

Teaching Bursary in Scotland – Island Communities Impact Assessment - not required

August 2023

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Name of Policy, Strategy or Service – Teaching Bursary in Scotland

Step One - What are the objectives of the policy, strategy or service?

The previous STEM bursary scheme which provided bursaries of £20,000 as an incentive to ease transition into Initial Teacher Education for those considering a change in career to the hardest-to-fill teaching subjects: Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Technical Education, Computing Science and Home Economics has now been extended to include Gaelic as a secondary subject, Gaelic medium across all secondary subjects and Gaelic medium in Primary, and has been renamed to the Teaching bursary in Scotland.

What are the intended impacts/ outcomes and how do these potentially differ across the islands?

The extension for Gaelic will be beneficial overall for the status of the language. There are speakers of Gaelic in island communities as well as speakers across Scotland. There is also Gaelic medium education (GME) being delivered in a range of urban and rural settings and therefore whether the impact will be “significantly” different in effect on island communities is difficult to tell. It is hoped that candidates for the Gaelic elements will apply and will be successful and that that will encourage more people into teaching who can then work through the medium of Gaelic. There are also options to undertake the relevant training and education courses in island settings – principally for 2023 at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig on Skye. There will not be a Gaelic distance learning option available for 2023 however so depending on where an applicant is resident on commencement of the course it may require short term displacement of candidates from or to island setting to access the course and or to undertake the probationary year. Benefit to island communities is that it could increase the number of teachers available to teach through the medium of Gaelic in future years and the range of subjects taught. This could increase workforce in GME in island settings and/or increase range of subjects available through infrastructure such as e-Sgoil. The general strengthening of GME is beneficial for the Gaelic language, job opportunities and language status.

Step Two - What data is available about the current situation in the islands?

[Bòrd na Gàidhlig](#) (NDPB) have had a practice of gathering and reporting on some data strands for GME - this information is here [Education Data – Bòrd na Gàidhlig \(gaidhlig.scot\)](#)

In addition, in an attempt by researchers to gauge the extent of the likely need for GME teachers over the next five years, local authorities were contacted and invited

to indicate their requirements set against the pressures outlined above. 19 local authorities with GME provision, or who had plans to introduce it in the near future responded. Based on the responses provided and taking into account the factors outlined above, it is estimated that a minimum of 420 Primary Teachers and 228 Secondary Teachers will be needed nationally over the next 5 years; requiring a minimum of 135 new Primary entrants and 90 new Secondary entrants to the profession. These figures do not include any early learning and childcare staff whose numbers undoubtedly will have to expand as demand increases.

In relation to the Gaelic related posts, this policy is likely to support island communities which have Gaelic more so than in Shetland and Orkney where the 2011 census data demonstrates that there are substantially less Gaelic speakers living in those areas, no instances of GME provision and no significant presence of Gaelic Learner Education (GLE).

Step Three – Consultation

The local authorities listed in the schedule to the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 are Argyll and Bute Council, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Highland Council, North Ayrshire Council, Orkney Islands Council and Shetland Islands Council.

Gaelic and Scots division conducted a full public consultation between the period August 2022 and December 2022. A significant section of that consultation was on a strategic approach to GME. The consultation responses and activity confirmed what was already understood about shortages of Gaelic Medium teachers being a barrier to the strengthening, expansion and delivery of Gaelic education across the country. Calls were made for incentives and initiatives to be brought forward to encourage candidates into teaching (as well as to retain them) and to take actions by government and public authorities to elevate the status of the language. Therefore, the policy demonstrates that the Scottish Government has listened to consultees and is acting on consultation findings. Inclusion of Gaelic in the teacher bursary scheme acts to elevate the status of the language by indicating the importance that Scottish Government place on Gaelic and teachers of Gaelic and of other subjects through the medium of Gaelic. This should impact positively on the status of the language within society.

Separately the inclusion of Gaelic in the bursary scheme can directly support individual candidates to come into teaching. We are fully aware that the bursary scheme in itself will not be the whole and only answer to addressing teacher shortages for Gaelic, but it is an important contribution. The prospect of a bursary has been very warmly received by the community and education providers at school and HE level. There is therefore no direct need to go back to consult with authorities on whether they wish the scheme to be extended however we will need to monitor impact.

Step Four – Assessment

Whether there will be a “significantly different effect” for island communities is difficult to evidence given the unknowns around where candidates will come from / where they will study and undergo probation and where they will eventually take up posts


thereafter. It should be noted that the requirements for fluency in Gaelic could be achieved by speakers who come from islands or other areas and from candidates who have Gaelic as a first language or have acquired it as a learner.

However, in a wider sense positive initiatives to support Gaelic will impact positively, both on Gaelic speaking island communities and for Gaelic communities in other areas.

Step Five - Is a full Island Communities Impact Assessment required?

In preparing the ICIA, I have formed an opinion that our policy, strategy or service is not likely to have an effect on an island community which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities). The reason for this is detailed below.

Reason for not completing a full Islands Communities Impact Assessment:
We can conclude that there will not be a “significantly different” impact from this extension on island communities and no full assessment required.

Screening ICIA completed by (name)	<u>Angela Felvus</u>
Position	<u>Senior Policy Officer</u>
Signature and date	<u>A Felvus</u> <u>30 June 2023</u>
ICIA authorised by (we recommend DD level)	Sam Anson
Position	Deputy Director, Workforce, Infrastructure and Digital.
Signature and date	 6 July 2023



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