



# OILTHIGH DHÙN ÈIDEANN

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

## Draft Gaelic Plan 2025-2030

### Introduction

As a global University firmly rooted in our unique civic history, we recognise the responsibilities we have towards Gaelic, one of the native living languages of Scotland. We are proud of the progress we have made since the launch of our current Gaelic Plan in 2019, which comes to an end in 2024. The establishment of a Gaelic Writer in Residence Scheme, expansion of teaching and learning opportunities within the Centre for Open Learning, and the development of our partnerships with local community networks and organisations have all greatly contributed to the opportunities available to staff, students, and members of our local community to use and learn Gaelic.

While we have seen significant progress towards the aims of our most recent plan, it is right that we look again at our strategic direction for Gaelic. This draft Gaelic Plan therefore sets out a series of principles and commitments which endeavour to develop the use, learning and visibility of Gaelic at the University over the next five-year period.

Following feedback on the previous plan, we are proposing to change the structure from a list of detailed commitments to a set of five principles which underpin our work in support of Gaelic. These principles will be put into action through a series of related commitments. These commitments are not intended to represent all the University's work in Gaelic, but instead will reflect the work that is most crucial to delivering on our principles and supporting Gaelic users.

Through the implementation of this plan, we hope to develop Gaelic on campus and support our local community of Gaelic speakers and learners, as well as our many other students and staff, by providing opportunities for them to use or engage with one of Scotland's native living languages during their time at the University.

## Our Principles for Gaelic

Five principles that will embed Gaelic across University practice.

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

## Our Commitments

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

### Collections<sup>1</sup> and Research

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

#### **Commitments:**

1. 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 in the Centre for Open Research; and, our extensive library holdings.
2. 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.
3. Promote research on Gaelic both internally and externally, including the delivery of a series of regular research seminars and conferences.
4. Develop a cross-University research network on Gaelic to promote further collaboration between departments and Schools.
5. Explore the possibility of establishing a Gaelic post-doctoral position to research the history of Gaelic at the University and across the city of Edinburgh.
6. Encourage Gaelic in research by providing services and tools which enable staff and students to use Gaelic as part of their work, including access to Gaelic software, and enabling students to submit theses, undergraduate dissertations, essays, and other assignments in Gaelic where appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Gaelic Learning and Teaching

**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:**

1. Celebrate and provide recognition for students who submit work in Gaelic.
2. Continue to offer our nationally significant degree in Primary Education with Gaelic for learners and fluent speakers.
3. 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.
4. Develop and expand proposals for immersion opportunities within our Gaelic degree programmes, including exploring the development of an intensive summer school for students on Celtic and Gaelic degree programmes with other higher education providers.
5. Explore possible options for Gaelic pathways and developments across the teacher education portfolio.
6. Work in partnership with organisations in Edinburgh to offer learning opportunities and experiences which encourage pupils to progress from school to a Higher Education setting while retaining and developing their Gaelic language skills.

## People & Community

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

### **Commitments:**

1. Progress, develop and support the Gaelic residential flat initiative so that Gaelic-speaking students can use the language daily in a home environment.
2. 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.
3. Develop a peer-support system for students who speak or are learning Gaelic at Moray House, Celtic & Scottish Studies, and the Centre for Open Learning.
4. Develop an immersive Gaelic weekend for students who speak or are learning Gaelic to enable them to build relationships through the medium of Gaelic.
5. 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.
6. Offer opportunities for members of our Gaelic-speaking alumnae to maintain a close relationship with the University.
7. Maintain and continue to promote the Gaelic Writer in Residence Scheme.

## 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:**

1. Continue to support and participate in the Capital Gaelic network to promote Gaelic in the city.
2. 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.
3. Work collaboratively with Ionad Gàidhlig Dhùn Èideann to support the initiative to establish a Gaelic centre in the city.
4. Ensure the continued success of Gaelic Week Edinburgh in collaboration with the City of Edinburgh Council and the Capital Gaelic network.
5. Work with An Comunn Gàidhealach to continue to host the annual John MacLeod Memorial Festival at the University.
6. Develop and expand our partnerships with Gaelic schools in Edinburgh and across the country, with an aim to demonstrate what the University can offer Gaelic-speaking students.
7. Work with partners to develop and promote Gaelic internship opportunities for our students.
8. Be aspirational in our partnership working with government, establishing the University as a voice for Gaelic in Scotland.
9. Establish regular contact with external Gaelic-speaking media outlets to promote Gaelic activity at the University.

## Gaelic on Campus

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

### **Commitments:**

1. Maintain the Gaelic Officer post.
2. Continue to promote the use of the University's Gaelic logo and explore the option of a bilingual logo.
3. Provide and promote resource for increased visibility and use of Gaelic in University systems, including by encouraging staff to have bilingual email signatures.
4. Include Gaelic in welcome and graduation ceremonies, where appropriate.
5. Display Gaelic welcome signage and screens and promote the use of Gaelic in bilingual signage on new and re-developed University buildings.
6. Report on Gaelic use, learning and teaching centrally, including by surveying staff and students on their Gaelic abilities.
7. Continue to stock and expand Gaelic-language merchandise at the University of Edinburgh shop.

## Public Consultation

In order to ensure that our new Gaelic Plan accurately reflects the priorities of our staff, students, and local community, **we are currently seeking your views** – whether you are a Gaelic speaker or not – on the structure and content of this draft Gaelic Plan.

You can respond to the public consultation on our draft plan from **Tuesday 19 March until Tuesday 30 April 2024**.

[edin.ac/gaelic-consultation](https://edin.ac/gaelic-consultation)

Further opportunities to engage with our Gaelic Plan development will be published on our website and social media channels.

[Gaelic at the University of Edinburgh](#)