



An Cùrsa Adhartais

**LEABHAR-LÀIMHE A' CHÙRSA
(COURSE HANDBOOK)**



**Seisean Acadaimigeach 2012/13
(Academic Session 2012/13)**

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SECTION 1. Course Introduction and Overview

1.1 Course Introduction

An Cùrsa Adhartais has been designed as a sequel to *An Cùrsa Inntrigidh*, the SMO Gaelic access course which provides *An Cùrsa Adhartais* with the majority of its entrants. The language modules employ the same distance-learning teaching and learning methodologies as *An Cùrsa Inntrigidh* and carry students' language development forward, building on and enhancing skills already acquired. The continuous grammatical syllabus which forms the backbone of both courses begins at ab initio stage in Unit One of *An Cùrsa Inntrigidh* and continues through to the last of the *Cùrsa Adhartais* language modules. They are in effect one course, the border between them having been created at the point at which learning value was assessed to be at, and subsequently validated as, Level 7 SCQF. The *An Cùrsa Adhartais* language and subject modules match the learning content of modules contained within the curriculum of *An Cùrsa Comais*, which is at Level 7 SCQF of the Gaelic and Related Studies Degree Scheme. That course is offered face to face at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and at Lews Castle College, partners in University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI).

An Cùrsa Adhartais has seven modules in all: six language and one subject. There are 15 SCOTCAT credit points for the first four language modules and two for the remaining two. *Saoghal na Gàidhlig 1*, the subject module, is also a 20 point module. Successful completion of all seven modules will lead to a Certificate of Higher Education.

1.2 Entry Requirements

Successful recent completion of *An Cùrsa Inntrigidh* is the usual entry route for *An Cùrsa Adhartais*. Students who achieved this in academic session 2011-12 are eligible for entry to the Course in 2012-13.

Applicants who successfully completed *An Cùrsa Inntrigidh* prior to session 2011-12 will be required to undertake an oral interview to ascertain whether they are at the pre-requisite level for entry to the course. Any student for whom that date was earlier than February 2007 may, subject to interview and/or assessment, start *An Cùrsa Adhartais* at Module 3 (CA3). The reason for this is that until 2007, *An Cùrsa Inntrigidh* in its original format included two modules which subsequently became modules 1 and 2 (CA1/CA2) of the newly validated *An Cùrsa Adhartais*. Students eligible for exemption under these conditions may, if they choose, start at Module 1 (CA1).

Alternatively, entry to the course may be permitted with one Higher or equivalent plus completion of a written assessment and oral interview to gauge whether the applicant's prior learning is broadly equivalent to the pre-requisite level.

1.3 Course Duration and Modes of Delivery

An Cùrsa Adhartais is offered on a part-time basis using distance learning strategies, supported and facilitated through a range of technologies. The six language modules will each take eight or nine weeks of part-time study to complete. The subject module, *Saoghal na Gàidhlig 1*, is a twelve-week module also studied on a part-time basis.

1.4 Gaelic and Related Studies Scheme: An Overview

An Cùrsa Adhartais has been designed as part of the UHI Gaelic and Related Studies Scheme (GRSS).

The awards offered within the GRSS are as follow:

G&RSS Programmes and Exit Qualifications **Table 1**

SCQF Level	SHE Level	Programme/Course Titles and Exit Qualifications
7	SHE 1	CertHE in either: a) An Cùrsa Comais or b) Gaelic and Communication course or c) An Cùrsa Adhartais
8	SHE 2	DipHE in Gaelic and Related Studies
9	SHE 3	BA Gaelic Language and Culture BA Gaelic and Development BA Gaelic and Media Studies BA Gaelic and Traditional Music
10	SHE H	BA (Hons) Gaelic Language and Culture BA (Hons) Gaelic and Development

		BA (Hons) Gaelic and Media Studies BA (Hons) Gaelic and Traditional Music
11	SHE M	PG Certificate in Material Culture and Highland History
11	SHE M	PG Diploma in Material Culture and Highland History
11	SHE M	MSc in Material Culture and Highland History

The contributing academic Partner Colleges within the GRSS are Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and Lews Castle College with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig as the Responsible Partner College. Sabhal Mòr Ostaig offers all programmes listed above.

1.5 UHI Scheme/Course Structures

UHI undergraduate and postgraduate courses are modularised, with each module involving 200 hours of notional student activity and earning 20 SCOTCAT credit points (with the current exception of four *An Cùrsa Adhartais* language modules which have 15 points). The adoption of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) allows for mixed level study.

1.6 The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI)

The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) is a higher education institution providing university-level courses and research opportunities throughout the Highlands and Islands, delivered through a unique network of 14 academic partners located throughout the area. Each UHI academic partner has its own distinct character and features.

UHI Mission

'To create in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland a collegiate university which will reach the highest standards and play a pivotal role in our educational, economic, social and cultural development.'

1.7 Sabhal Mòr Ostaig

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, which has developed as an independent educational institution since it was founded in 1973, is a unique and specialist Partner College within UHI Millennium Institute and is the only college of FE/HE offering advanced courses solely through the medium of Gaelic. As such, it has a critical role to play in ensuring the development and support of the Gaelic language, culture and heritage through educational, cultural, promotional and economic programmes and activities.

College Mission

'Sabhal Mòr Ostaig is committed to being a centre of excellence for the development and enhancement of the Gaelic language, culture and heritage, by providing quality educational, training and research opportunities through the medium of Scottish Gaelic; and by interacting innovatively with individuals, communities and businesses, to contribute to social, cultural and economic development.'

SECTION 2 Course Structure, Delivery and Module Summaries

2.1 Course structure

An Cùrsa Adhartais comprises seven modules and students are required to work through the modules in sequential order, i.e. from module CA1 progressing to subject module CA7 (*Saoghal na Gàidhlig 1*). Modules cannot be selected at random.

Each of the six language modules will consist of four or five sections, or 'lessons'. An item of text in print and in sound file format forms the basis of the lesson. This is usually a drama extract, complete with characters and situations, in which the new language content is interwoven with the plotlines. The text is supported in the written workpack by explanations of the new structures and vocabulary contained within it, and a variety of self-assessment written exercises. The recorded course materials offer an additional set of oral exercises to accompany each lesson. These combine listen-and-repeat sound drills, which allow the student to do work on pronunciation, intonation and delivery of speech, with a second strand of creative and grammar based exercises in which students must supply correct answers, for example, in short passages of dialogue. Each lesson is supported by a weekly tutor-led telephone class which brings students together in groups in a realistic social setting with a clear strategy of developing speaking skills through structured exercises and extempore oral conversations based on the language content of the lesson.

The subject module, *Saoghal na Gàidhlig 1*, takes the form of online class materials supported by group telephone tutorials and online discussion fora. The aim of this module is to provide students with a broad-based multi-disciplinary view of the Scottish Gaidhealtachd/Highlands and Islands and, by applying the basic methodologies of various disciplines such as history, geography and geology, to enable students to gain a greater understanding of an area.

2.2 Course/Module Delivery

An Cùrsa Adhartais is offered on a part-time distance-learning basis, allowing students flexibility in relation to their programme of study. Through part-time study, students will normally require a minimum of two years to complete the course. The delivery plan in relation to the minimum period of part-time study is illustrated in Table 2 below.

Course/Module Delivery Plan

For each language module, there will be a weekly group phone tutorial lasting about one hour, in addition to self-study and preparation for the tutorials and assessment.

There will be two group phone tutorials per week and online discussion fora for *Saoghal na Gàidhlig 1*, in addition to self-study and preparation for the tutorials and assessment.

Course delivery plan

Table 2

Intake: August 2012		
	Start date	End date
Induction and Preparation Week	06 August 2012	10 August 2012
Module 1 (CA1)	13 August 2012	05 October 2012
Written and oral assessment issued 05 October 2012		
Written and oral assessment to be submitted by 22 October 2012		
Module 2 (CA2)	08 October 2012	07 December 2012
Oral assessment issued and recorded in class 03 - 07 December 2012		
Written assessment issued 07 December 2012		
Written assessment to be submitted by 17 December 2012		
Module 3 (CA3)	10 December 2012	15 February 2013
Oral assessment issued 25 January 2013		
Oral assessment to be submitted by 15 February 2013		
Written assessment issued 15 February 2013		
Written assessment to be submitted by 25 February 2013		
Module 4 (CA4)	18 February 2013	19 April 2013

Oral assessment issued in class and recorded 15 - 19 April 2013		
Written assessment issued 19 April 2013		
Written assessment to be submitted by 29 April 2013		
Intake August 2013 (Provisional dates)		
Modules 1 to 4	Start date	End date
Induction and preparation week	05 August 2013	09 August 2013
Module 1	12 August 2013	04 October 2013
Module 2	07 October 2013	05 December 2013
Module 3	09 December 2013	14 February 2014
Module 4	17 February 2014	18 April 2014
Modules 5 to 7 (CA5/CA6/Saoghal na Gàidhlig 1)		
Module 5	02 September 2013	15 November 2013
Module 6	18 November 2013	24 January 2014
Module 7	3 February 2014	9 May 2014

SECTION 3 – Aims and Learning Outcomes

3.1 Introduction

An Cùrsa Adhartais offers students the opportunity to further develop their communicative competence in Gaelic by distance-learning.

3.2 Aims of the Course

An Cùrsa Adhartais aims through supported distance-learning to enable students to develop a level of oral fluency and grammatical literacy which will qualify them to enter Level SCQF 8 of the GRSS degree programmes (subject to certain conditions as outlined in 4.3) or to gain employment in the Gaelic sector. The level of communicative competency aimed at applies both to extemporised and prepared communication, including real-life conversations, passages suitable for radio or television broadcast and written work employing, where appropriate, higher language registers for use in formal discourse.

The specific aims of the Course are to:

- allow students to develop confidence and accuracy in all aspects of communication skills in Gaelic;
- to produce students who have oral and written fluency in Gaelic, to a level whereby they are able to cope with course delivery beyond Level 7 SCQF through the medium of Gaelic;
- provide a basis for further learning or advancement to a higher qualification;
- provide students with a route to Gaelic–language related employment or advancement in employment.

3.3 Intended Learning Outcomes of the Course

The specific learning outcomes of *An Cùrsa Adhartais* are:

1. to communicate effectively with users of Gaelic using appropriate registers and vocabulary to an advanced level (where appropriate);
2. to respond to stimuli on a variety of advanced Gaelic source materials;
3. to recognise and be able to select an increasingly sophisticated range of language structures, vocabulary and registers;
4. to demonstrate enhanced pronunciation skills;
5. to demonstrate understanding of a range of advanced Gaelic source materials including both formal and informal registers;
6. to be able to select suitable language registers in order to produce formal written or oral communication in a professional or business style;
7. to demonstrate a basic knowledge and understanding of how the Highlands and Islands emerged as a geographically and culturally distinct region of Scotland
8. to demonstrate an understanding of Gaelic in Scottish society.

Please see details of the specific learning outcomes for each of the modules in Appendix 1.

SECTION 4 – Learning and Assessment

4.1 Teaching, learning and assessment methodologies

The teaching, learning and assessment strategies adopted are appropriate to the requirements of the modules being studied.

A variety of teaching and learning strategies, appropriate to the course aims, the intended learning outcomes of the individual modules and the modes of delivery, will be utilised.

4.1.1 The Language Modules *(See also Appendix 2 for an analysis of how to maximise learning.)*

The language modules take a linguistic structure approach, with an emphasis on introducing new structures or their variants in each lesson while reinforcing known ones. Topics are utilised primarily to illustrate the structures themselves. The student's main means of engaging with the course is through the **workpack and recorded materials** in home-study. These can be accessed online via the Blackboard learning environment, although the course recommends downloading and copying to increase use and contact time.

In all modules the lesson content takes the form of a storyline, complete with characters and plot, which may be played out as a series of dialogues or monologues. Storylines usually have a beginning middle and end within a single module, and in any particular module they may vary from several distinct themes to one which lasts the duration of the module. In the case of modules CA1 and CA2 a single storyline continues throughout the entire length of both modules.

The storyline, whatever its length, is essentially a vehicle to create a context in which a grammatical scheme, which runs through the course from beginning to end, can be applied. Individual language points are planned, scripted and usually introduced in such a way as to begin and end within the boundaries of each module. In that sense, the grammar 'storyline' often follows the main storyline. Module CA1, for example, is the module where the hall committee is planning the events of the cèilidh, and that scenario is played out over the five lessons contained within the module. Running in parallel with that is the story of the two main grammatical themes of the module: the future tense of regular verbs and inverted infinitive constructions. These are introduced, explained and all their variants studied within the plotlines of the five lessons.

Each module is supported by **hours of recorded material**. The drama extract which forms the basis of each lesson is recorded in multiple versions, for example with the text chopped up phrase by phrase, then line by line, for **listen-and-repeat work**. These drills are supplemented by **creative oral exercises** which allow students to supply lines of dialogue in realistic passages of speech with voice prompts.

Underpinning it all is the voice of the narrator who takes the student through every stage of these oral activities. Every drill or thinking exercises is carefully explained, set up and tried out in examples, then again for real, the narrator issuing a continuous stream of instruction (**entirely in Gaelic** in the later modules). In all, this could add up to hours of listening for each module. The student is continuously directed back and forth between the various media (from the soundfile to the workpack, where analysis and comprehension of the new language can be done through reading and written exercises). In all, it is not dissimilar to the experience of being in the language classroom, the voice of the narrator a guide to every soundfile activity that a student might engage in. The narrator is in many ways a surrogate tutor during the days without classes until the student can take part in the weekly tutor-led telephone tutorial in the company of other learners.

This key design feature of An Cùrsa Adhartais ties in with a core course philosophy which is to maximise the student's contact time with the target-language and, in so doing, to normalise the target-language and make it the medium through which the student can function while learning. An Cùrsa Adhartais does this on a scale which is likely to be uncommon, if it is there at all, in any other course of its kind by virtue of the volume of recorded material available for self-directed and self-assessed study.

The learning process for the language modules is supported through **weekly telephone tutorials** where the course philosophy outlined above can be applied in a realistic and social setting. In the language tutorials students are offered real-time conversation practice with other students under the guidance of a tutor. A class plan allows students to prepare for the lesson. In addition to grammar exercise for groups to

do based on questions with predicted or set answers, students will be asked to think up questions of their own based on these same structures. In so doing they combine their skills in **creative language production** when planning the questions and their **listening and speaking skills** when responding to the questions and answers given by others. Another typical phoneclass activity which has similar outcomes is to prepare a short monologue based on a scenario described in the text which is the basis of that week's lesson, or on an idiomatic expression which turns up in it. The monologue will be delivered in class and that will trigger a **spontaneous question and answer session** to which the other listeners will contribute. Furthermore, being a drama extract, the text which forms the weekly lesson provides an ideal reading exercise for a group of students. Each will take the part of a separate character and they become the cast of a radio play. That activity, as well as being a useful device for **checking pronunciation, delivery and reading skills** generally in an interesting and uncontrived context, will usually provide launching points to get the conversation started. Oral extempore conversation, **developing the student's communicative language skills**, is considered by far the most important outcome of the weekly tutorial.

4.1.2 The Subject Module

Module 7, *Saoghal na Gàidhlig 1*, will be taught through the medium of Gaelic. Learning materials are provided online and will be complemented by twice-weekly telephone tutorials and online discussion fora.

Within *Saoghal na Gàidhlig 1* learning is presented under three main themes with online discussion relating to Themes 1-2. For Theme 3 (the area study) the focus will be on individual research to produce a detailed inter-disciplinary study. Students located out-with the Highlands and Islands will be provided with material relating to a specific area of the Gaidhealtachd in order to enable them to undertake this study. Highlands and Islands students may select this or another area of their choice.

4.2 Assessment arrangements

Module descriptors provide information on the individual assessments for each module.

4.2.1 The Language Modules

Students are assessed in the four language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. Diagnostic and formative assessment take place on an on-going basis throughout each module, both written and oral. This happens mainly through the self-assessing exercises, both oral and written, contained within the main course self-study materials and informally during the weekly tutor-led telephone tutorial.

Summative assessment takes place at the end of each module, with internal and external moderation processes in place to ensure quality control. There is both an oral and written component to each end of module assessment.

The written assessment is in each case a grammar paper most of which is made up of questions based on the key language points introduced in the module. There is a degree of ongoing assessment in that the background texts and contexts for each question may be illustrated by language points from previous modules. Each assessment will also include one essay question which requires that students produce a passage of continuous prose, the theme of which will tie in with important grammatical structures from the module. In a module which deals, for example, with the future tense of verbs, the assessment may ask that a dialogue be produced in writing based on friends planning for an event together, such as a holiday or a visit to a restaurant.

The oral assessments require that students demonstrate a range of speaking skills. These vary from module to module and fall into two broad categories: prepared and unprepared. There is an alternating pattern throughout the course of prepared and unprepared assessments, and an increasingly challenging set of skills are assessed as the student moves up through the modules.

The first language module, for example, has a prepared reading exercise to assess mainly pronunciation and delivery. Mid way through the course the student is being asked to prepare a commentary, the style of which will be dominated by perfect tense structures, on an important historical event. The assessment set in the final module is a news item described in two language registers: one formal, suitable for professional broadcast; one informal in a style appropriate for delivery to a familiar audience.

The unprepared assessments include an oral extempore conversation between two students based on a topic given out at the moment the assessment begins. This happens in two separate modules at different points in the course. The other unprepared assessment is a monologue, again unrehearsed and in response to a topic unknown before the assessment.

4.2.2 The Subject Module

There will be two assessment elements for *Saoghal na Gàidhlig 1*. 60% of the assessment element will be allocated to the individual written project (the area study) and its oral presentation. Short essay questions from a list of questions from Themes 1-2 to be completed in the students' own time will make up the remaining 40%.

The dates for submission of assessments are published before the start of the course, incorporated within the course timetable. Each assessment will be marked by the students' allocated telephone tutors and a sample of the papers sent to the internal and external moderator for moderation, as per the G&RSS regulations.

The pass mark for the end of module assessments is 40% and four attempts are allowed in all, but two only in any academic session. In the event of a fail, a student may continue to study the next module but will be ineligible to sit the assessment for that module until they have passed the re-sit for the previous one. The course will provide for a re-sit opportunity within that timeframe.

Students who fail to submit assessments by the prescribed date without good cause, as prescribed by regulations 17 and 18 of the UHI Assessment Regulations, <http://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/about-uhi/governance/policies-and-regulations/regulations/asqr-2012-13/academic-standards-and-quality-regulations-2012#tab1> will normally be penalised by the deduction of a percentage of their mark.

Extensions may be granted if evidence of mitigating circumstances is presented which is deemed acceptable by the Module Leader. Details of procedures with regard to these can be found within the UHI Academic Standards and Procedures Section H at <http://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/about-uhi/governance/policies-and-regulations/regulations/asqr-2012-13/academic-standards-and-quality-regulations-2012#tab1>

On successful completion of each module, students will attain 15 credit points at SCQF Level 7 (modules CA1–CA4) and 20 points (modules CA5/CA6/*Saoghal na Gàidhlig 1*). Under normal circumstances, students will be required to start at language Module CA1 and work through to subject module *Saoghal na Gàidhlig 1* (CA7).

On successful completion of *An Cùrsa Adhartais*, students will have accumulated 120 credit points and gained a Certificate of Higher Education. Students will then be qualified to gain access to Level 8 SCQF modules of the *Gaelic & Related Studies* degree. In addition, under the GRSS specific regulations with regard to progression, they will normally also be required to attain an average of 50% in their assessments for Modules CA5-CA7.

UHI/G&RSS Committee will make every effort to deliver more of the content of the Gaelic degrees by remote delivery. Having obtained a degree, students may wish to progress to postgraduate study with the *Master of Arts/Postgraduate Degree in Material Culture and the Environment* offered through distance-learning by Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, or other postgraduate opportunities with UHI or other higher-education establishments.

4.3 Assessment - Course regulations with regard to progression and re-sits

A distinct features of *An Cùrsa Adhartais* is the sequential delivery of modules. Modules are introduced one at a time and each is a pre-requisite for the one which follows. *An Cùrsa Adhartais* is essentially a foundation language course whose subject module doesn't appear in the curriculum until the six language modules have been completed. Being a grammar based course, each module introduces some new language points and reinforces important points from previous modules. There is one tutorial a week and it deals with the particular module being studied at any one time. By this linear approach, students develop their language skills in a building-block formation through the six language modules to prepare them for the subject module at the end of the course. At Level 8 (Year Two of a Degree programme) with language competence at a suitable level, they can continue with the more conventional method of studying several modules at one time through the medium of that language.

There is a feature of this arrangement which sets the course apart and that is its impact on assessment. As each module is a pre-requisite for the one which follows, it means that students must pass each assessment before being allowed to sit the next. They aren't able to carry a fail to the end of session re-

sit programme which is the norm in other courses. *An Cùrsa Adhartais* language modules have an eight or nine week duration and there is usually no break between them. The approach to re-sits is as follows:

- assessments are distributed at the end of each module and handed in in the second week of the next;
- the team of tutors marks and reports the marks to the module leader at around week three or four, and internal verification begins;
- should a student require to re-sit the assessment, the assessment is sent out immediately and a deadline set, equivalent to the first sit, of about ten days (week 5/6);
- the re-sit will be marked and cross-marked and the result known before the assessment point of the module running, which will usually be in the final week of the module (week 8 or 9);
- should a student fail the re-sit they are withdrawn by default from the course, having had the two attempts at passing a module permitted under UHI assessment regulations for any one academic session.

Over the years the course team have observed that a fail grade due to a poor mark is a relatively rare occurrence. Non-submission of work is a far more common cause. Furthermore, failure due to non-submission tends to have the same root causes as those attributed to voluntary withdrawals, which are that events in other areas of students' lives have begun to affect their ability to devote the necessary time to study.

The unusual circumstances described above with regard to re-sits are an unavoidable outcome of the Course's module delivery pattern. Rather than being a structural handicap, however, this arrangement has proved to be an effective instrument in indicating to students who are experiencing difficulty for one reason or another where a **suitable exit point** might be. Most view it as a warning shot which allows them to withdraw and consolidate their language skills before re-joining (as many do) in a later run of the course. In this the course has an advantage over its sister course *An Cùrsa Comais*, delivered face to face via the usual multi-module format, where students who are beginning to struggle or fall behind may persevere to the end of an academic session, and to the assessment stage, ultimately to be unsuccessful in several modules. There are attendant issues of de-motivation and sense of failure which can lead to a longer recovery period before, for example, re-entering a learning programme.

4.4 Quality Assurance and Evaluation

The staff involved in the delivery, assessment and management of the Course seek to achieve the highest quality in all academic provision and services, and through a process of systematic review seek to achieve quality improvement in the courses and academic services provided to all its clients.

For all courses, end of module evaluations will be conducted and the student comments included within the annual Course report.

SECTION 5 – Resources and Student Support

5.1 Support for students and their learning

Before the course begins students are asked to:

- complete the UHI Admission/Registration Form;
- pay the fees for the modules delivered in the year for which they are registered.

Students will receive:

- a time-table;
- a College Gàidhlig contract. Students should sign and return one copy to the College and keep a copy for their reference;
- passwords for accessing online materials;
- instructions for accessing the Virtual Learning environment (Blackboard);
- CDs for the language modules if they have been requested and paid for.

Before the course starts students will receive:

- confirmation of the time of their telephone tutorial(s)(same time each week);
- Name and e-mail address of their tutor.

Telephone tutorials for the Language Modules

Students will be with several other students and their tutor at a regular time each week chosen to suit them. Students should organise their workbooks and notebooks at least 15 minutes before the beginning of the tutorial. The tutorial will last about one hour. It is important that students are prompt and prepared in order to make most use of the time available, and to save disrupting other students. **Students should not use mobile phones unless they can be sure that the connection will be clear and uninterrupted.** Telephone tutorial materials provided online will be used for the phone tutorials.

Weekend schools *(See Appendix 2 for analysis of weekend schools and their benefits for learning)*

One weekend school will be offered at SMO for every two language modules. Although attendance is not mandatory, it is recommended. The weekend school presents a good opportunity to spend some time in a Gaelic environment along with other students at the same level. Some on-campus accommodation is usually available at the College.

There are no tuition fees payable for the weekend schools but students are required to pay for meals, accommodation and travel.

Registered students can book weekend schools through the course administrative staff.

Telephone tutors for the language modules will:

- lead the telephone tutorials;
- mark assessments and provide feedback;
- answer questions relating to grammar and other language issues;
- give support for the duration of the language and subject modules.

Telephone/online tutors for the subject module will:

- lead the telephone tutorials and online discussion fora;
- mark assessments and provide feedback;
- answer questions relating to the module content;
- give support for the duration of the relevant subject module.

Administrative staff will support students by:

- registering students and handling fees
- organising Induction Week
- organising telephone tutorials
- organising weekend schools
- recording changes of contact details
- offering advice if students have problems downloading the workbooks, sound files or accessing online tutorials and class materials

Students are responsible for:

- undertaking the tasks set out in Online Induction Week
- informing tutors if they are having problems with course work
- informing the College of change of address, telephone number, e-mail etc.
- informing tutors and the College if they are ill or unable to attend telephone or online tutorials
- calling at the relevant times for their telephone tutorial
- attending online tutorials
- responding promptly to communication from SMO
- handing in assessments on time

Student Support Services

Students will be allocated a student adviser /Personal Academic Tutors for matters relating to learning, teaching and personal development.

Normally the Student Adviser/Personal Academic Tutor role includes:

- Responding to student study queries and acting as a first point of contact on other issues such as ICT access, referring students to appropriate specialist information/help/support.
- Providing a minimum of at least one advisory session per student each semester. For full-time students, this is in addition to an introductory meeting in the first semester.
- Reviewing academic progress.
- Advising on matters relating to the programme, including the selection of options.
- Assisting in the production and maintenance of a Personal Development Plan. (See Section 1.9)
- Facilitating appropriate contact between students and programme leaders.
- Reporting academic issues raised by learners to the appropriate programme committee.

If students have difficulties which affect attendance at telephone or online tutorials or the return of their assessments, or in accessing course materials they should speak to the Senior Administrator.

5.2 Induction and Preparation Week

The Induction and Preparation Week will give students the opportunity to ensure that they are familiar with practical and technical aspects of the course. It will also enable them to network with other students. Prior to Induction Week taking place the week beginning **Monday 6 August 2012**, students should read the Student Handbook.

Induction Week will consist of the completion of a few tasks, the instructions for which will be available on the Virtual Learning Environment Discussion Board. Students will be expected to start their coursework to ensure they are prepared for their first telephone tutorial.

More details about Induction and Preparation Week will be sent to students after they have been accepted on the course.

5.3 Students with additional support needs

At the beginning of the course students with disabilities and additional support needs should complete a Disclosure of Disability Form to ensure that they receive appropriate support during their period of study at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. Under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Part 4, the College is required: to treat students with disabilities no less favourably than other students and where necessary to make reasonable adjustments to policies, practices and procedures in order to achieve this.

The following categories are listed on the Student Enrolment Form:

- A. No disability
- B. Social/ Communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome other autistic spectrum disorder
- C. Blind/ Serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses
- D. Deaf/ Serious hearing impairment
- E. Long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic hear disease, or epilepsy
- F. Mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder
- G. Specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, or AD(H)D
- H. Physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using my arms or using a wheelchair or crutches
- I. Disability, impairment or medical condition not listed above

- J. Two or more impairments and/or disabling medical conditions
- R. Information refused
Personal care support
I carry medicines which are time critical in their application (e.g. Epi-pen)

Depending on the nature of the disability, individuals will be invited to discuss with the Student Services Adviser how best to support their needs.

5.4 Library and Learning Resources

The College has an extensive lending library and use can be made of inter-library loan arrangements.

5.5 Financial assistance

The College will provide students with guidance on possible sources of finance and scholarships for post-graduate study.

Part-time UK and EU students may qualify for financial assistance, dependent on financial circumstances.

5.6 Student provided resources

Students will be required to have access to the following:

- **Windows PC** and printer with CD-Rom, speakers and Sound Card;
- Internet access to web and e-mail facilities;
- Access to telephone for phone tutorials;
- Headset with microphone attached to record oral assessments.

Hard copies of the workbooks and CDs for the language modules can be purchased from the College at an additional cost. All students registered with UHI will have a GroupWise e-mail account. Students studying out with the UHI network may gain access to this facility through web-mail.

E-mail and discussion board facilities will be provided through a Virtual Learning Environment.

Appendix 1

Learning Outcomes for the Modules

Module CA1

On completion of this module, students should be able to:

- use the future tense of regular verbs and their variant forms;
- use inverted infinitive structures involving direct objects;
- use the preposition 'ann' with possessive objectives to form 'nam/nad' structures in non-abstract contexts;
- select and use new vocabulary to illustrate structures and reinforce structures introduced earlier in the course.

Module CA2

On completion of this module, students should be able to:

- use the future tense of irregular verbs and their variant forms;
- use personal pronouns in the context of inverted infinitive structures;
- use 'nam/nad' structures in an abstract context and in relation to professions;
- select and use new vocabulary to illustrate structures and reinforce structures introduced earlier in the course.

Module CA3

On completion of this module, students should be able to:

- use the perfect tense to recall past events;
- use the pluperfect and future perfect tense;
- to express abilities or compulsion and the various ways to say 'because';
- use past participles of a verb;
- understand language structures with regard to counting people;
- understand and use a range of compound prepositions combined with personal pronouns;
- select and use new vocabulary to illustrate structures and reinforce structures introduced earlier in the course.

Module CA4

On completion of this module, students should be able to:

- use the conditional tense of the verb 'to be' and its variant forms;
- use the conditional tense of regular verbs and their variant forms;
- use the conditional tense of two irregular verbs and their variant forms;
- to understand and use the emphatic structure: 'S ann/Chan ann;
- use prepositions as objects in question formats of the type Cò leis/Cò ris, etc;
- select and use new vocabulary to illustrate structures and reinforce structures introduced earlier in the course.

Module CA5

On completion of this module, students should be able to:

- understand and use the conditional tense of the most common irregular verbs;
- express imminent events using the 'gu bhith' structure;
- understand and use subordinating conjunctions;
- select formal registers using impersonal passive forms of the verb 'to be', such as: *Thathar/Bhathar*, etc;
- link relative clauses based on prepositional phrases such as: *air a bheil/ris am bi*, etc;
- express habitual events using the form '*B' àbhaist*';
- select formal registers using the passive voice with 'gam/gad' forms;
- select and use new vocabulary to illustrate structures and reinforce structures introduced earlier in the course.

Appendix 1 (contd)

Module CA6

On completion of this module, students should be able to:

- express finite tenses in their passive forms, based on the verb *bi* (to be) in all its tenses and variant forms, e.g. *Tha/Bha X air a dhèanamh*.
- use the above structures with personal pronouns, e.g. *Bha e/i air a dhèanamh/dèanamh*.
- express finite tenses in their passive forms, based on the verb *rach/theirig* (to go) in all its tenses and variant forms, e.g. *Chaidh/Thèid X air a dhèanamh*.
- use the above structures with personal pronouns, e.g. *Chaidh/Thèid a dhèanamh/dèanamh*.
- select and use new vocabulary to illustrate structures and reinforce structures introduced earlier in the course.

Module CA7: *Saoghal na Gàidhlig 1*

On completion of this module, students should be able to:

- identify and explain the main historical, social, cultural and economic differences between various areas of the Highlands and Islands;
- identify the main factors, including the historical, geological, geographic and environmental, which have shaped the Highlands and Islands;
- identify the role of the main social, educational, political and economic institutions within the contemporary Highlands and Islands;
- demonstrate an awareness of political, social, environmental and economic issues which are of central importance to the Highlands and Islands today;
- demonstrate an understanding of those influences which contribute to maintaining and generating a sense of identity and place within the Highlands and Islands;
- apply the knowledge and understanding gained from the module to the selection and undertaking of a project on some aspect of a local community;
- demonstrate that their Gaelic vocabulary extends to the requirements of this module regarding terminology and concepts;
- demonstrate that they have the requisite oral communication skills in Gaelic to discuss current issues within the Highlands and Islands;
- demonstrate that their language capabilities in Gaelic are sufficient to cope with content delivered through the medium of Gaelic.

Appendix 2

Responsibilities of the learner/Expected hours of study

This part-time language course requires a reasonable commitment, in terms of time spent studying, if one is to get the most out of it. It isn't easy to advise on the issue of study time as needs will vary from one individual to another, but one area in which the course can have some influence is in providing opportunities and resources for study. The *Cùrsa Adhartais* learning materials have been designed in such a way as to lend themselves to reasonably long periods of use. A student could, plausibly, spend upwards of ten hours study-time a week if one were to add up the time spent on the main course materials, on attending the telephone tutorials and on doing the preparation work for that and the reflective and follow up work afterwards.

The following are suggestions that a serious student should consider with a view to making the best use of the Course learning resources, and through those to develop their language skills to the highest possible level, given the restrictions under which a distance-learning course of its type will be operating.

A particular challenge for students on *An Cùrsa Adhartais* will be that language is essentially a practical discipline and in many ways a hard thing to study alone. In this it is unlike subjects such as history, for example, which are mainly concerned, in non tutorial time, with independent self-directed study. For a language student the ideal learning environment is to be with other learners in a social setting, as would be the case if they were involved with a participative sport such as badminton or football. The key point is that, like those sports, not only is a communal atmosphere better suited to practice, a student can only fully develop communicative skills - the most important outcome of language learning - in a setting where there are others to communicate with.

In that context the *Cùrsa Adhartais* isn't a perfect substitute for being face to face with a group of students in a class led by a tutor, in spite of the role of the ubiquitous narrator whose voice, as described in section 7e of this document, guides the student through a variety of tasks and exercises contained in the **recorded materials**. Nevertheless, these materials are designed so as to allow students to get the very most out of solitary home-study. While the main aim of each lesson is to introduce new language points in the storyline for the purpose of analysing, understanding and trying these out in the written exercises of the workpack, it could be argued that the recorded work for listening and oral practice has an equal bearing on developing competence. A learner will emerge as a fully confident speaker when they have the pronunciation and intonation to match their understanding of grammar and ability to put good sentences together. Producing speech which fails to deliver for its oral weaknesses can cause a learner the same sense of disappointment as sentences which fall apart due to poor grammar. The **listen and repeat drills**, in particular, could be revisited time and again by a conscientious student keen on improving pronunciation and delivery.

Furthermore, the texts are scripted in such a way (it is hoped) as to make them intrinsically interesting, and to stand alone as passages of speech (whether read or heard) which might stand repeated listening. In the sound drills these texts are broken up into fragments - phrase by phrase first, for work on pronunciation of sounds within words, then as whole lines, to practise intonation - an accent, even - and delivery. Although the course doesn't suggest the following as a specific learning activity, it would seem a plausible extension of these oral exercises that whole passages of the drama extracts which form the text could be learned by rote, much as an actor would learn lines for a play. A student would then effectively be committing large portions of the course itself to memory, inasmuch as the texts have all the key language structures woven into them.

Having those auditory resources to hand, students of *An Cùrsa Adhartais* are, in some respects, at an advantage in comparison to their face to face counterparts in conventional classes where support of that kind is rarely available. In the times between classes students tend to be left to their own devices with regard to remembering how new words are sounded.

Furthermore the **creative oral exercises**, where the speaker supplies words or lines of dialogue in response to a voice prompt, offer another means of practising and developing listening and speaking skills - a semi-realistic communication activity, this time, and a slightly more elaborate alternative to the parrot-work of the pronunciation drills described above. The voice on the recording may not be as interactive as a fellow learner sitting in front of them would be but these exercises aren't completely devoid of real-life context.

Appendix 2 (contd)

They are for the most part scripted as mini-dialogues running to several lines, where the student has to supply some of the lines. The success of the short conversation depends on the student having chosen the correct phrase or language structure in each line so that the response the voice will deliver a moment later sounds right. Each exercise is based on **self-assessment** in that, having gone through it once a second version is normally played, again allowing the student to participate. This time the missing line is spoken each time too, just after the student has delivered it. Needless to say these exercises can be done repeatedly over time, unlike exercises in the conventional language classroom which will tend to be featured for one lesson before the tutor moves on perhaps to a new level.

In terms of a formal commitment to study, the only timetabled event is the weekly **telephone tutorial**. The learning benefits of full and active participation in these classes are incalculable in that, for most students, living in areas where Gaelic is not present as a community language, this will be the only opportunity to interact with other speakers (albeit learners at their own level) in meaningful discourse. As set out in section 4.1.1 of this document, the class plan is scripted in such a way as to create conditions for a good deal of oral extempore conversation, while allowing for some time to be spent on remediation and analysis. Again the student will maximise the learning opportunity by coming into this weekly class well prepared. The class plan itself forms a part of the core course materials and can be downloaded along with the main workpack and recorded soundfiles from the Blackboard site.

An option for students during the period of the course when the language modules run is to attend a **weekend school** once in each semester. The module delivery calendar is such that they could come to three of these during the two year run of the course. The general aim of the weekend schools is to bring students together in a face to face classroom setting to offer the benefits of that form of learning - something which is otherwise not available on this course. The teaching plan will concentrate on the part of the syllabus currently being studied and tutors will adopt methodologies for target-language interaction. A typical learning activity would be a collaborative short project based on group or pair work, the specific language aims being to expand vocabulary. In a standard sense this will happen as students find the new words and expressions needed to illustrate the finished product itself - a short drama, perhaps, or a presentation, or a proposal to a group. A key outcome of this type of strategy, however, is that language skills are also developed in a covert and more natural sense as students in pairs or small groups discuss, plan and present a piece of work together. The social setting has been engineered in such a way as to bring a group together who will function and communicate with one another in the language they are learning. Over the years students attending these schools have observed that Gaelic was as far as possible the language of the whole experience and that this was the most valuable thing they took from the weekend. Some said it was the moment when they began to see themselves as 'Gaelic speakers' rather than just 'Gaelic learners'.