



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Gaelic Plan 2025-2030



Plana Gàidhlig 2025-2030

gaelic.ed.ac.uk

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Cover image: *Bivalve Mural – Tidal Greens* (detail) 2024
Terrazzo tile mural made from waste seashells.
Acquired by the University of Edinburgh Art Collection, 2024.

Bivalve Murals – Tidal Greens is a Cooking Sections project produced in the framework of CLIMAVORE in the Isle of Skye and fabricated by Climavore Community Interest Company and Joel Franklyn.
Tidal Greens has a mirrored twin, permanently installed within Raasay Community Hall and owned by Raasay Community Trust.

Image by Jordan Young and courtesy of CLIMAVORE.

Contents

Foreword	2
Our Principles for Gaelic	4
1. Gaelic Teaching and Learning	6
2. Research and Collections	8
3. People and Community	10
4. Gaelic on Campus	12
5. Partnership Working	14
Implementation and Monitoring	16
Our Community	18

Principles for Gaelic

Five principles that will embed Gaelic across University practice.

1. We will continue to deliver, promote, and expand our opportunities for lifelong learning of Gaelic language and culture and support teaching at the University.
2. We will promote, protect, and make accessible our internationally significant Gaelic collections and encourage and support Gaelic research at the University.
3. We will encourage and cultivate a supportive and active community of Gaelic-speakers at the University and within our local area.
4. We will take a cross-University approach to enhance the visibility, use, and profile of Gaelic across our campuses.
5. We will continue to seek opportunities for partnership working and promote the University as a centre for Gaelic use, teaching, and research.

Each of the five principles in our Gaelic Plan is underpinned by a series of commitments.



Gaelic in Edinburgh tour hosted by Invisible Cities during Gaelic Week Edinburgh 2023.

1. Gaelic Teaching and Learning

Principle

We will continue to deliver, promote, and expand our opportunities for lifelong learning of Gaelic language and culture and support teaching at the University.

Commitments

- a. Build on our reputation as a recognised centre of excellence in Celtic and Gaelic studies and continue to offer our nationally significant degree in Primary Education with Gaelic for learners and fluent speakers.
- b. Develop and expand proposals for immersion opportunities within or alongside our Gaelic degree programmes, including exploring the development of an intensive summer school with other higher education providers.
- c. Promote and expand our opportunities for Gaelic language courses within our Languages for All provision, providing opportunities for members of the public, our staff, and students to learn Gaelic.
- d. Encourage, support, and celebrate students who submit work in Gaelic, including by providing support for students with additional learning needs as required.
- e. Explore possible options for Gaelic pathways and developments across the department of Celtic and Scottish Studies and within our teacher education portfolio.
- f. Develop and expand our partnerships with schools and colleges in Edinburgh and across the country, with an aim to demonstrate what the University can offer Gaelic-speaking students and those interested in learning Gaelic.

Playing Gaelic Scrabble at Ionad Pop Up hosted by Edinburgh Gaelic Centre in collaboration with Capital Gaelic and the University.



Gaelic at the Centre for Open Learning

Gaelic courses on our Languages for All programme at the Centre for Open Learning (COL) are open to staff, students and members of the public. Our provision for Gaelic continues to expand with classes now available at beginner, elementary and intermediate level. In 2023, COL established the 'Cleachd i: Return to Gaelic' course for those who used to speak Gaelic, whether in school, work or the community, and would like to return to the language. The course offers former speakers the chance to explore their experience of the language and rebuild confidence in using Gaelic.

2. Research and Collections*

Principle

We will promote, protect, and make accessible our internationally significant Gaelic collections and encourage and support Gaelic research at the University.

Commitments

- a. Support and promote the University's specialist and internationally significant Gaelic collections, particularly: the School of Scottish Studies archives, which contains thousands of audio recordings in Gaelic; rare printed Gaelic books and archives, including the UNESCO-recognised Carmichael-Watson Collection; other important Gaelic and Celtic holdings across Heritage Collections; and our extensive library holdings.
- b. Ensure that University Gaelic archives and collections are accessible to students and staff, including widening physical access to the archives, and offer opportunities for members of the public to engage with collections.
- c. Encourage and promote Gaelic in research both internally and externally, including through the delivery of a series of regular research seminars and conferences.
- d. Develop a cross-University research network on Gaelic to promote further collaboration between departments and Schools.
- e. Explore the possibility of establishing a position at doctoral or post-doctoral level to research the history of Gaelic at the University and across the city of Edinburgh.

* Collections refers to the University's collections of heritage and archival material, specifically the audio recordings, literary material, video footage and photographs held by the School of Scottish Studies archives, the Carmichael-Watson project (ref. Coll-97), and rare printed books and archival materials held across Heritage Collections, including those at New College Library.



Hamish Henderson interviewing Gaelic storyteller Ailidh Dall Stiùbhart, 1958.

*School of Scottish Studies Archives, ref. SSSA/A4/147/35 (8045).
Photographer: Sandy Paton*

Gaelic Artificial Intelligence

In 2022, researchers at the University of Edinburgh embarked on an ambitious collaborative project with the University of Glasgow and BBC ALBA, and funded by the Scottish Government. The project's aim is to produce a state-of-the-art subtitling and voice transcription system for Scottish Gaelic. To do this, the team is using text and audio material from the School of Scottish Studies Archives at the University of Edinburgh and the Digital Archive of Scottish Gaelic (DASG) in Glasgow to develop predictive language and acoustic models for Scottish Gaelic. By generating a high-quality automatic speech recognition system for media, education and research, the project will help to provide an essential foothold for Gaelic in the digital age.

3. People and Community

Principle

We will encourage and cultivate a supportive and active community of Gaelic-speakers at the University and within our local area.

Commitments

- a. Progress, develop, and support the Gaelic residential flat initiative so that Gaelic-speaking students can use the language daily in a home environment.
- b. Develop a peer-support system for students who speak or are learning Gaelic at Moray House, Celtic and Scottish Studies, and the Centre for Open Learning.
- c. Work in partnership with student bodies and groups, encouraging increased Gaelic use and visibility in Edinburgh University Students' Association buildings and activities, and maintaining our close relationship with and support the activities of the Edinburgh University Highland Society.
- d. Develop immersive Gaelic opportunities for those who speak or are learning Gaelic to enable them to build relationships through the medium of Gaelic.
- e. Maintain and continue to promote the Gaelic Writer in Residence scheme.
- f. Explore and develop opportunities to encourage and enable students and staff to promote Gaelic use locally, nationally, and globally through a Gaelic Edinburgh Award or Gaelic Ambassador scheme.
- g. Use social media, newsletters, and the Gaelic pages of the University website to promote and raise awareness of Gaelic throughout the University and with the wider community.
- h. Offer opportunities for members of our Gaelic-speaking alumni to maintain a close relationship with the University.

The University's first Gaelic Writer in Residence, Martin MacIntyre, at the launch of "A' Ruith Eadar Dà Dhràgon" in 50 George Square.



Gaelic Writer in Residence

Established in 2022, the University's Gaelic Writer in Residence scheme aims to promote and encourage writing in Gaelic across the University and beyond. The post offers the opportunity for writers to develop a creative piece during their two-year tenure and to work with our staff, students, and local community to encourage writing locally through workshops and events. Award-winning author, poet and storyteller Martin MacIntyre was appointed as the University's first Gaelic Writer in Residence in 2022.

4. Gaelic on Campus

Principle

We will take a cross-University approach to enhance the visibility, use, and profile of Gaelic across our campuses.

Commitments

- a. Deliver this Gaelic Plan, led by the Gaelic Officer with support from the Gaelic Plan Working Group.
- b. Continue to promote the use of the University's Gaelic logo and explore the option of a bilingual logo.
- c. Provide and promote resource for increased visibility and use of Gaelic in University systems and on the University website.
- d. Include Gaelic in welcome and graduation ceremonies.
- e. Display Gaelic welcome signage and screens and promote the use of Gaelic in bilingual signage on new and re-developed University buildings.
- f. Report on Gaelic use, learning, and teaching centrally, including by surveying staff and students on their Gaelic abilities.
- g. Continue to stock and expand Gaelic-language merchandise at the University of Edinburgh shop.

Conversation Circles

Our Gaelic conversation circles offer informal opportunities for Gaelic-speakers and learners from across Edinburgh and the world to come together and use Gaelic. Our regular Thursday conversation circle continues to operate online, welcoming Gaelic-speakers from as close to home as Leith, Liberton and Lewis and as far afield as Melbourne, Toronto and Buenos Aires. The University also hosts an in-person Gaelic conversation circle during term-time in collaboration with Capital Gaelic, providing a meeting space for Gaelic-speakers and learners locally and promoting the use of Gaelic in Edinburgh.

*The Highland Society Ceilidh for
Gaelic Week Edinburgh,
hosted in Greyfriars Charteris Centre.*

5. Partnership Working

Principle

We will continue to seek opportunities for partnership working and promote the University as a centre for Gaelic use, teaching, and research.

Commitments

- a. Ensure the continued success of Gaelic Week Edinburgh in collaboration with the City of Edinburgh Council and the Capital Gaelic network.
- b. Work with partners internally and externally to offer regular Gaelic musical and cultural events for staff, students, and the local community, including working with An Comunn Gàidhealach to continue to host the annual John MacLeod Memorial Festival at the University.
- c. Continue to support and participate in the Capital Gaelic network and to work with other Gaelic organisations in Edinburgh to promote Gaelic in the city.
- d. Work with partners to develop and promote paid Gaelic internship opportunities for our students.
- e. Work collaboratively with Ionad Gàidhlig Dhùn Èideann to support the initiative to establish a Gaelic centre in the city.
- f. Continue to work with other university and college Gaelic officers and departments to help coordinate the Higher and Further Education voice on issues of importance to Gaelic.
- g. Coordinate the University's contribution to Gaelic public policy and cultural discussion.
- h. Establish regular contact with external Gaelic-speaking media outlets to promote Gaelic activity at the University.



Attendees singing at Ionad Pop Up hosted by Edinburgh Gaelic Centre in collaboration with Capital Gaelic, the City of Edinburgh Council, and the University.

Gaelic Week Edinburgh

Established in 2014, Gaelic Week Edinburgh is a celebration of Gaelic language, culture and community in the city. With events including film screenings, walking tours, and multilingual performances of story, song and poetry, Gaelic Week Edinburgh is hosted by the University in collaboration with the City of Edinburgh Council and Capital Gaelic, and runs at the same time as the wider World Gaelic Week, established 2021.

Capital Gaelic is an innovative new project bringing together local and national organisations across Edinburgh, including the National Library of Scotland, National Museums Scotland, and Comunn na Gàidhlig, to promote Gaelic in the city.

Implementation and Monitoring

This Gaelic Plan will be delivered over the period 2025-2030 and, as a University-wide plan, it will require the whole institution to live up to these commitments.

The Gaelic Plan Working Group (GPWG) will have overall responsibility for the implementation of this plan and will provide support and oversight to the Gaelic Officer, who will be responsible for day-to-day implementation. Chaired by the Deputy Director – Stakeholder Relations, the GPWG is made up of representatives from both the academic and professional services sides of the University, and includes a representative from the Edinburgh University Students' Association.

The GPWG will, in turn, report on the progress of the Gaelic Plan to the Sustainability, Civic and Social Responsibility (SCSR) Committee (or the appropriate successor committee) on an annual basis, or as requested.

In order to achieve the aims of this plan, we will ensure that adequate resource and funding is in place to meet the commitments, including by maintaining the Gaelic Officer post and investigating what additional resource might be necessary to support their work and the wider commitments.

While the principles outlined in this plan will remain consistent, we will respond to emerging needs as they become apparent and evolve our activity as required.

We will continue to monitor and promote the commitments of this plan and be accountable to our staff, students and local community. In order to achieve this aim, we will:

- Publicise this plan widely amongst staff and students. A more detailed implementation plan will be developed and used by those with roles in implementation.
- Review the membership of the GPWG to ensure representation from key stakeholders in the delivery of this plan. Information and contact details of the members of the GPWG will be published.
- Use our dedicated Gaelic communication channels to highlight our activity and progress on our Plan to staff, students and the community.
- Assess the impact of our projects and commitments by monitoring attendance and engagement figures at Gaelic events, learning and training opportunities, and social media activity, and other evaluation measures as determined in the implementation plan.



Attendees at the Guid Crack storytelling night hosted by the Scottish Storytelling Centre for Gaelic Week Edinburgh.

Our Community

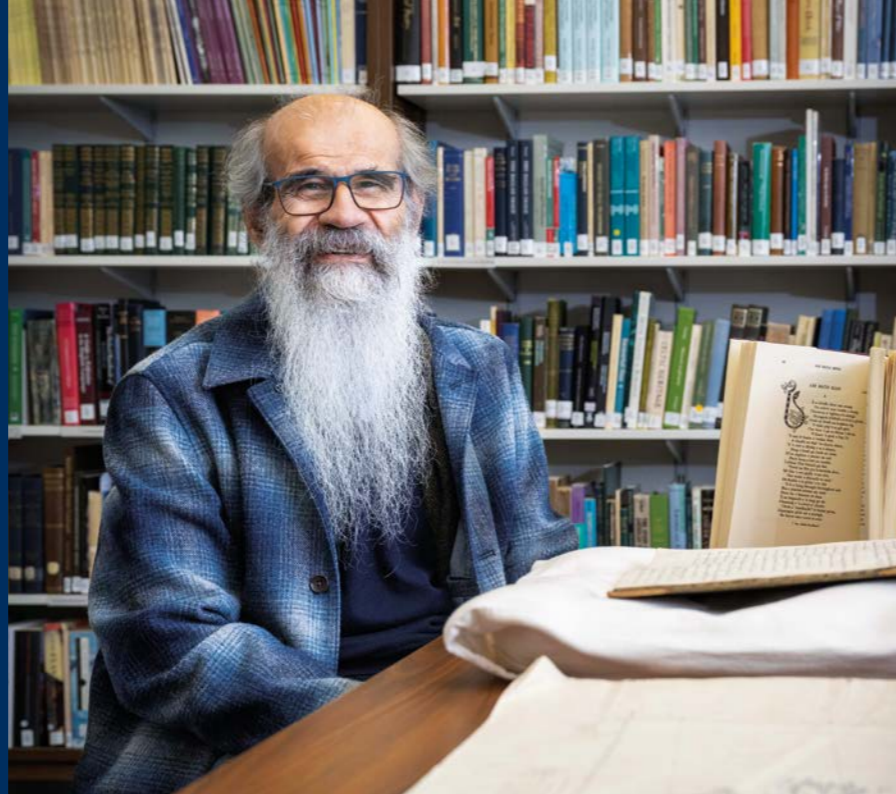
Mirin
Student, Celtic

I decided to change to a Celtic degree after taking Gaelic as an elective course. Studying Gaelic has given me many opportunities. I have been part of the Highland Society for three years and am now President. I am sure that Gaelic will continue to play an important role in my life after university. I already have a job with Gaelic and am keen to keep on working in the Gaelic world in the future.



Kyriakos
Member of the community

I started to go to the Conversation Circle that the School of Scottish Studies established a while ago, and I continue to attend online today. When Martin MacIntyre established the Writing Group, as Gaelic Writer in Residence, that was an excellent opportunity. It was so helpful and encouraging. I made a lot of progress on poems that I had been thinking about over a long time. These opportunities are valuable especially to learners.



Jonathan
Graduate, Education with Gaelic

Gaelic was a huge part of my course and I really enjoyed the Gaelic lectures. Since University, I have started working as a Gaelic Development Officer at a national charity. If you would like to work in the Gaelic world, there are loads of opportunities. The services at the University and events in the community, such as Bothan Dhùn Èideann, had a big impact on me and on my desire to keep learning Gaelic.



Hanna
Staff member

I'm a Student Adviser for the MA Primary Education with Gaelic programme. In 2024, I started learning Gaelic at the Centre for Open Learning. I feel much more connected to the Primary Education with Gaelic programme and have been able to support its staff and students better. It's also been great to connect with other Gaelic speaking colleagues across the University. My plan is to keep learning until I'm fluent!

