

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Academic Standards Committee – 20 March 2020

Periodic Subject Review: Responses to the Recommendations arising from the Review of Celtic & Gaelic held on 22 February 2019

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Celtic & Gaelic wish to thank the Periodic Subject Review Panel for the thorough and detailed report into the Review of Celtic & Gaelic which was held on 22nd February 2019. Celtic & Gaelic welcome the commendations given in the report and will endeavour to continue and enhance the good practice which has been highlighted in the report.

The Subject Area is also grateful to the review panel for the recommendations highlighted. The following is an update on the progress of those recommendations:

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made to support the Celtic and Gaelic Subject Area in its reflection and to enhance provision in relation to teaching, learning and assessment. The recommendations have been cross-referenced to the paragraphs in the text of the report to which they refer and are **grouped together** by the areas for improvement/enhancement and are **ranked in order of priority within each section**.

Research-led Teaching

Recommendation 1

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Head of Subject liaise with the Dean of Research in the College of Arts, to examine ways in which the Subject can raise greater awareness of staff research interests among all students undertaking its programmes and thus enhance their learning experience. *[Paragraph 5.1]*

For the attention of: Head of Subject.

For the information of: Dean of Research, College of Arts

Response:

As a result of this recommendation, in discussion with the Dean of Research, in The College of Arts, Celtic & Gaelic have put in place a number of initiatives. These are as follows:

- The Junior Honours, Honours induction session included a session on the research interests and ongoing projects of staff - as well as raising awareness of the research interests of staff it also aimed at focusing students on a dissertation research topic based on some of the research interests of staff. This will be incorporated into all Honours induction sessions going forward.
- The Senior Honours, Honours induction session included a session on the research interests and ongoing projects of staff - as well as raising awareness of the research interests of staff it also aimed at focusing students on possible PG studies and on some of the broad subjects which could be a basis for PG study. This will be

incorporated into all Honours induction sessions going forward and the throughput of students from Hons to PG research will be monitored.

- Celtic & Gaelic will use one of the scheduled class time hours to expose Level 1 & 2 course students to the research culture within the subject area and to prime students for Honours studies in Celtic and Gaelic. This will be aimed at widening the students' appreciation of the breadth of subjects covered by Celtic & Gaelic. We envisage that this will have an impact not only on the awareness of students of staff research interests but that it could also have a positive impact on student retention from Level 1 to Level 2 and from Level 2 to Hons. Student retention in relation to this development will be monitored to assess any impact on student throughput. Feedback will be sought from students at Staff Student Liaison meetings on their experience of
- We will raise awareness of staff research presentations at the Centre for Scottish and Celtic Studies and at other relevant organisations e.g. Comunn Gàidhlig Ghlaschu, Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig at which staff members are active participants and also continue to invite and encourage students to research events in Celtic & Gaelic e.g. seminars and the annual Professor Angus Matheson Memorial Lecture.
- Celtic and Gaelic staff will continue to encourage students to attend informal research 'Cagainn is Cnuasaich' sessions. 'Cagainn is Cnuasaich' seeks to enhance the quality of Celtic and Gaelic publications by engaging staff and students in informal pre-publication peer-review discussions.

Use of Alumni in Marketing

Recommendation 2

The Review Panel was aware that a key component of the University's new Gaelic Language Plan focused specifically on recruitment and also that the Subject was developing a recruitment strategy that would increase its profile in areas outwith its traditional recruitment pool. The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject takes this opportunity to incorporate within its recruitment strategy a greater emphasis on the use of alumni in its publicity and recruitment efforts. *[Paragraph 6.1]*

For the attention of: Head of Subject

Response:

Celtic & Gaelic welcomes this recommendation. Celtic and Gaelic and UofG Gaelic are this academic year (2019/20) extensively using alumni in promotional material as a result of the 10 year anniversary of the residency scheme Taigh na Gàidhlig. A series of videos of alumni speaking in Gaelic about their years at Glasgow are now available on social media and a roadshow will take place in June 2020 with alumni returning to secondary schools in their own local areas to promote both the scheme and their studies at the University. Most of the alumni involved in this initiative will be graduates of Celtic and Gaelic and this presents an opportunity to attract students to study Gaelic but also to become involved in UofG Gaelic activities.

Furthermore, Celtic and Gaelic staff members will be members of the short-term working group to develop and implement a collaborative student recruitment strategy to promote Gaelic opportunities at the University. This STWG will be spearheaded by Gaelic Development Manager. The Celtic & Gaelic Head of Subject has also been co-opted as a board member of Comann Luchd-teagaisg Àrd-Sgoile (CLAS)/The Association of Gaelic

Secondary Teachers with a specific focus on developing links with the schools sector for promoting progression opportunities from school to studying Gaelic HE level. The Subject Area will also host a one-day conference of Gaelic Secondary Teachers in June 2020.

In collaboration with UofG Gàidhlig, Celtic and Gaelic are now involved in an annual schools event with Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu which offers secondary school pupils the opportunity to experience a day in the life of the University through the medium of Gaelic. This event has proved extremely popular and includes a taster of Celtic and Gaelic as a subject area. Building on the success of this event with Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu in 2018 & 2019, Gaelic pupils in the surrounding areas of Glasgow will be invited to participate in a similar experience scheduled for April 2020.

Celtic and Gaelic continues to incorporate alumni in its social media output. The subject area regularly highlights alumni successes and uses this to highlight the opportunities and successes gained by studying a Celtic and Gaelic degree at The University of Glasgow.

Marketing of Gaelic Studies with Programmes Offered by the School of Modern Languages and Cultures

Recommendation 3

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject gives consideration to marketing its Gaelic Studies programme together with programmes offered by the School of Modern Languages and Cultures, in order to raise awareness of the programme and maximise exposure to potential applicants with a language interest. The Subject should develop its recruitment strategy in liaison with External Relations. [Paragraph 6.1.3]

For the attention of: Heads of Subject; School of Modern Languages and Cultures; and External Relations

Response - Celtic and Gaelic:

Celtic & Gaelic are keen to develop closer links with the School of Modern Languages and Cultures (SMLC) in a wide range of areas whilst recognising that Celtic & Gaelic is within the School of Humanities and has close interdisciplinary links to a range of other subjects e.g History, Archaeology. Celtic & Gaelic were happy to consider the marketing of Gaelic Studies programmes together with programmes offered by SMLC, however SMLC felt that it was not appropriate for their needs to market the courses/programmes together. However, Celtic & Gaelic and SMLC have developed the following links in the period since the review:

- (a) the development of a Gaelic section cohort for the SMLC Honours option, *Introduction to Translation Studies*. This is an Honours course offered by SMLC which is available to Celtic & Gaelic Hons students. The core lecture element of the course is taught by SMLC staff and the seminars are taught by Celtic & Gaelic staff. The 2019/20 session is the first time that the course has run and it has been an extremely positive experience for staff and students. The development of the course materials has been done in conjunction between C&G staff following advice and guidance from SMLC staff.
- (b) An SMLC staff member was invited to be a key note speaker at a one-day conference organised by UofG Gaelic with input in planning by Celtic & Gaelic staff members. *An Ath Cheum: Gaelic in a global and Digital Age* was held in October 2019 and many

C&G students and staff were in attendance at the conference and further links were developed with SMLC staff and PG students.

- (c) A Celtic & Gaelic staff member has continued to develop and enhance links with SMLC by lecturing on the Comparative Literature 1A: Heroic Men course.

Response – School of Modern Languages and Cultures:

This recommendation was discussed at the School Executive Committee on 4 September 2019. It was agreed that the matter should be raised at the next Language Strategy Group meeting, as this Group aims to coordinate the University's language provision with a view to informing students of courses on offer from all providers (SMLC degree courses, International Mobility courses, Short Courses).

Review of Gaelic Language Content in Years 1 and 2

Recommendation 4

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Subject review the Gaelic language content of Years 1 and 2, to take account of the changing student demographic and to ensure that content is appropriate and up to date. Full consultation with students should be central to informing developments in this area. *[Paragraph 7.1]*

For the attention of: Head of Subject

Response:

Celtic and Gaelic welcomes this recommendation and notes that a number of initiatives have been implemented to fulfill this recommendation. After consultation with students we have changed some of the assessment in 2019/20 for Gaelic 1 Advanced and Gaelic 2 Advanced, Gaelic 1 Intermediate and Gaelic 2 Intermediate courses. Phonetics and Sociolinguistics, which were previously assessed components in the Gaelic 2 Advanced course have been replaced with an Applied Linguistics component. Student feedback on this change has been positive but the impact of this change will be monitored in the coming sessions. Gaelic 1 Advanced students will be introduced to Gaelic Drama as part of their 1st year Literature component. A presentation and write-up replaces an essay for that element of the course. Furthermore, a new Hons course, *An Dealbh-Chluich agus a' Ghàidhlig bho 1790 (Gaelic Drama from 1790)*, has been delivered for the first time in the 2019/20 session and the introduction to Gaelic drama at Level 1 is an important addition to the curriculum. All these changes have been implemented after full student consultation and staff-student liaison committee meetings and course evaluation forms will be used to monitor the success of these changes.

Recommendation 5

Technology-Enhanced Learning and Teaching

Recommendation 5

The Review Panel **recommends** that IT Services, in consultation with the Heads of Celtic and Gaelic, and the School of Humanities, arranges to install Microsoft Office Scottish Gaelic spell-check language support software on all appropriate student-use university computers, including laptops available to students for loan. *[Paragraph 7.3]*

For the attention of: Head of IT Services; Heads of Celtic and Gaelic, and the School of Humanities

Response:

Celtic & Gaelic welcome this recommendation. The Microsoft Office Scottish Gaelic spell-check has now been installed and is available on CSCE (Common Student Computing Environment which is the lab software installed on most student lab machines, for example in the College of Arts and in the library covering 3000 of the 3800 available machines on campus for students). CSCE is also part of the teaching space builds available on machines in presentation spaces. Most exams use the CSCE build on the machines for students, so most of the machines that are co-opted for exams have access to this spell checker.

The Gaelic spell-checker is being added currently to the VDI builds (the laptop service used by students in the library), and our staff build meaning it will be part of all of our standard builds moving forward. This will remain the case in future builds. IT Services asked all of the service leads to include Gaelic language support where possible on all systems.

Recommendation 6

The Review Panel **recommends** that consideration be given to recording Gaelic Language classes in order for these to be used as a teaching and study resource. Clarity should also be obtained on the entitlement of students with disabilities to have recordings of classes. *[Paragraph 7.3.1]*

**For the attention of: Head of Subject
For information: Head of Disability Service**

Response:

Celtic and Gaelic are aware that the University under the auspices of the SRC are preparing a new policy/guidelines on Lecture Recording and we await the outcome of this new policy (forthcoming 2020). The current UofG Lecture Recording Policy (last updated in October 2018) states that lectures are not recorded as standard and the policy applies to lectures and not seminars. Thus, current UofG policy notes that recordings may not be made or permission may be refused when lots of student interaction is likely to be recorded and some may not be comfortable having their voices recorded. The issue for Celtic and Gaelic, as a subject area teaching a modern spoken language, is that 'Gaelic language classes' are often seminar-style and not lecture-style teaching with every student in a particular class being asked to practice their language skills. However, while we await the outcome of the new UofG policy on this topic we have been in discussions with the Disability Service regarding

this issue. All teaching staff in the subject area have been made aware of the University's lecture recording policy and their obligation to comply with it and on the need to make reasonable adjustments in this respect for disabled students in their classes. The University's lecture policy has been uploaded to all course Moodles and this will be updated when there is an update of the University's lecture recording policy. The Disability Service have indicated that in the case of a disabled student, the appropriate reasonable adjustment would be for the student to have a note taker with them. This service has been put in place for a student this session and two note takers have been employed to attend lectures and tutorials with the student to take notes. This has worked well and if the need arises again, we will continue to work with Disability Services to provide this service.

Assessment and Feedback

Recommendation 7

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Head of the School of Humanities, in consultation with the Head of Celtic & Gaelic, liaise with the Convener of the VLE Development Board to:

- (i) establish the level of access to Moodle Quiz materials currently provided to students and staff in the Subject; and
- (ii) ensure that students in the Subject be afforded access to previous years' Moodle Quiz materials. *[Paragraph 7.4]*

For the attention of: Head of the School of Humanities
For information: Head of Subject

Response:

Celtic and Gaelic welcome this recommendation. In consultation with the Head of School of Humanities, it was agreed that a Gaelic Language Skills Moodle would be created which would be available to students on all Gaelic courses. Moodle quiz materials from a range of courses will be available on the central Moodle site. Level 1 Gaelic background lectures and related powerpoint and reading lists will also be available on the Moodle site. Access to a range of Moodle Quiz materials will also be available on this site.

Assessment and Feedback

Recommendation 8

The Review Panel **recommends**, that in order not to disadvantage those students submitting work in Gaelic, the Subject gives consideration to increasing the word count for essays submitted in the Gaelic language, in recognition that generally, it requires more words in Gaelic, as compared to English, to relate the same information. *[Paragraph 7.4.5]*

For the attention of: Head of Subject

Response:

Celtic and Gaelic welcome this recommendation and recognise that the issue of Gaelic word count is an issue that can potentially disadvantage students writing their essays in Gaelic. As

such, Celtic and Gaelic staff have agreed that essays written in Gaelic will have a 10% increase in the permitted wordcount. Therefore, for a 5,000 word essay written in English, the wordcount in Gaelic would be 5,500. This change has been agreed at a Subject Area departmental meeting.

Accommodation

Recommendation 9

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Space Management & Timetabling Team give consideration to accessibility issues in terms of the reasonableness of the distance students, and particularly students with mobility difficulties, are expected to travel between consecutive classes. *[Paragraph 8.1]*

For the attention of: Space Management and Timetabling Team

Response:

Accommodating the specific needs, including travel distances, of students with mobility difficulties is a priority in terms of timetabling and room allocations.

However, in the vast majority of cases this can only be addressed post-enrolment when the student has confirmed their course choices and built a timetable. Inevitably, this means that provisions are made reactively rather than proactively, often requiring changes to room allocations - or even to the student's timetable - to be made.

There is also a reliance on Schools to flag the issue and request a change as student enrolment data is not available to the Space Management and Timetabling Team. Improvements to the current processes and working practices, particularly in developing a more co-ordinated approach in these matters, could deliver significant benefit to the student experience.

Recommendation 10

The Review Panel **recommends** that the Head of the College of Arts, together with other relevant staff, gives consideration to providing space which supports the development of Gaelic language and helps foster a sense of community within the Subject in the plans for the new College of Arts accommodation. *[Paragraph 8.1.1]*

For the attention of: Head of the College of Arts

Response:

The College recognises the need for dedicated space to support the use of the Gaelic language, especially among though not limited to students. The College also recognises that management of Room 203 by CTT has impacted negatively on the Gaelic-speaking environment of Number 3. Access to dedicated space within Celtic & Gaelic (C&G), preferably adjacent to the Gaelic Language Initiative office, that re-enforces language skills and supports confidence of speakers is of particular importance given the launch next session of the innovative Gaelic Immersion Year funded by the SFC.

Equally, the College is keenly aware of the severe space challenges within the College and the University more generally. The HoC and DoCPS met with Karen Lee, the HoSub and the University's Gaelic Development Manager to discuss the challenges. It was agreed that C&G would ask the HoPS for Humanities to seek a conversation between the HoPS in CCA to explore the possibility of a transfer of one of their locally managed rooms to CTT in return for CTT transferring back local control of Room 203 to Humanities. If that option turned out not to be viable given current space constraints, the solution with most potential to support a Gaelic hub on the first floor of the Celtic & Gaelic building was a review and reallocation of locally managed space within Number 3 itself which the HoSub would take forward in consultation with C&G colleagues and the School.

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)

Recommendation 11

The Review Panel **recommends** that the School of Humanities reviews the payment made to GTAs in the Subject, with a view to the GTAs being able to claim payment for at least one additional hour per week for undertaking extra administrative tasks that are over and above their core workload. [Paragraph 8.2.2]

For the attention of: Head of the School of Humanities

Response- Head of School:

The Dean of Graduate Studies in The College of Arts is currently reviewing GTA payment rates across the College of Arts with a consultation paper due to be presented to College Management Group in the coming months; the issue of additional allocations for administrative tasks will be fed into the response to the consultation at that time.

Response: Dean (Learning and Teaching), College of Arts

From a College perspective, Nick Fells and I are planning to take a paper to a CMG in the near future. The aim of this will be to increase parity across the College in terms of expectations around marking and preparation time in particular. We have also begun some work to increase the transparency of expectations on GTAs, by creating a College-wide GTA handbook to bring together the four School handbooks. This work, which will necessarily take some time to get right, does not, however, restrict Schools and Subjects from amending their practices to deal with matters as they arise, such as payments for administrative tasks as outlined in the PSR recommendation.

The University's GTA Support Working Group is also currently working to create a GTA Code of Practice which will set out expectations of Schools.

Early Career Staff

Recommendation 12

The Review Panel **recommends** that any staff member carrying out the Performance Development & Review process for early career staff should either have completed the Early Career Development Programme themselves, or be provided with appropriate training. Also, instead of focussing on ECDP itself, PDR could highlight advice and support concerning career progression and promotion. In this regard, Celtic and Gaelic could

consider adopting the model used by the School of Life Sciences whereby an early career mentor and the line manager both contributed to PDR. *[Paragraph 8.2.9]*

For the attention of: Director of Human Resources

Response:

Line managers are ultimately responsible for ensuring that PDR reviews take place. Implementation is through the agreed PDR hierarchy, which ideally, although not always possible, reflects the line management structure, at Unitary level. Schools/RIs/Services ensure that: there are a sufficient number of trained and competent reviewers; each reviewer conducts a sufficient number of reviews to be able to recognise differences in performance levels thus ensuring a consistent approach, whilst maintaining a manageable load. Ideally, reviewers should conduct no more than a maximum of 12 reviews. Where not acting as reviewers, line managers are responsible for ensuring that nominated reviewers have access to relevant information to carry out the PDR review.

Given the number of staff currently enrolled onto the ECDP Programme (c 500) it is neither realistic nor viable to expect that all reviewers undertake and complete the ECDP Programme. We are planning to hold an 'ECDP Lunch and Learn' session in semester 1 2019-20, specifically for Heads of School/Directors of Research Institutes and Heads of Service. We would aim to run this session once every academic year. In addition, Hos/DRIs/Mentors, etc. are invited to attend the ECDP Induction and Strategic Induction sessions which take place on a quarterly basis each academic year.