Gaelic Language Plan

July 2012

At the request of Bòrd na Gàidhlig, this plan has been prepared by the University of Strathclyde within the spirit of Section 3 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005
1. **Foreword**

As Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Strathclyde I am pleased to present our first Gaelic Language Plan.

The University of Strathclyde is committed to the aspirations and objectives set out in the National Plan for Gaelic and the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and has identified commitments and allocated responsibilities for ensuring that Strathclyde contributes as best it can to the future sustainability of the Gaelic language and culture in Scotland.

From our foundation as a place of useful learning, we take it as our responsibility to research, teach and be of benefit to society – to reach outside the University to make the world better educated, prosperous, healthy, fair and secure. Our ambition is to be among the leading technological universities in the world.

The University of Strathclyde supports the city and region in being modern and multicultural, a focus of opportunity and achievement, cultural and sporting excellence. Our contribution to the city’s sustainable economic and social growth positions our institution as a natural partner for our civic and commercial leaders and echoes our traditional strengths and connectivity with the city.

We take pride in our place at the heart of the City of Glasgow. Taking our character from our home, we are dedicated to the principle that the world should flow through the University and not around it - the University of Strathclyde is not a place apart.

Glasgow’s history is one of radicalism and intellectual vigour, of industry, enterprise and international trade. We take seriously our responsibilities to help the city and region and to provide opportunities for the local community to study and work with us.

Part of our commitment as a leading Scottish university is supporting Scotland’s history and national identity. We also recognise Strathclyde’s essential role in public life and the local community, and we will continue to support the development of the Gaelic language.

The University of Strathclyde has a unique position in Scotland as the first and principal provider of initial teacher education and professional development for primary and secondary Gaelic teachers and teachers working in Gaelic medium schools. Our plan describes how the University will maintain and build on this tradition and will contribute to the future of the Gaelic language in Scotland through teaching, research and knowledge exchange activities.

2. **Summary**

This is the University of Strathclyde’s Gaelic Language Plan, prepared within the framework of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.

The plan sets out:

1) role of Gaelic in core University functions
2) use of Gaelic in communications
3) promotion and development of Gaelic language through the work of the Centre for Lifelong Learning
4) commitment to Gaelic Medium education in the School of Education
3. Introduction

Description of the University of Strathclyde

The University of Strathclyde was founded in 1796 when John Anderson, Professor of Natural Philosophy at Glasgow University, left instructions in his will for ‘a place of useful learning’ - a university open to everyone. His vision was realised when Anderson’s Institution opened later the same year.

The Institution grew rapidly and became Anderson’s University in 1828. By the close of the nineteenth century as the Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College our institution had become a major player in research and teaching in science and technology. We became the Royal Technical College in 1912 and the Royal College of Science and Technology in 1956. In the 1960s the College was able to broaden its activities through merger with the Scottish College of Commerce which offered a wide range of business and social science subjects. In 1964 the merged institution was granted a Royal Charter and became the University of Strathclyde. In 1993, the University merged with the Jordanhill College of Education, Scotland’s premier teacher training college.

Today, Strathclyde is the third largest university in Scotland and has four faculties: Business (Strathclyde Business School), Engineering, Humanities & Social Sciences and Science. The University is committed to providing a high-quality education and experience to all students, regardless of background, inspiring them to develop to the full their abilities, producing outstanding professional and enterprising people for industry, business and the professions.

The University has in excess of 15,000 undergraduates, 80% of whom live on or close to campus in the heart of Glasgow. Around 4,000 of our students are ‘mature’ students, starting their studies after gaining experience in the workplace, and almost 10% are international students coming from more than 100 countries around the world.

Over 7,000 students are undertaking postgraduate studies and each year, approximately 45,000 students come to the university to study part-time, either in the evenings and weekends or through distance learning. Our Alumni community is 113,000-strong, with more than a quarter based internationally.

The University employs 3,200 staff, of which, approximately 1300 are academic and research staff, with around 400 (30%) of them being non-UK nationals drawn for all parts of the globe.

Gaelic in the University’s Area of Operation

The 2001 census showed that just 58,552 (just under 1.2%) of Scotland’s population spoke Gaelic. Of the City of Glasgow and wider central West of Scotland area from which much of the University’s learner population and staff are principally drawn, 0.6% are Gaelic speakers*. However, as this represents over 10% of Scotland’s Gaelic speakers, the largest number outwith the Western Isles, the City of Glasgow area can be seen as the centre for Gaelic culture in mainland Scotland.[* Scotland’s Census 2001: category % speaking Gaelic]. The University supports Bòrd na Gàidhlig’s identification of Glasgow as an important area for the development and enhancement of the Gaelic language and culture and will help in this objective through the extension of our outreach activities through the Centre for Lifelong Learning. We will also continue to play our part to support the increasing demand for Gaelic
medium education at school level in Glasgow through interactions between the School of Education and the City of Glasgow Council.

Since 2001, the numbers of fluent Gaelic speakers and those learning the language in the city have increased. Both the development of Gaelic-medium education and the opening of Scotland's first Gaelic-medium secondary school in 2006, mean that the number of younger people using Gaelic continues to grow.

Currently, the University does not maintain information on the number of members of staff able to speak, read or understand Gaelic. We intend to investigate how best to establish base line information about levels of usage of Gaelic amongst staff as part of a wider exercise to identify proficiency in languages other than English amongst staff at Strathclyde. We also intend to undertake a language survey of all our students to establish levels of language usage and proficiency (including Gaelic) which we plan to launch on September 26, 2012 – the European day of Languages.

The University is partly funded by the Scottish Funding Council (in 2010/11 main grant was 41% of total income), and the University works with and supports the Council’s plans, along with those of the University’s other key funders, i.e. UK Research Councils, UK Government, industrial partners, etc.

The University supports the aim of the Scottish Funding Council to help the colleges and universities it provides funds to, to promote and market existing Gaelic provision. We also support SFC’s “aspiration to increase the availability and uptake of Gaelic learning opportunities in the college sector over the period of this Plan” (Scottish Funding Council Gaelic Language Plan, December 2009).

In developing the Plan, the University notes that funding available from the Scottish Government, via the Scottish Funding Council to support the learning and teaching of Gaelic, for the public sector and for higher and further education, has recently been reduced. The Council indicates that their priorities for this funding would be for supporting classes with small cohorts and for immersion opportunities in both sectors, but they recognise with a move to more outcome driven funding may mean a change to supporting Gaelic. It is also noted that the Scottish Funding Council is working with the University, and the University of Aberdeen, as the two providers of Gaelic/Gaelic-medium teacher education, to reconfigure Gaelic teacher education in Scotland.

**History of Gaelic at Strathclyde:**

The University of Strathclyde became a provider of Gaelic and Gaelic-medium teacher education in Scotland as a result of our merger with Jordanhill College of Education in 1993. Gaelic and Gaelic-medium teacher education had featured at Jordanhill from the mid-1980s primarily through the work of Boyd Robertson, formerly Reader in Gaelic at the University of Strathclyde (1982-2009), who initiated programmes at the college and led the University’s contribution until being appointed as Principal of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the Gaelic College on Skye, in 2009.

Mona Wilson, member of the Faclair na Gàidhlig steering committee for the Dictionary of the Scottish Gaelic language, and senior lecturer in the School of Education currently has responsibility for Gaelic medium initial teacher education and leads our activities in this area.

Gaelic medium (GM) schools in Scotland date back to 1985 and since this time the key players in GM teacher education have been Strathclyde, Northern College (now part of the University of Aberdeen) and the University of Glasgow. In the last few years the University of Strathclyde has worked closely with the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) to deliver GM Initial Teacher Education for both primary and secondary teachers in the
Highlands and Islands and will continue to work with UHI through our role as a Sponsoring University.

Policy Implications and Core Commitments
The University will actively promote the use and development of Gaelic in two key areas:

1.1 Gaelic-Medium Teacher Education
1.2 The University’s community learning and public programmes

The University will work with other key providers of Gaelic Language provision, particularly those located in the city of Glasgow and in the West of Scotland: these include Glasgow City Council, the University of Glasgow and Gaelic-Medium schools.

1.1) Gaelic-Medium Teacher Education
The School of Education is the main provider of initial teacher education and professional development in Scotland for teachers in the Gaelic-Medium (GM) sector.

Initial Teacher Education
We have 20 reserved places for initial teacher education (GM) from the Scottish Funding Council. Typically, we have recruited 10-12 GM students on the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) course (for early years and primary education). We will continue to strive to ensure that all 20 places are taken up by Gaelic Medium students. Such students are offered two Gaelic electives in the first year of the course (one for those who are beginners in the language and one for fluent speakers), and placements in GM settings in the second and fourth years, where they are visited by a Gaelic speaking tutor. These are recent developments, improving on previous provision where GM placements were available only in fourth year. The possibility of GM placements also in third year is currently being explored. The Gaelic language student ambassador represents the views of GM students to the B.Ed. course team and has been using social networking resources to make contacts with students of Gaelic across Scotland. The current arrangements associated with the B.Ed. are subject to change, as, from 2013, in line with the recommendations of the Review of Teacher Education in Scotland (“The Donaldson Review”), undergraduate education students will be enrolled in a broader BA programme. Discussions are under way to secure the place of provision for GM ITE in this context and to enhance the Gaelic language components of this provision.

There are typically between three to six students each year on the Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE), where students may be training to teach Gaelic as a first language, Gaelic as a second language, or other subjects, such as history or biology, through the medium of Gaelic. The teacher education courses do not all include substantial provision for improving students’ language skills in Gaelic, although some PGDE classes are now delivered through Gaelic. In future, language learning provision may need to increase as more students who are learners of Gaelic rather than fluent speakers are likely to be attracted to teaching in the GM sector, in response to Bòrd na Gàidhlig’s plan to expand GM provision.

The School of Education employs one lecturer to provide Gaelic language support for students training to work in the GM sector and to promote Gaelic through social activities for students. In addition, two Gaelic-speaking tutors are employed to visit students on placements in GM schools.

Professional development
The School of Education offers the Post Graduate Certificate in Supporting Bilingual Learners. This course is not exclusively aimed at GM teachers but at all teachers working with bilingual pupils. The four module certificate course provides students with an understanding of theories of language acquisition and bilingualism, and of the implications of
these theories for best practice and critical engagement with policy for bilingual education. Students undertake school-based action research to demonstrate and develop their understanding and improve their own practice. A current participant, who is a GM teacher, evaluated the first module as follows:

“I feel I have a deeper understanding of language acquisition as a whole and can adapt my teaching accordingly. It has also enabled me to question the senior management team on aspects of Gaelic medium education in my school”.

Students are encouraged to take their study further. A recent PhD graduate developed and trialed a Gaelic Language Phonological Awareness Assessment Tool as part of her research. This work was so successful that GL Assessment have now published the Gaelic Phonological Screening Test, Deuchainn Fuaimneachadh Gàidhlig, designed exclusively for use by GM teachers to assess the phonological skills of young Gaelic speakers and learners in Primary 2 and 3.

We are committed to developing and enhancing our provision for GM teacher education. This is a key feature of our plan. In the context of the renewal of our undergraduate programme in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, the recommendations of the Donaldson Review, and the targets set to increase the number of pupils starting GM education (which entail a corresponding increase in the number of GM teachers) we will consider:

- providing post-Higher level courses for undergraduates with Higher Gaelic for learners or for fluent speakers, to enable those considering a career as teachers to develop their Gaelic to a suitably high level to work in GM settings;
- providing a conversion course to enable already qualified teachers with limited or no Gaelic to acquire the linguistic and pedagogical skills needed to transfer to GM education;
- collaborating with the other Scottish providers to develop a national strategy for GM initial teacher education and professional development.

1.2) The University’s Community Learning and Public Programmes

The University’s Centre for Lifelong Learning (CLL) is well placed to assist the university in its aim to address some of the desired outcomes from the Ginealach Ùr na Gàidhlig, as it is able to reach within the University to the staff and student community as well as externally to a large public audience. CLL’s public programmes are circulated to over 5000 individuals twice annually and there is further scope within this for target marketing of particular communities.

There are several initiatives which CLL could undertake to initiate the process of testing markets and building up a base of students interested in Scottish Studies, including options featuring Gaelic. In the summer of 2012, CLL has included several class options within the Summer Programme 2012 as short, ‘taster’ sessions designed to consolidate students’ current knowledge and whet appetite for further learning in this area:

- Introduction to Gaelic Language and Culture (16 students)
- The Lordship of the Isles: history and archaeology of a lost Gaelic kingdom (19 students)
- Discover Scotland’s Placenames: Celtic, Scandinavian, Scots and more (24 students)
- Explore Scotland’s Surnames and Given Names: Celtic, Scandinavian, Scots and more (20 students)

CLL programme for 2012/13 will include two Gaelic courses as well as several classes within the Scottish Heritage spectrum. These are Gaelic Language and Culture for Beginners (10 week evening class starting in October 2012) and Keep Your Gaelic Going (a 10 week class starting in January 2013 for “rusty” native speakers or others wishing to improve their Gaelic).
Data will also be collected during 2012/13 to assess the use of languages other than English by the CLL student population.

Through its Open Studies Certificate framework, CLL has a mechanism for developing new credit-bearing classes in Gaelic language and Scottish Heritage studies and demand for this will be led by take-up on the pilot classes offered during 2012/13.

There is also opportunity for commercial enterprise by offering training to companies whose business would benefit from greater knowledge of this area. This could be done either through the delivery of Open Studies classes off-campus in a format suited to the client or the development of bespoke training similar to that provided in the past by the Languages for Business unit. CLL is well placed to deliver this if approached by external agencies.

In its statutory Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans, Bòrd na Gàidhlig notes that creating the right environment for the use of Gaelic in public life is one of the key components of language regeneration. The Bòrd has identified four core areas of service delivery that it wishes public bodies to address when preparing Gaelic Language Plans:

**Identity:**
- corporate identity
- signage

**Communications:**
- reception
- telephone
- mail and email
- forms
- public meetings
- complaints procedures

**Publications:**
- public relations and media
- printed material
- websites
- exhibitions

**Staffing:**
- training
- language learning
- recruitment
- advertising

2.1) **Identity**

The University of Strathclyde recognises the importance of extending the visibility of Gaelic and increasing its status.

2.1.1 The University will seek to develop a Gaelic version of its corporate logo within its existing corporate brand policy.
   - **Action:** Director of Marketing and Development Services
   - **Timeline:** to report to the Vice-Principal in December 2012

2.1.2 The University will consider how best to incorporate any signage in Gaelic in its signage strategy. Our intention, at present, is to undertake a pilot programme for bilingual signage in the Lord Hope Building which houses the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and in that part of the Hills Building which houses the Centre for Lifelong Learning. These are the most likely areas of the campus to be used by
Gaelic-speaking students and staff. We will seek feedback on content, visibility and style and submit a report on the pilot
   Action: Director of Estates Services
   Timeline: to the Estates Strategy Committee as appropriate.

2.2) Communications

The University of Strathclyde recognises the importance of creating opportunities for the practical use of Gaelic in a wide range of everyday situations, and will seek to identify how best this can be supported.

2.2.1 Mail and email: the Gaelic version of University corporate logo will be available for use with written and electronic communications, and this will be used by staff as appropriate. The University will not require all staff to adopt Gaelic language disclaimers though staff members who frequently communicate by email in Gaelic will be able to do so. The University will welcome correspondence in Gaelic and will endeavour to respond in Gaelic, acknowledging receipt in 20 working days.
   Action: Director of Marketing and Development Services
   Timeline: to report to the Vice-Principal in December 2012

2.2.2 Forms, public meetings and complaints procedures: the University will develop Gaelic language versions of forms, documentation for meetings and procedures, etc where the content is of specific interest to Gaelic-speaking communities. Guidance will be developed on when it is appropriate to develop and issue Gaelic versions of documents.
   Action: Director of Marketing and Development Services
   Timeline: Director to report to the Vice-Principal in Spring 2013.

2.3) Publications

The University of Strathclyde is committed to increasing the use of Gaelic in the areas where the subject matter relates to Gaelic issues/subject matter.

2.3.1 Public relations and media; printed material; websites and exhibitions: currently all printed materials are in English with supplementary material being produced in other languages for specific global markets and the University will develop materials in Gaelic within this framework. Specifically, the University will develop a Gaelic language version of the introductory University webpage and this will be held within a suite of information in other languages and it will link to information about the University’s Gaelic language provision and this Plan.
   Action: Director of Marketing and Development Services
   Timeline: to report to the Vice-Principal in December 2012

2.4) Staffing

2.4.1 Training: training provision for staff is offered in English and no further development is intended in this area.

2.4.2 Language learning: The University offers staff a wide range of learning and training opportunities. As a Leading International Technological University, Strathclyde encourages staff and students to broaden their language skills and provides access to language teaching (including Gaelic) through its Language Learning Centre and the Centre for Lifelong Learning.

2.4.3 Recruitment and advertising: the recruitment process and advertising are conducted in English, but for any post for which Gaelic is an essential requirement or for which
Gaelic speakers represent the advertisement’s target audience, the use of Gaelic would be considered and materials would be produced appropriate to the role.  
Action: Director of Human Resources 
Timeline: to report to the Vice-Principal in December 2012

5 Implementation and Monitoring
5.1 The Language Plan will formally remain in force for a period of five years from the date of agreement by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, or until a new Plan has been put in place.
5.2 Publicising the Plan: the Plan will be published bilingually on the University’s website. Additionally, the publication of the Plan will be announced to staff and students via regular electronic corporate communications, and will be made available to other interested bodies on request.
5.3 Monitoring Implementation of the Plan: the University Court will be responsible ultimately for ensuring that the University delivers on the commitments set out in this Plan. The Vice-Principal will be responsible for the monitoring and implementation of the Plan and will report on an annual basis to the Executive Team. There will also be an annual report from the Executive Team to the University Court.
5.4 Contact details: Professor Kenneth Miller, Vice–Principal, University of Strathclyde

31/08/2012
Membership of the Gaelic Language Plan Working Group

- Professor Kenneth Miller, Vice-Principal
- Joanna McPake, Vice-Dean (Knowledge Exchange). Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Mona Wilson, Lecturer, School of Education
- Iona Beveridge, Student Experience and Enhancement Services
- Naseem Anwar, Equality and Diversity Manager
- Catherine Court, Faculty manager, Strathclyde Business School
- Alix Macdonald, Centre for Lifelong Learning