft Plan.

The University's Communications team published a press release hosted on the news web pages and available via the University homepage (see archive copy at [Press Release](#)). The consultation meetings were also advertised bilingually via the University homepage and on the calendar of events pages for the public and the events page for staff. Staff received a consultation notice issued in staff newsletters, and via the 'message of the day' (for staff) which appears on the staff homepage.

Students received notice of the consultation through a number of sources in addition to those noted above, including the 'message of the day' (for students), which appears onscreen when students log-on to institutional PCs and via a routine student newsletter.

Social networking sites were used to promote the University's GLP and consultation period. The University's main Twitter and Facebook accounts, as well as its "Student Life" accounts (which are aimed at current students), promoted the consultation in English and Gaelic.

Media sources were also notified about the consultation process through the press release issued by the Communications Team. There was some press coverage of the consultation period; the University's Celtic Society, which is represented on the University's Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group responsible for developing the plan, approached the Press and Journal and BBC Alba with their opinions on the Draft Plan. The University was invited to comment and provided the press with further information.

In addition, organisations and institutions with an interest in the Plan were sent notice of the consultation and invited to participate through the G Mòr Practitioners' Group.

All information circulated included a web address to encourage the public to read the Plan and provide feedback.

## **DRAFTING THE GLP / ROLE OF GLPAG**

The Draft GLP was written by the GLPAG, a cross institutional advisory group convened by a Vice-Principal. This Group, which includes a number of Gaelic-speakers, is comprised of representatives from each Directorate and School involved in implementing the Plan. There are also two student representatives on the Group, representing the Aberdeen University Students Association and the Aberdeen University Celtic Society. Draft Plans were produced and refined by the Group before the Plan was presented to the University Management Group to seek approval to begin wider consultation.

## **CONSULTATION MEETINGS**

The University used the consultation period as an opportunity to gain both internal and external feedback on the GLP.

### *Open Meetings*

Two open meetings were held, hosted by the Convener of the Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group.

An open public meeting was held on the 19<sup>th</sup> April (see [Eventbrite listing](#)), and one staff and student consultation meeting was held on the 25<sup>th</sup> April. These were held at the King's College campus, and at different hours to facilitate participation. A bilingual presentation was used at both events, which began with a welcome in Gaelic from the GLPAG Convener. Attendees were encouraged to use whichever language they preferred at these meetings.

Despite the efforts made to promote the consultation meetings, these were poorly attended. No members of the public attended the public meeting. Four members of staff attended the staff and student meeting; however, no students attended.

### *Methods of Gathering Data*

The University gathered data through two primary methods: consultation meetings and an online survey. Participation was voluntary.

To gather specific data on the Plan, an online feedback survey was created, and this was available in Gaelic or English. Compared to the first Gaelic Plan consultation, the University received far more engagement with the consultation this year, with a total of 120 responses.

## **RESPONDENT PROFILE**

The majority of respondents were members of staff, followed by residents of Aberdeen. A small number of students also provided feedback. There was a good mixture of responses from both Gaelic-speakers (including learners) and non-Gaelic-speakers, with 42% of respondents identifying as Gaelic-speakers.

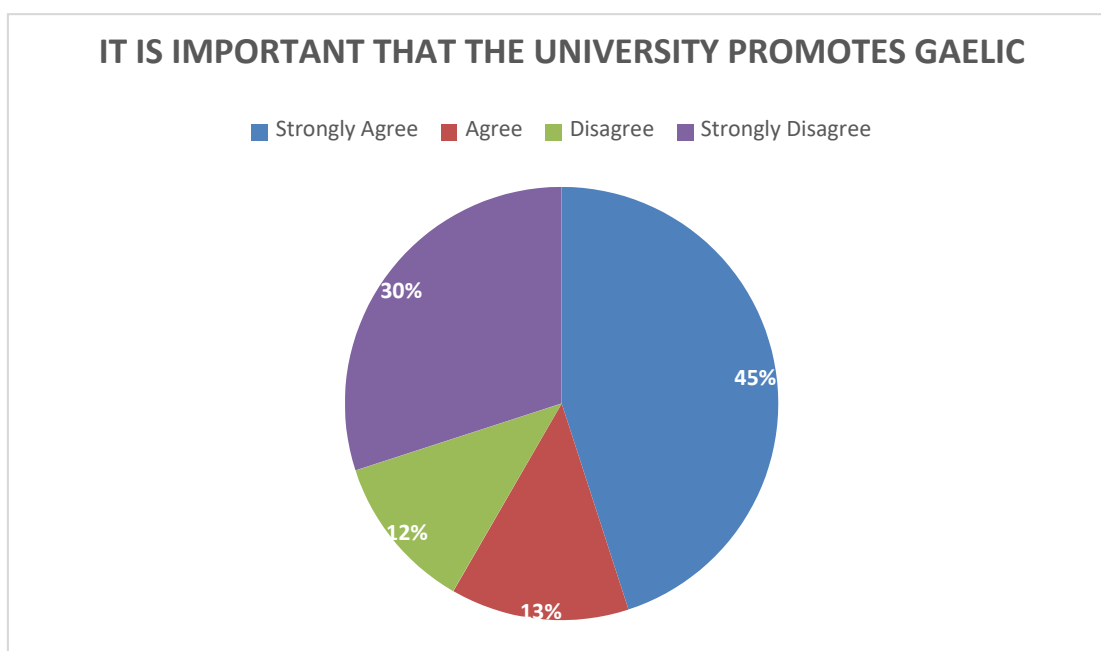
The average respondent agreed that it is important that the University promotes Gaelic, and that the Plan includes issues the individual is interested in.

## **FEEDBACK ANALYSIS**

### *General feedback*

The majority of feedback gathered is supportive of the University's GLP: 58% of respondents strongly agreed/agreed that it is important that the University supports Gaelic.





Some comments were received which opposed further Gaelic provision. These included comments about making Gaelic language commitments and not implementing similar provision for Doric or other languages. Other comments questioned whether it was appropriate to be undertaking such an exercise at a time of economic hardship and whether such activity was worthwhile given the small number of Gaelic speakers at the University and in Scotland. Some examples:

*Only 26 staff (of 2500) reported knowing Gaelic. The effort onto promoting Gaelic is futile and unwarranted.*

*I am opposed to wasting important and scarce resources on such a plan, even if the university found a way of implementing it well.*

*Ensure that vital university resources are not wasted on this plan. I think that if you were to take a poll from members of the university or residents living you would find that there are better ways for the university to allocate its resources.*

*How about emphasising Chinese, or another common language*

These comments perhaps fail to recognise the statutory nature of the exercise, or indeed the purpose of introducing a Gaelic Language Plan.

*Feedback on the Plan:*

Some charts are included in **Appendix A1** to evidence the overall positive feedback received from respondents about the appropriateness of our Draft Plan.

A small number of practical comments and suggestions, beyond those simply opposing the Plan, were received. These are discussed in further detail below.

**Visibility and use of Gaelic:** Some comments were received which suggested ways to increase Gaelic's visibility or opportunities to use the language. This includes the following comments:

*It would be good if more could be done to identify staff able/willing to speak Gaelic to other staff/students eg provide them with eg lanyard/badge that notes they are happy to speak Gaelic*

*Produce a bilingual email signature and promote its use throughout the university as the standard email signature. Some Welsh universities do this and it looks very interesting and would help promote this both academically and also throughout professional services in their dealings with both local and national suppliers and contacts.*

*Make it more accessible for students and easy for students to know how to get involved*

*I recently received correspondence from the University of Cardiff, with the following endnote. "The University welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to any delay." I wonder if something similar could be developed for Gaelic (and Scots)?*

The Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group (GLPAG) discussed the suggestion to provide lanyards or badges to identify Gaelic-speaking staff, and is interested in taking this forward. However, we do not yet know exactly who the Gaelic-speakers are and where they are located in the University; our staff survey of Gaelic abilities collects anonymous data. As such, we decided it would be more practical to firstly find out who our Gaelic-speakers are and where they work, before deciding how best we can work with them to deliver our Plan and increase opportunities to use the language. Although the lanyards suggestion is not specifically included in this Plan, we will consider this once we have a clearer indication of how many Gaelic-speakers are willing to come forward and use the language.

Some University staff have and use bilingual email signatures. However, as is included in our Draft Plan, our External Relations Directorate will work to encourage staff and students to use the bilingual logo (and signatures) more frequently. We recognise that this will require more signposting to raise awareness about the availability of these resources, and a new webpage with information about our Gaelic brand is forthcoming. This will be hosted in the same area that English-medium brand guidance is made available, and an action about this is included in the Draft Plan.

Two other commitments have now been included in the Draft Plan in response to the feedback above: to interact with a wider range of the University's Schools, beyond those where some Gaelic is taught, to increase awareness of Gaelic provision at the University; and our Marketing and Recruitment publications will now include a note that we accept correspondence in English and Gaelic.

*Adult Learning:* Comments were also received about the provision of Gaelic language sessions. As Bòrd na Gàidhlig will be aware, the University's Language Centre previously offered Gaelic evening classes. However, tutor availability became an issue for the Centre, and it was unable to continue offering these courses. However, Aberdeen Gaelic Club successfully offers a range of Gaelic language evening courses, and the University promotes this on Gaelic Plan webpages, and by putting any enquirers in touch with the Gaelic Club. The University's smallads community and its Blackboard learning platform, used by students, are used to promote learning opportunities outwith the University. Opportunities are also available for staff to attend undergraduate Gaelic courses if they wish.

Some comments received include:

*Offer more opportunities for University staff members to learn/interact with Gaelic. For example, Gaelic language evening courses through the Language Centre would be a great opportunity for non-Gaelic speakers to learn the language, especially for non-Scottish/International staff members.*

It is clear that greater signposting will assist in directing those who are interested in learning Gaelic to existing opportunities to use the language. One of the main aims of this Plan is to embed Gaelic in institutional processes and policies, and thereby create an environment where our community can more regularly interact with or see Gaelic. This includes using our internal communications more frequently to promote the work of the Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group, and a commitment around this is included in the Draft Plan.

*Public Engagement and Recruitment:* Some comments were received during the consultation regarding our interaction with schools:

*Conduct Gaelic events in Partnership with Schools in most deprived postcodes in Inverness, Fraserburgh, Perterhead and Aberdeen.*

*My kids are Gaelic-speaking students at Gilcomstoun Primary School in Aberdeen, but unfortunately the provision for Gaelic-medium education at the secondary school level in Aberdeen is quite poor. Is it possible that the University engages the underserved Gaelic-speaking teenagers in Aberdeen by hosting events or courses? If so, this would be an invaluable service to the provision of Gaelic in Aberdeen and could help recruit future Gaelic-speaking students to our University*

*It would be beneficial if the university could directly engage the Gaelic-speaking secondary school pupils in Aberdeen (not only at Hazlehead). This group is eager yet underserved.*

As a result of the feedback above, the GLPAG decided to include an additional commitment in the Plan to trial a Gaelic languages event for pupils in the North-East.

## **SUMMARY**

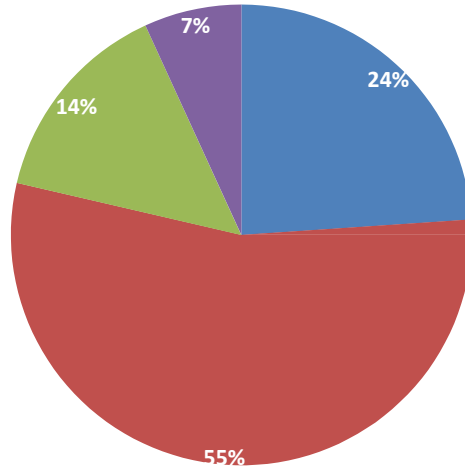
A concerted effort was made over the consultation period to promote the Draft Gaelic Language Plan through a wide range of communications channels.

The consultation period provided an excellent opportunity to hear from our community as to what kind of Gaelic provision they believe the University should offer. We have considered all feedback provided and revised our Plan accordingly.

As a result of our consultation, we consider that our Draft Plan contains a balanced series of deliverable commitments which internal and external stakeholders have been given a full opportunity to develop.

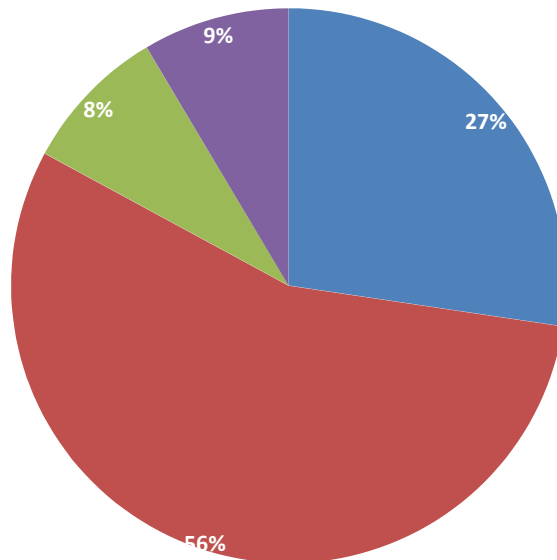
### THE PLAN MAKES THE UNIVERSITY'S COMMITMENTS CLEAR

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree



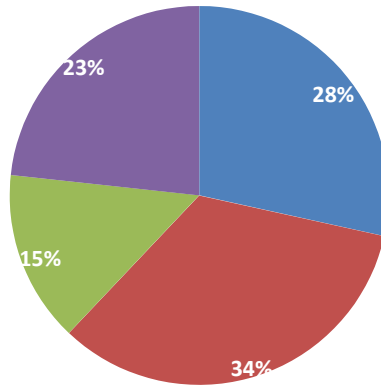
### THE UNIVERSITY'S PRIORITIES FOR GAELIC CLEARLY SUPPORT THE NATIONAL GAELIC PLAN'S AIM TO INCREASE LEARNING, PROMOTION AND USE OF GAELIC

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree



**THE AIMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN ARE APPROPRIATE GIVEN THE UNIVERSITY'S VISION OF "TRANSFORMING THE WORLD THROUGH GREATER KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING"**

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree



**THE STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE GAELIC PLAN IS CLEAR AND APPROPRIATE**

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

