Lìbhrigeadh Gàidhlig do dh'Inbhich tro Ùlpan

Delivery of Gaelic to Adults through Ùlpan

Final Report to Bòrd na Gàidhlig

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List of Acronyms

BAC	Basque Autonomous Community
BnG	Bòrd na Gàidhlig
CLIÙ	Cuideachadh do Luchd-Ionnsachaidh Ùra
CnES	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
GfA	Gaelic for Adults
GLAIF	Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund
GLP	Gaelic Language Plan
GME	Gaelic Medium Education
HABE	Institute for Basquisation and Literacy in Adults
HIE	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
L1	First language
L2	Second language
IP	Intellectual Property
SDS	Skills Development Scotland
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SCQF	Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority

WfA   Welsh for Adults

Geàrr-chunntas

Ro-ràdh

'S e amas an rannsachaidh seo sgrùdadh a dhèanamh air buaidh agus èifeachdas Ùlpain airson ionnsachadh na Gàidhlig mar inbhich ann an Alba. Tha Ùlpan na chùrsa Ghàidhlig do inbhich air a dhealbhadh le companaidh prìobhaideach, Deiseal Earranta. Tha an cùrsa ag amas air dòigh a sholarachadh a leigeas le inbhich fileantachd ann am bruidhinn / èisteachd fhaighinn gu furasta, gu luath agus gu h-èifeachdach. Tha 144 aonadan anns a' chùrsa air an teagasg ann an 216 uairean a thìde.

Tha an rannsachadh seo a' sgrùdadh a' chùrsa agus mar a thathar ga lìbhrigeadh tro cheithir raointean rannsachaidh:

- Feallsanachd-teagaisg a' chùrsa
- Lìbhrigeadh a' chùrsa
- Eòlas nan oileanach
- Eòlas nan oidean

'S e amas na h-aithisg seo toraidhean an rannsachaidh a thoirt seachad agus molaidhean a dhèanamh.

Dealbhadh an Rannsachaidh

Chleachdadh grunn mhodhan gus èifeachdas structar agus cùrsa Ùlpain a sgrùdadh: lèirmheas aithisgean, lèirmheas litreachais; sgrùdadh dàta rianachd; agallamhan le luchd-fiosrachaidh sònraichte, oifigearan poileasaidh, luchd-solaraidh cùrsa agus Deiseal nam measg; sgrùdadh-cùise air trì buidhnean de luchd-ionnsachaidh (a' gabhail a-staigh agallamhan le oidean ionadail; sealltainn air clasaichean / goireasan; buidhnean-fòcais le luchd-ionnsachaidh; cleachdadh foirm mu shoirbheachas ionnsachaidh agus deuchainn-labhairt le luchd-ionnsachaidh a bha deònach); ceisteachan air-loidhne le ball-sampaill tuairmeach de oileanaich Ùlpain, an dà chuid feadhainn a tha ga dhèanamh an-dràsta agus feadhainn a bha roimhe; agallamhan le ball-sampaill tomhasach oidean; agus agallamhan le eòlaichean fa-leth ann an suidheachaidhean cànain coltach.

Cha b' urrainn don rannsachadh coimeas a dhèanamh air soirbheas luchd-ionnsachaidh Ùlpain le buidheann choltach de luchd-ionnsachaidh inbhich a tha ag ionnsachadh tro mhodhan eile (buidhnean coimeis); an àite sin rinneadh coimeasan le pìosan rannsachaidh a rinneadh roimhe. Chaidh toraidhean co-cheangailte ri ionnsachadh na Gàidhlig a sgrùdadh leis a' cheisteachan air-loidhne agus buidhnean-fòcais às dèidh làimh. Gus tomhas a dhèanamh air comasan cànain, chleachd sinn sgèilichean an CEFR – an Common European Framework of Reference.

Prìomh Thoraidhean

Rianachd agus Lìbhrigeadh a' Chùrsa

- Tha maoineachadh cùrsa luchd-tòiseachaidh na Gàidhlig a' cumail ri poileasaidhean Bòrd na Gàidhlig agus a chom-pàirtichean.

- San fharsaingeachd tha earbsa aig luchd-sealbhaidh ann an Ùlpan agus tha iad a' comharrachadh clàr-teagaisg aontaichte, adhartas tro ionnsachadh rianail agus dian-ionnsachadh iomchaidh agus feumail do choimhearsnachd na Gàidhlig.

- Tha na sgilean agus amasan cànain, air a bheil Ùlpan ag amas, iomchaidh san fharsaingeachd airson cùrsa Gàidhlig do luchd-tòiseachaidh a tha nan inbhich.

- Tha luchd-sealbhaidh a' sùileachadh cus a thaobh ìre comais labhairtich bho chùrsa a mhaireas 215 uairean a thìde.

- Cha do chuireadh an gnìomh am modail-lìbhrigidh gu tur mar a bhathas an dùil an toiseach, le lìonradh de oidean neo-eisimeileach ceadaichte gus Ùlpan a theagasg. Thathar ga lìbhrigeadh ann an cumantas tro bhuidhnean eile (luchd-solarachaidh chùrsaichean). Tha lìbhrigeadh èifeachdach Ùlpain an urra ri dòigh-obrach cho-òrdanaichte stèidhichte air tuigse feumalachdan luchd-ionnsachaidh na Gàidhlig agus air sealbh roinnte a' phrògraim. Tha seo a dhìth aig an ìre seo.

- Tha luchd-bratha cudromach a' cumail a-mach gu bheil Ùlpan a' stiùireadh iùl ro-innleachdail GdI ann an Alba agus ann a bhith a' dèanamh sin nach eil cothromachd ann eadar gnothaichean malairteach agus gnothaichean coimhearsnachd luchd-ionnsachaidh inbhich san fharsaingeachd.

- Tha dìth iùl maoineachaidh nàiseanta airson solarachadh GdI as coireach ri modail maoineachaidh neo-chothromach 'son Ùlpain. Tha seo a' cur bacadh air sgrùdadh iomlan maoineachadh poblach ann an Ùlpan, agus mar sin air cho èifeachdach 's a tha e a thaobh chosgaisean.

- Tha na siostaman maoineachaidh ioma-fhilltich aig cridhe lìbhrigeadh Ùlpain le buidhnean eile a bharrachd an urra ri dòighean rianachd toinnte agus eadar-dhealaichte; tha seo a' cur uallach a bharrachd air luchd-solarachaidh chùrsaichean agus le bhith dèanamh seo tha èifeachdas-cosgais dualtach gun a bhith cho math.

- Chan eil ach 50% de luchd-ionnsachaidh riaraichte leis cho furasta 's a tha clas Ùlpain fhaighinn aig ìre a tha freagarrach dhaibh. Tha seo a' sealltainn gu bheil tòrr oileanaich ann nach urrainn cùrsaichean Ùlpain fhaighinn nuair a tha iad gan iarraidh.

Builean a' Chùrsa

- Cha do chruinnicheadh dàta rianachail air adhartas no builean an luchd-ionnsachaidh. Chan urrainnear a' bhuaidh as fharsainge co-cheangailte ri àireamhan no soirbheachas oileanaich a thomhas gu h-iomlan. An àite sin rinneadh sgrùdadh air ball-sampaill de luchd-ionnsachaidh gus buaidh Ùlpain air builean ionnsachadh oileanaich Ghàidhlig a chnuasachadh.

- Tha an cùrsa air a bhith soirbheachail ann am faighinn gu luchd-ionnsachaidh ùr agus ann an a bhith a' togail ùidh às ùr am measg luchd-ionnsachaidh a bha air sgur. Tha toraidhean an sgrùdaidh tuairmich againn air oileanaich a' sealltainn na leanas: a-mach às na 2586 oileanaich a chlàraich air aon no barrachd air aon chùrsa Ùlpain, tha:

  - 27% nan luchd-ionnsachaidh a thill don Ghàidhlig
  - 55% nan luchd-ionnsachaidh ùr don Ghàidhlig

- Tha 92.5% air pàirt de Ùlpan a dhèanamh agus às an àireamh sin tha 29% air co-dhùnadh a dhèanamh sgur de ionnsachadh na Gàidhlig le Ùlpan, agus tha 57% an

dùil an cùrsa a choileanadh. 'S e 3.43 bliadhnaichean an ùine as gnàthaiche airson Ùlpan a choileanadh.

- Cha do fhritheil ach 69% de luchd-ionnsachaidh a ghabh pàirt anns an sgrùdadh, a tha air pàirt de Ùlpan a dhèanamh, air cùrsa Ùlpain ann an 2013. Tha seo a' sealltainn nach eil ionnsachadh na Gàidhlig le Ùlpan na iomairt leantainneach airson na mòr-chuid. Air aon làimh tha seo a' sealltainn an dùbhlain ann a bhith a' toirt seachad solarachadh leantainneach, ach air an làimh eile, tha e a' sealltainn firinn shòisealta an luchd-ionnsachaidh agus an iomadachd cothroman ionnsachaidh a chleachdas luchd-ionnsachaidh airson fighe a-staigh gu beatha teaghlaich agus obair.

- Chan eilear a' cleachdadh Ùlpain leis fhèin airson ionnsachadh; tha 34% de luchd-ionnsachaidh a' cleachdadh modhan eile de theagaisg gu seachdaineach no gu mìosail, a bharrachd air frithealadh air clasaichean Ùlpain; agus tha 49% de luchd-ionnsachaidh a tha air pàirt de Ùlpan a dhèanamh air frithealadh a dhèanamh air clas eile às dèidh a' chlas Ùlpain mu dheireadh aca.

- Tha e doirbh, mar sin, buil ionnsachadh na Gàidhlig tro Ùlpan a chumail fa leth bho bhuaidhean eile air an cuid ionnsachadh aca, ionnsachadh cànain foirmeil, togradh pearsanta, lìonraidhean sòisealta, msaa. San fharsaingeachd, ge-tà:
    - Tha 85.7% de oileanaich Ùlpan air A2 den CEFR (cleachdadh bunaiteach) a ruigsinn no air a dhol seachad air ann am bruidhinn os àrd (*spoken production*) às dèidh c. 160 uairean a thìde de theagasg Ùlpain.
    - Tha 75.7% de oileanaich Ùlpan air A2 den CEFR (cleachdadh bunaiteach) a ruigsinn no air a dhol seachad air ann an *eadar-labhairt (spoken interaction)* às dèidh c. 160 uairean a thìde de theagasg Ùlpain.

- Chan eil luchd-ionnsachaidh ùr cho dualtach na h-ìrean comais seo a ruigsinn 's a tha luchd-ionnsachaidh leantainneach. Ruigidh beagan a bharrachd air dà thrian (69%) de luchd-ionnsachaidh ùr A2 ann am bruidhinn os àrd agus beagan a bharrachd na leth A2 ann an eadar-labhairt às dèidh am meud de theagasg seo.

- Tha seo a' sealltainn, nuair a chuimhnicheas sinn air ìre tòiseachaidh luchd-ionnsachaidh, nach eil Ùlpan cho èifeachdach ann a bhith a' teagasg Gàidhlig do fhìor luchd-tòiseachaidh 's a tha e do fheadhainn aig a bheil eòlas eile air ionnsachadh na Gàidhlig. Tha seo cuideachd a' sealltainn gainnead tachartasan ionnsachaidh neo-fhoirmeil ri fhaighinn aig luchd-ionnsachaidh, a dh'fhaodadh a bhith na dhòigh chudromach airson luchd-ionnsachaidh ùr lìonraidhean sòisealta Gàidhlig a thogail.

- Shoirbhich leis a' phrògram seo ann a bhith a' trèanadh 187 oidean gus a bhith a' teagasg na Gàidhlig, ach tha fada nas lugha na sin ri fhaighinn airson teagasg oir tha iarrtasan teagasg Ùlpain ann an co-fharpais le obair làn-ùine airson tòrr de oidean. Mar sin, gu tric thathar a' cleachdadh teagasg Ùlpain airson beàrnan a lìonadh nuair a tha daoine eadar obair, no air a chleachdadh ri taobh obair phàirt-ùine eile agus nuair a tha daoine air an dreuchd a leigeil dhiubh.

Dealbhadh a' Chùrsa

- Tha feallsanachd teagaisg chiallach aig Ùlpan a thaobh teagasg agus ionnsachadh na Gàidhlig a tha freagarrach airson cuid de luchd-ionnsachaidh.

- Tha buaidh mhath aig susbaint, structar agus àrainneachd a' chlas air togradh luchd-ionnsachaidh taobh a-staigh a' chlas. Chòrd an cùrsa Ùlpain mu dheireadh aca ri 78%.

- Tha àite ann an GdI airson cùrsa a tha a' cleachdadh modhan drilidh, ath-aithris agus cuimhneachaidh. Feumar na modhan seo a chur còmhla le gnìomhan a tha a' ceadachadh eadar-labhairt le fiosrachadh pearsanta agus a' toirt seachad chothroman airson labhairt nàdarra. Chan eil na gnìomhan seo air an gabhail a-staigh ann an cruth a' chùrsa.

- Tha tòrr den luchd-ionnsachaidh ga fhaighinn doirbh gus cuimhneachadh air a' ghràmar a tha riatanach airson rudeigin ùr a ràdh, mar as trice seach nach eil iad ga thuigsinn gu h-iomlan. Tha dùbhlain aig luchd-ionnsachaidh ann a bhith a' faighinn chothroman gus Gàidhlig a bhruidhinn taobh a-muigh a' chlas. Chan eil ach 40.1% a' bruidhinn Gàidhlig gu seachdaineil taobh a-muigh a' chlas.

- Chan eil cùmhnantan no cumhachan lìbhrigeadh Ùlpain a' ceadachadh sùbailteachd airson lìbhrigeadh cùrsa a tha air a dhealbhadh airson àrainneachd ionadail.

- Tha buannachdan ann do chuid de oileanaich agus do oidean leis cho teann agus òrdaichte a tha dealbhadh nan leasan.

- Chan eil dealbhadh lìbhrigeadh a' chùrsa ag amas air leigeil le farsaingeachd de mhodhan no ro-innleachdan ionnsachaidh no comasan no togradh oileanaich.

- Dh'fhaodadh seo a bhith na dhuilgheadas seach gu bheil cleachdadh Ùlpain airson Gàidhlig ionnsachadh co-cheangailte ri cho furasta 's a tha Ùlpan ri fhaighinn airson 46.8% de luchd-ionnsachaidh, an àite modh no clàr a' chùrsa. Gu dearbh, 's e a' bheag-chuid den t-seòrsa luchd-ionnsachaidh ris an deach an cùrsa a chruthachadh a tha nan oileanaich air a' chùrsa.

Càileachd a' Chùrsa

- Tha an trèanadh a gheibh oidean an toiseach gan ullachadh gu math airson lìbhrigeadh leasain Ùlpain aig na h-ìrean as tràithe. Chan fheum teisteanas teagasg Gàidhlig, no uidheamachd no eòlas teagasg cànain sam bith a bhith aig oidean.

- Tha farsaingeachd sgilean agus eòlas, sgilean cànain nam measg, a' ciallachadh gum biodh cuid de oidean feumach air barrachd taic agus trèanadh.

- Chaidh càileachd nan oidean a chomharrachadh le luchd-ionnsachaidh mar aon de na neartan aig Ùlpan: tha 90% de luchd-ionnsachaidh riaraichte no glè riaraichte le càileachd an oidean.

- Tha oidean cudromach airson togradh luchd-ionnsachaidh a chumail a' dol agus chunnacas, nuair a bha sinn sna seòmraichean-teagaisg, cho cruaidh 's a tha iad ag obair gus cothroman ionnsachaidh tlachdmhor a chruthachadh.

- Uile-gu-lèir, tha 53% de luchd-ionnsachaidh a' creidsinn gu bheil Ùlpan a' teagasg Gàidhlig gu math no glè mhath. Tha 85% den luchd-ionnsachaidh a' creidsinn gun deach an cùrsa mu dheireadh aca a theagasg gu math. Tha seo a' sealltainn nach eil na feumalachdan ionnsachaidh aig tòrr luchd-ionnsachaidh air an coileanadh le Ùlpan.

- A thaobh toimhsean càileachd eile:

    - tha 71% riaraichte no glè riaraichte le taic agus fiosrachadh 'son oileanaich

- tha 61% riaraichte no glè riaraichte le susbaint a' chùrsa

- tha 50% riaraichte no glè riaraichte le geamannan a' chùrsa

• Tha susbaint cànain a' chùrsa air a stiùireadh gu ìre a thaobh structar. Tha e a' dol thairis air pìosan gràmair cudromach. Tha seo a' gabhail a-staigh susbaint cànain aig àrd ìre agus beagan briathrachais agus ghnàthasan-cainnt neo-àbhaisteach. Tha an cùrsa feumach air beagan ath-dhealbhadh, gu sònraichte aig na h-ìrean as àirde, gus an tèid aige a bhith nas soirbheachail na amas air fìor Ghàidhlig labhairteach a theagasg.

• Tha an cùrsa cuideachd feumail air: modhan gus measadh a dhèanamh air obair nan oidean; dòighean rianail gus fiosrachadh fhaighinn air ais agus a thoirt a-mach; agus, sgrùdadh le neach-leughaidh neo-eisimeileach gus mearachdan agus briathrachas, gnàthasan-cainnt agus structaran neo-iomchaidh a chomharrachadh.

Executive Summary

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to review the effects and effectiveness of Ùlpan for L2 adult Gaelic acquisition in Scotland. Ùlpan is a Gaelic language course for adults designed by a private company called Deiseal Ltd. The course aims to provide an accessible, accelerated and effective route to achieving oral/aural fluency in Gaelic in adulthood. The course comprises 144 units taught over 216 hours.

This research addresses the course and its delivery mechanisms through the following four research areas:

- Course pedagogy

- Delivery of the course

- The student experience

- The tutor experience.

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the study, and to offer recommendations.

Study Design

Several lines of inquiry were used to investigate the effectiveness of the Ùlpan course and structure: document review; a literature review; administrative data analysis; interviews with key informants, including policy officers, course providers and Deiseal; case studies of three groups of learners (which included interviews with local tutors, facility/classroom observations, focus groups with learners, completion of a language outcomes form and outcomes testing with volunteers); an online survey to a random sample of Ùlpan students, current and former; interviews with a criteria-based sample of tutors; and, interviews with external experts in broadly comparable language contexts.

The study was not able to compare the outcomes of Ùlpan learners with a similar group of adult learners, who are learning through other methods (comparison group); instead comparisons were drawn with previous studies. The outcomes which relate to the objectives of learning Gaelic were explored through the online survey and followed up by focus groups. To measure general Gaelic language proficiency, we used the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) scales.

Key Findings

Course Management and Delivery

- The funding of a beginners course for the Gaelic L2 community is aligned with Bòrd na Gàidhlig and partners' policies.

- Stakeholders generally have confidence in the Ùlpan course, and identify the uniform curriculum, progression through structured learning and the intensity of learning as highly beneficial and appropriate to the needs of the Gaelic community.

- The skills being aimed for, and the proficiency targets of Ùlpan, are broadly appropriate for a beginners' course for the Gaelic adult learner community.

- There are unrealistic expectations held by stakeholders on the level of oral proficiency to be expected from the 216-hour Ùlpan course.

- The original Ùlpan delivery model, based on a network of licensed tutors teaching Ùlpan as sole-traders, has not been fully realised. Provision is mainly through third-party organisations (course providers). The successful delivery of Ùlpan requires, therefore, a collaborative approach based on a shared understanding of the needs of the Gaelic learner community and shared ownership of the programme. This is currently lacking.

- Key informants argue Ùlpan is determining the strategic direction of GfA in Scotland and that, in doing so, a satisfactory balance is not being struck between commercial interests and the interests of the adult learning community at large.

- The continued absence of a national funding framework for GfA provision has resulted in a fragmented funding model for Ùlpan, which has impeded a full exploration of public investment in Ùlpan, and therefore its cost-effectiveness.

- The complex funding arrangements underpinning the delivery of Ùlpan by third-party organisations are leading to varied and complex forms of administration, which place a burden on course providers and, in doing so, are likely to reduce the overall cost-effectiveness of delivery.

- Only 50% of learners are satisfied with the availability of Ùlpan for their level. This suggests that many are unable to access Ùlpan courses in a timely fashion.

Course Impacts

- Administrative data on learner progression and outcomes has not been collected. A sample survey of learners was conducted to explore, among other things, the impact of Ùlpan on students' Gaelic language learning.

- The course has been successful in reaching new learners as well as re-engaging lapsed learners. The results of our random student survey suggest that, of the 2586 students to have enrolled on one or more Ùlpan courses,

    - 27% are lapsed learners
    - 55% are new Gaelic learners

- 92.5% of learners are part-way through Ùlpan of which 29% have chosen to discontinue learning Gaelic with Ùlpan, and 57% plan to complete the course. The mean length of time taken to complete Ùlpan is 3.43 years.

- Only 69% of learners surveyed, who are part-way through Ùlpan, had attended an Ùlpan class in 2013. This highlights that, for the majority, learning Gaelic through Ùlpan is not a continuous process. This reflects the challenge of continuity of provision as well the social realities of learners and the multiple learning options which learners use to fit around family and working life.

- Ùlpan is not only used as a stand-alone method; 34% of learners attend other kinds of structured tuition on a weekly or monthly basis, whilst also attending Ùlpan

classes; and 49% of learners who are part-way through Ùlpan have attended other structured tuition since their last Ùlpan class.

- It is difficult, therefore, to isolate the effect of learning Gaelic through Ùlpan from other influences on their language acquisition, including other forms of structured language learning, motivation and social networks. In general, however:

  - 85.7% of Ùlpan students have reached or exceeded level A2 (basic user) of the CEFR for proficiency in *spoken production* following c. 160 hours or more Ùlpan tuition.

  - 75.7% of Ùlpan students have reached or exceeded A2 (basic user) proficiency in *spoken interaction* after c. 160 hours or more Ùlpan tuition.

- New learners are less likely to reach these levels of proficiency than continuing learners. Just over two thirds (69%) of new learners reach A2 level in spoken production and just over half (51.9%) reach A2 in spoken interaction after this amount of tuition.

- This suggests that, when we take into account the learners starting point, Ùlpan is not as effective at teaching Gaelic to total beginners as it is to those who have previous experience of learning Gaelic. It also reflects the paucity of informal learning activities available to learners, which can be an important way for new learners to build Gaelic-speaking social networks.

- The programme has succeeded in training 187 tutors to teach Gaelic, but far fewer are available to teach as the demands of tutoring Ùlpan compete with the demands of full-time employment for many would-be active tutors. As such, tutoring is often used to 'gap fill' breaks in employment, or used in combination with other part-time work and in retirement.

Course Design

- Ùlpan has a clear pedagogic approach to teaching and learning Gaelic which has benefits to some learners.

- The course content, structure and class atmosphere has a positive effect on learners' motivation: 78% enjoyed their last Ùlpan course.

- There is a place in GfA for a course which uses drilling, repetition and memorisation methods. These methods need to be combined with activities which give opportunity for the exchange of genuine, personalised information and spontaneous speech. These activities are not embedded in the Ùlpan course design.

- Many learners find it difficult to retrieve the grammar required to say something novel, often because they do not fully understand it. Learners also face challenges in finding opportunities to practise speaking Gaelic out of class: only 40.1% speak Gaelic on at least a weekly basis outside of class.

- The terms and conditions for the delivery of Ùlpan leave little flexibility for delivering a course which is tailored to local conditions.

- The prescriptive and tightly scheduled design of lessons has benefits to some learners, as well as to tutors.

- The lesson delivery design does not aim to accommodate a diverse range of learner differences in aptitude, motivation, learning styles and learning strategies.

- This is potentially problematic given that the choice to learn Gaelic with Ùlpan is guided by course availability and convenience for 46.8% of learners, not by the course method or schedule. Furthermore, the kind of learners it has been designed to teach account for only a small proportion of students.

Course Quality

- The initial tutor training prepares tutors well for delivering Ùlpan lessons at the earlier levels. Tutors do not have to be qualified in teaching Gaelic, have any qualifications or any language teaching experience.

- The variety of skills and experiences, including language skills, mean some tutors would benefit from a greater level of ongoing support and training than they are currently receiving.

- The quality of tutors is identified as one of strengths of Ùlpan by learners: 90% of learners are either satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of their tutors.

- Tutors are important for maintaining learner motivation and we witnessed during class observations how hard they work to create an energetic and enjoyable learning experience.

- Overall, 85% of learners believe their current or last course was well or very well taught, but only 53% believe Ùlpan teaches Gaelic well or very well. The discrepancy between the two figures suggests that the learning preferences, desires and needs of many learners are not being fully met by Ùlpan.

- On other parameters of quality:
    - 71% are satisfied or very satisfied with student support and feedback.
    - 61% are satisfied or very satisfied with the course content.
    - 50% are satisfied or very satisfied with the course games.

- Ùlpan language content is structure-led. It covers significant grammatical ground. This includes some high register content as well as unusual use of vocabulary and idiom. The course requires some re-orientation, particularly at the upper levels, in order to make it more successful in achieving its goal of teaching authentic Gaelic speech.

- The course would also benefit from: measures to review tutor practice; more systematic procedures for eliciting and communicating feedback; and, external review to identify errors and inappropriate use of vocabulary, idiom and structure in the current version.

1. Background to the Study

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The *National Plan for Gaelic 2007 – 12* explicitly set the agenda "to create a sustainable future for Gaelic in Scotland" (Bòrd na Gàidhlig, 2007: 8) and outlined Bòrd na Gàidhlig's short-term target to increase the number of adult learners progressing to fluency, with a view to increasing the total number of Gaelic speakers to 65,000 by 2021. More specifically, in the Bòrd's seminal action plan, *Ginealach Ùr na Gàidhlig* (Bòrd na Gàidhlig, 2010), adult education was identified as a priority area to help achieve target increases in the crude number of Gaelic speakers in Scotland. To this end, additional investment in the Ùlpan programme was made in 2010, when Bòrd na Gàidhlig entered into a Funding Agreement with Deiseal Ltd (henceforth referred to as Deiseal) to co-fund the "certification, refinement, and completion of Ùlpan" (Bòrd na Gàidhlig, 2012a: 29) together with Skills Development Scotland and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. This funding agreement ends in March 2014.

1.1.2 The *National Gaelic Language Plan 2012 – 17* reinforced Gaelic for Adults as a priority area of language acquisition policy, stating an expected outcome of its intervention to be "an increase in the number of adults acquiring Gaelic from the current total of around 2,000 to 3,000 by 2017" (Bòrd na Gàidhlig, 2012b: 8). As the only nationally accessible and nationally coherent class-room method for learning Gaelic as an adult, Ùlpan has an important role to play in the process of achieving these goals for adult learning. However, the efficacy and efficiency of Ùlpan for producing new Gaelic speakers is poorly understood, as there has been little research on the topic to date. Given the strategic imperative to ensure greater numbers of adults learning Gaelic achieve fluency, and the recent investments in Ùlpan nationally, it is timely that rigorous and impartial research investigates the effects and effectiveness of Ùlpan in order to inform its future development and to ensure a sustainable future for adult Gaelic acquisition.

1.1.3 The University of Aberdeen, in partnership with the University of the West of Scotland and in association with IAITH: Welsh Centre for Language Planning, was commissioned by Bòrd na Gàidhlig to undertake a study into the effectiveness of the Ùlpan course and delivery. This study commenced in November 2012.

Table 1: Research questions

Research Area	Questions to be addressed in research area
Course Pedagogy	• What are the principal features of Ùlpan, and how do they compare with other *ulpanim*? • What is the difference between the teaching methods and content of Ùlpan as compared to L2 adult teaching in broadly comparable language contexts? • How educationally effective is Ùlpan in general and what improvements might be recommended for course pedagogy? • How suitable would the course be for accreditation by education authorities?
Delivery of the Course	• What are the various models of delivery currently available, who runs them, and what improvements, if any, might be recommended for them? • How do the models of delivery of the course compare to models of *ulpan* and other L2 courses internationally? • How effective in terms of education and return on public investment are the models of delivery and what improvements, if any, might be recommended for them?
The Student Experience	• What is the level of language proficiency which might be expected from the average student emerging from the various stages and models of the course; and what is the range of abilities that might be expected? • What is the level of prior skills required for enrolling in Ùlpan in the various stages and models of the course? • What are the existing support systems and materials for students, and how effective are these systems and materials and their distribution to students? • What learning methods and materials, in addition to Ùlpan are used by Ùlpan students, and to what extent do they contribute to success? • What draws learners of different backgrounds to the course and to the various delivery models, or act as disincentives; were their expectations met; and how might uptake and outcome be improved? • How effective is the course and the various delivery models in retaining students, and how can losses be explained; and how might the retention be improved? • What organised arrangements are there for maintaining student support and networks on completion of an Ùlpan course?
The Tutor Experience	• What are the language and other skills required of a tutor to teach the various stages and models of the course? • What tutor recruitment and training systems are in place, and how effective are they? • What support systems and materials exist, and how effective are these systems and materials and their distribution to tutors? • What attracts people of different backgrounds to the course and to the various delivery models; and how might the circumstances be improved? • How effective is the course and delivery models in employing and retaining tutors; what are the main reasons for tutors leaving Ùlpan; and how might their utilisation and retention be improved?

1.2 Purpose of the study

1.2.1 The purpose of this study is to review the effects and effectiveness of Ùlpan for L2 adult Gaelic acquisition in Scotland. The study has one over-arching research question:

- How effective is the Ùlpan course and structure in delivering Gaelic learning to adults in Scotland?

1.2.2 This research addresses this question through the following four research areas, as outlined in the research specification:

- Course pedagogy
- Delivery of the course
- The student experience
- The tutor experience.

Within each strand is a set of secondary research questions, which guide our approach. These research questions are summarised in Table 1.

1.3 Purpose of this report

1.3.1 The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the study, and to offer recommendations. In this report we:

- Introduce the Ùlpan course (Section 2);
- Explore existing research into additional language acquisition for adults (Section 3);
- Compare *ex ante* knowledge about Gaelic for Adults programmes to adult language programmes in comparable minority language contexts, principally in Wales and the Basque country (Section 4);
- Provide a simple account of the Ùlpan business model, as developed by Deiseal and implemented in partnership with sponsors and providers (Section 5);
- Provide an overview of how Ùlpan provision has evolved since its inception in 2007 and explore the nature and effects of the delivery mechanisms (Section 6);
- Explore the profile of Ùlpan learners and their experiences of the course (Section 7);
- Describe the impact the Ùlpan course is having in bringing adult learners towards fluency (Section 8);

- Provide a comprehensive account of student and tutor experiences of teaching and learning Ùlpan from a pedagogical perspective (Section 9);
- Explore the nature of the tutor experience (Section 10).
- Provide a list of conclusions and offer recommendations (Section 11).

1.4   The basis of this report

1.4.1   This report is based on a review of the academic and grey literature; analysis of Ùlpan programme data to June 2013; interviews with key policy and delivery stakeholders in the Ùlpan programme; a review of course materials pertaining to 24 units from the Ùlpan course; survey data from 282 Ùlpan students; interviews with Ùlpan tutors; observation of Ùlpan classes; and, semi-structured interviews, using a combination of focus group and individual interviews, with Ùlpan students.

1.4.2   The literature review comprises a review of previous reports, commentaries and analyses concerning Gaelic language for adult programmes. With respect to best practice in the teaching and learning of small languages, the study has benefited from the findings of recent and ongoing research commissioned by the Welsh Government Department for Education and Skills (Wray *et al*., 2011; Mac Giolla Chríost *et al*., 2012) to inform the development of the Welsh for Adults Programme, as well as international literature. There is limited research in the public domain in the English or Welsh languages which is specifically about *ulpan*-based programmes; what does exist has been reviewed from a pedagogical and delivery perspective.

1.4.3   Deiseal collects and maintains information on Ùlpan students and tutors derived from student registration data and tutor-training data. At the client's request, the study team approached Deiseal for these data at the initial stage of the project, and received student registration data and tutor accreditation data in June 2013. The report has also used secondary programme data reported in the quarterly reports from Deiseal to Bòrd na Gàidhlig March 2010 to March 2013. Some of the data contained within the quarterly reports has been redacted to prevent the disclosure of individuals or due to the data being commercially sensitive.

1.4.4   The data collected by Deiseal has been limited, for it has, historically, been based on invoices for course materials fees which, until recently, were levied at the point of student registration for Part 1 (Units 1 – 72) and on commencing Part 2 (Units 73 – 144). No single organisation has been charged with collecting data on student progression and completion; or on course provision. Rather, the

maintenance of such data has been at the discretion of course providers. Some course providers routinely collect and maintain student and course data, whereas others do not. It was outwith the scope of this research to undertake data collection from all course providers directly; rather, we use several course providers' data as case studies of how Ùlpan has been delivered to generate insights into the different patterns and models of delivery.

1.4.5   Key informant interviews were conducted with 17 representatives of fourteen organisations. The key informants represent organisations which have an investment in the Ùlpan programme. These include policy and practice organisations, Ùlpan course providers and Ùlpan sponsors. The sample sought to capture the diversity of Course Providers according to sector; quantity of Ùlpan students and units taught; and, rural and urban location. Detailed interviews with the director (*stiùiriche*) of Deiseal were also conducted. A general topic guide was devised on the following topics: the expected outcomes of the Ùlpan programme; the potential market of adults for Ùlpan; patterns of provision of Ùlpan and the relative strengths and weaknesses of delivery models; student attainment and progression; and, tutor recruitment and retention. Additionally, linkages and partnerships with other organisations were identified. These topic guides were adjusted according to the type of key informant category and interviewee.

1.4.6   Interviews were conducted with 15 Ùlpan tutors, who have worked in following areas: Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Fife, the Isle of Lewis, and Perthshire. The training of these tutors has primarily been through the traditional Ùlpan short-course method, although one of the tutors interviewed completed via the skills conference and mentoring route. Tutors interviewed were selected from among the 195 trained and/or training Ùlpan tutors whose contact details were provided by Deiseal to the researchers. The study has adopted criteria based, purposive sampling with efforts being taken to ensure that: a) both first and second language users of Gaelic are represented; b) we gained opinions and experiences from those with minimal and extensive Gaelic tutoring experience; and c) we gained insight from those in a range of locations throughout Scotland.

1.4.7   A survey was distributed online to a random sample of Ùlpan students in August 2013. The sample generated 282 valid responses (a 25 percent response rate). The random sample enables us to generalise from our findings, with a +/-10 percent margin of error. As with any such survey, however, they may be subject to non-response bias and should, therefore, be treated with some caution.

1.4.8   Focus groups were held with groups of former and current Ùlpan students during August and September 2013 in three locations: Glasgow, Stornoway and Inverness. These group discussions were supplemented with individual interviews, generating data from 21 students in total. The locations sought to capture student diversity in terms of: a) level of Ùlpan study; b) Ùlpan course model; and, c) sociolinguistic context. Language proficiency testing was conducted with volunteers in these three locations.

1.4.9   Finally, interviews were conducted with experts on minority language adult education programmes for Basque, Welsh and Breton. These interviews used a combination of telephone, face-to-face and online communication. The majority of external experts chose to be named in the report. Elsewhere, verbatim quotes are not attributed or pseudonyms have been used, in order to protect the anonymity of research participants. All research participants explicitly consented for their information to be used for the purposes of this study. The research was governed by the University of Aberdeen's Research Ethics Framework.

1.5   What is not in this report

1.5.1   Deiseal owns the Ùlpan tutor-training material and course materials. Deiseal reached the decision that it would not make the full course materials available for the purposes of this study, as to do so would present a potential risk to the company's Intellectual Property (IP), which is vested in the course materials. In July 2013, Deiseal supplied a sample of course materials for 24 of 144 units (comprising student notes and tutor notes). A breakdown of intended learning outcomes for the remaining 120 units and access to online support materials was not provided as expected.

1.5.2   This study is not about the confidential commercial affairs of the course company, Deiseal, or any of the delivery organisations or of the tutors.

1.6   Conflicts of interest

1.6.1   The research team has taken reasonable steps to ensure that family members of Bòrd employees and the University research team were not approached to take part in the project. During the period of the study, the University of Aberdeen's Language Centre commenced delivery of Ùlpan. The Language Centre was not approached to take part in this study. Bòrd na Gàidhlig is satisfied with these measures to mitigate any potential conflicts of interest.

1.7 Acknowledgements

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- Helen Prosser, Head of Glamorgan Welsh for Adults Centre
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- Kevin Johansen, Advisor for Sami Issues, University of Nordland
- Representative, Institute for Basquisation and Literacy in Adults (HABE), the Autonomous Basque Community.

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2. An Introduction to the Ùlpan Course

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1   The purpose of this Section is to outline the pedagogical orientation of the Ùlpan programme in Scotland. It is informed by interviews with Deiseal, the course writer and owner, interviews with key informants and supplemented with secondary data available in the public domain.

2.2 What is Ùlpan?

2.2.1   Ùlpan is a Gaelic language course for adults designed by an independent company called Deiseal.[1] The course aims to provide an accessible, accelerated and effective route to achieving oral/aural fluency in Gaelic in adulthood. It was first introduced in Scotland in 2007. Deiseal is the author of the course, which comprises 144 Units or *Aonadan*, and accompanying Tutor Notes or *Notaichean an Oide* as well as online learning materials. Deiseal is responsible for training tutors to provide Ùlpan in Scotland and, since October 2010, Deiseal has assumed responsibility for marketing Ùlpan to prospective students and tutors. Deiseal holds the Intellectual Property (IP) rights for the course materials and it grants permission to accredited Ùlpan tutors to use these materials through a licensee agreement.

2.2.2   Deiseal borrows the word *ulpan* from an approach to language learning first introduced in Israel for Hebrew, in a context in which it was crucial that adult learners learned a lingua franca with speed. The *ulpan* approach was subsequently adapted for Welsh through the *Wlpan* programme, as well as for Breton and other small languages (see Section 4 for a review of *ulpan* courses in other sociolinguistic contexts). These approaches share in common an emphasis on achieving basic oral skills in a second language in a short time through intensive learning. There are significant spatial and temporal variations, however, in the intensity in which *ulpan* courses have been delivered; both in terms of the weekly hours of tuition and the frequency of tuition (see Section 4).

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[1] Ùlpan was initially developed by Deiseal Earranta Limited, a commercial company jointly owned by Dàibhidh Grannd and Guto Rhys. Formed in 2005, Deiseal Earranta Limited was dissolved in 2007 and the business was purchased by Deiseal Ltd, incorporated at the end of 2007. Dàibhidh Grannd is the sole shareholder of Deiseal Ltd.

2.3 The Ùlpan course structure

2.3.1 Ùlpan consists of 144 units which, since 2012, have been divided into 6 levels of 24 units each (see Figure 1). Previously, the course was structured in two parts: Part 1 comprising Units 1 – 72 and Part 2 comprising Units 73 – 144. Each unit is designed to last 90 minutes, following the same structure, and approximately every sixth unit revises the contents of the previous five units.

Figure 1: The Ùlpan course structure
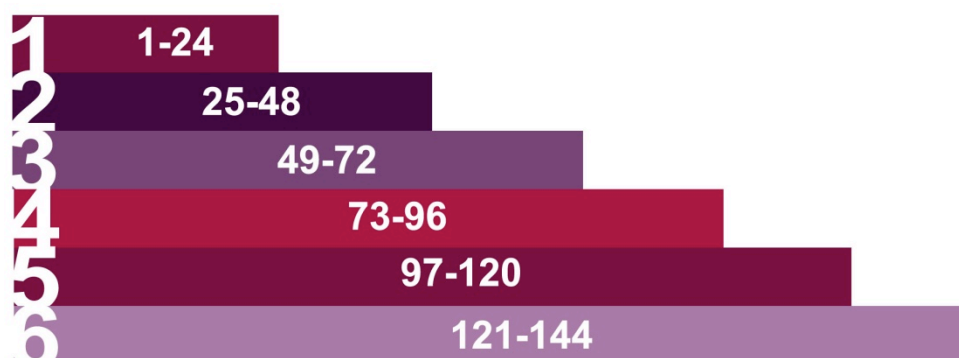
Source: http://www.ulpan.co.uk/Home/Learning (Accessed 13 March 2013)

2.3.2 The Gaelic Ùlpan model has been designed to be delivered for a minimum of three hours of tuition per week, or two units, supported by self-directed learning. At this level of intensity, a student can potentially complete all 144 units in around two years. The 216 hours of tuition has been delivered at very different rates since 2007, however, with the rate at which students can complete the course dependent upon, among other things, provision in their locality. Potentially, Ùlpan could be delivered within nine weeks using an intensive, residential model. In reality, the majority of Ùlpan provision has been at a slower rate of between 1.5 to 2 hours tuition per week, which is equivalent to one unit a week (see Section 5.7).

2.4 Pedagogical principles

2.4.1 The Ùlpan course is a highly structured series of lessons (called units) that are grouped into levels of study. All tutors trained to deliver Ùlpan use the same course materials and delivery paradigm when providing instruction to students. A typical lesson is divided into 10 – 15 minute blocks of activity, as illustrated in Table 2. The core activities are repetition drills and task-based oral activities. This lesson structure mirrors the earlier or 'traditional' WIpan model, upon which Ùlpan is founded (see Section 4.4). At the end of each level, and interspersed,

are revision units, which reintroduce the language patterns and vocabulary learnt and have a more diverse and varied format. These including activities such as listening exercises, role-playing to develop novel speech, and learning of Gaelic song.

Table 2: A typical Ùlpan lesson structure

Duration	Class Activity
10 minutes	Revision of previous unit drills and script
10 minutes	Drill 1
10 minutes	Game 1
10 minutes	Drill 2
10 minutes	Game 2
10 minutes	Drill 3
10 minutes	Game 3
15 minutes	Script: reading & memorisation of dialogue
5 minutes	New vocabulary and short recapitulation

2.4.2   Students progress upward through units and levels in a linear fashion to gain their language skills. Because Ùlpan is so prescriptive, it is not accurate to describe it merely as an approach – Ùlpan has a way in which it conceptualises language, a way in which it perceives the process of learning an L2, expectations for the skills that will be acquired by students and expectations for the amount of proficiency that will be achieved.

2.4.3   Oracy skills are prioritised through communication-based learning taught primarily by tutor modelling of carefully selected linguistic input and student repetition. The first key principle is, therefore, for students to receive aural input first and foremost and visual information second, which encourages them to focus on the sounds of Gaelic (both articulation and prosody), rather than the orthographic features of the language. Focusing on spoken before written language is a widely used and accepted practice in language teaching, particularly to adults, as it helps learners avoid the pitfalls associated with using their L1 phonic system in L2 production (in other words, the students cannot read Gaelic as if it were English). Students are not permitted to write during drilling sessions but work-sheet exercises are available to them for home-completion. These worksheet exercises are not assessed by their tutors and are not mandatory, but they do go some way to catering toward the learning desires of students who might seek to develop their literacy skills in Gaelic whilst

focusing on the development of their oracy skills. This diverges from many other adult learning courses which teach through extensive reading and writing.

2.4.4   A second principle is for grammar to be learnt through memorisation of language patterns and formulaic language, rather than explicitly through analysis or discussion of grammatical rules. A third principle is teaching in the target language, Gaelic; tutors are not allowed to use non-scripted English, and students' aren't permitted to use any English. We were told that this is in order to maintain students' concentration, which is important for memorisation, and to give the 'immersion' experience. These three principles are consistent with the original *ulpan* method, as described more fully in Section 4.3.

2.5   Course materials

2.5.1   Each unit is tightly scheduled, and begins with 10 minutes of revision of the previous unit, prior to commencing the new learning materials. Every unit is accompanied by a learner worksheet, which is divided into four sections:
   a) *Seòllairtean,* which are language phrases on which class drilling is based.
   b) *Còmhradh*, which is a scripted dialogue used for reading out loud in class to develop comprehension and to contextualise use of the drilled phrases.
   c) *Facail*, the new vocabulary which the tutor will model and ask students to repeat in class, and which they are expected to learn for the following class.
   d) *Eacarsaichean*, the written exercises, which students do at home in order to consolidate their learning.

2.5.2   The Ùlpan online learning environment is being developed in partnership with Napier University and will ultimately provide additional resources for students, as well as for tutors. At the time of our empirical research, sound files were available for Units 1 – 24. These sound files can only be accessed by the students when they are logged into the Ùlpan online system and cannot be downloaded. Deiseal plan to develop the online resources to Unit 144 before the end of the funding period.

2.5.3   The tutor materials comprise lesson plans, with concise instructions (in English) on how to implement the unit, and a set of 'games', which are distributed in class for students to play. In response to early experiences with Ùlpan delivery and the initial trials through which early units were devised, revised tutor notes in the Ùlpan unit lesson plans include guidance on the key 'linguistic targets' being aimed for in each unit. These linguistic targets have not been written for each unit as yet, but where they do exist, they include notes about aspects of

pronunciation and prosody that are frequently problematic for learners (i.e. stressed syllables marked in bold), and note pre-aspiration with superscript 'h'. Similarly, learner worksheets use emboldening to indicate to learners stressed syllables, and colour indicates consonants that cause particular morphological changes in Gaelic (e.g. *b*, *p*, *f* and *m*). In revised units, a section called 'Monitor' advises tutors to monitor likely phonological errors and a range of features such as elision, stress and intonation. The lesson plans also include, for some of the sample units made available to us, detailed instructions about grammatical features contained within the target phrases. This guidance uses technical English terminology.

2.6   Proficiency and student learning outcomes

2.6.1   The Ùlpan course is targeted at learners who are motivated to become active Gaelic speakers in the workplace and in the home, with their children. The director of Deiseal uses the term 'vocational learners' to distinguish this target group from 'vacational learners', who typically attend evening classes. The 'vocational' learners are characterised by the pace of their preferred learning, as well as their motivation: vocational learners "absolutely need a course which is going to take me there quick" (Stiùiriche, Deiseal).

2.6.2   An appraisal of projected student outcomes via the Ùlpan programme is difficult, as the unit materials (student worksheets and tutor notes) that have been shown to the researchers are limited and the intended learning outcomes are not explicitly given for all units received. However, through discussion with the course author and director, some of the overarching aims of the programme have been made clear.

2.6.3   Firstly, Ùlpan is a programme heavily influenced by the Deiseal director's experiences of training in speech and language therapy, and related to this it is also a programme for which the primary proficiency outcome is the oral production of Gaelic. The student learning expectations anchored to the overall goal of the Ùlpan programme, as written in Ùlpan promotional materials, report that students enrolling on this course might expect to be 'functionally fluent' in Gaelic on completion. The term 'functionally fluent' is used to describe:

> *"... that state of being solo and capable in a normal Gaelic-using environment, where you're driving your own learning through experience, without too much reference now to any kind of course. Although, obviously, that would help. You know, we'll get you to that point. That's what Ùlpan is aiming at. By 144 units we've got you to functional fluency." (Stiùiriche, Deiseal)*

A central concept in this description is the notion of being 'independent'. We interpret this as being broadly equivalent to reaching B1 on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for languages, where a speaker can be described as an 'independent user' (see Appendix 1).

2.6.4   Secondly, the course aims to achieve "accurate and natural pronunciation" and units have been carefully crafted and scaffolded to help learners achieve a native-like pronunciation and prosodic utterances. In interview, the director of Deiseal explained that considerable importance is given to pronunciation in Ùlpan, as intelligibility is important not only for being understood, but for being accepted as a Gaelic speaker by native speakers, who are liable to switch to English if they find a learners speech difficult to follow. Achieving authentic speech is a key proficiency target.

2.6.5   The written materials for Ùlpan are based upon the authors' interpretation of 'standard Gaelic' (see Section 9 for further discussion on the course corpus). Ùlpan encourages tutors, and therefore learners, to use the pronunciation of local or regional dialects if/when known. It should be noted, however, that worksheets, tutor notes, and training itself may not make allowances for these dialects. Tutors are free and welcome to adjust their teaching to bypass any recommendations that would not be appropriate for their or their students' regional dialect.

2.6.6   Thirdly, in order to gain conversational competence, learners are encouraged toward lexical borrowing and intra-sentential code-switching, where required. This practice is modelled in the course script from the outset. This is to encourage learners to recognise borrowing as a communicative strategy, which they can use in the classroom to maintain a Gaelic-medium learning environment, and outside the class for when speaking about topics for which they have not learned vocabulary. When borrowing, however, students are encouraged to maintain the cadence of Gaelic speech, or prosodic integrity.

2.6.7   During interview, it was explained that there is an expectation that students will engage in self-directed learning outside of the class and that, as such, achieving language outcomes is dependent upon students using modes of reinforcement. This is described as "everything else that gives you your 10 hours outside the class, to every one hour in it" (Stiùiriche, Deiseal). However, we are told that students have not routinely received information that this level of self-directed learning is required and expected and, indeed, the ratio of ten hours outside of

class to one hour of class teaching is likely to be a challenge for many students, particularly if they are engaged in three hours of Ùlpan classes a week.

2.7   Summary

2.7.1   Ùlpan is a Gaelic language course for adults designed by an independent company called Deiseal Ltd (Deiseal). The course aims to provide an accessible, accelerated and effective route to achieving oral/aural fluency in Gaelic in adulthood. The course comprises 144 units taught over 216 hours. Students are expected to spend up to 2160 hours of self-learning and study.

2.7.2   Deiseal own the course, and grants permission to tutors, who are accredited by Deiseal, to teach using these materials through a licensee agreement. The course materials comprise student worksheets and tutor notes. The lessons are highly structured and all tutors deliver the course using the same materials and delivery paradigm, as governed by the licensee agreement. The lesson structure is modelled on the traditional *Wlpan* course.

2.7.3   The course places an importance on developing students' oral skills, and uses the written form only to support this objective. It aims for students to be 'functionally fluent' on completion of the course, and to be able to develop their spoken fluency independent of any formal course on completion.

2.7.4   Because Ùlpan is so prescriptive, it is not accurate to describe it merely as an approach; however, it is useful to relate the way in which it conceptualises language and the process of learning an L2 to more widely recognised coherent approaches to additional language teaching. The following section summarises these approaches.

3. Additional Language Acquisition for Adults

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The purpose of this section is to provide insight into additional language acquisition for adults, which is the overarching purpose of the Ùlpan programme in Scotland. The discussions and evidence provided in this section are derived from a range of published data on the topic of additional language acquisition, with preference being given to publications produced within the 21st century.

3.1.2 Defining so-called 'best' practice in the teaching of additional languages to adults is a contentious task. The particular strategies brought to a learning context must always be catered to the learning needs and preferences of a learning group; what is appropriate for one group of adult learners may be inappropriate for others. This has been explained by Wray *et al.*, who provide a forewarning in their review of additional language teaching literature that we should neither "see learners or teachers as static entities," nor "assume that what works at one stage in the learning process will necessarily work at every stage" (2011: 8). By extension, where a teacher opts to follow a defined additional language teaching technique or method in his or her classroom practices, it is crucial either to ensure the selected approach is appropriate for meeting the needs of the existing students, or to recruit students specifically to match the implicit prerequisites or preconceptions of the method. As Cook has explained, "[t]he reasons why a technique works or does not work depend on many factors", which include "what it [the technique] implies in terms of language learning and language processing, the type of student for whom it is most appropriate, and the ways it fits into the classroom situation" (2008: 9).

3.1.3 When reviewing coherent techniques to additional language teaching, sometimes called 'methods', it can be useful to consider: a) how the technique understands language as a concept, b) how the technique presumes we learn additional languages, c) the skills with which the technique aims to equip its students, and d) the criteria against which the technique proposes to evaluate proficiency. A brief discussion of the implications on teaching and learning for each of these four areas are provided below:

3.2 Language as a concept

3.2.1 Some language teaching approaches are founded on a conceptualisation of language as a bounded entity, whereas others regard languages to be indiscreet

and malleable entities. The conceptualisation of language, therefore, has substantial implications for classroom practice. Tutors working in an approach that is founded in a notion of 'correct' pronunciation, grammar, orthography will be encouraged to provide corrections to students whose language use diverges from the norm, they may be asked to teach using more restricted materials and they may be less likely to encourage creative *languaging* in the classroom than tutors working in an alternative approach. A well-known example of a language teaching approach which does conceptualise language as being static is the Situational Approach. As a result of this approach's conceptualisation of language, learner activities seek to ensure the purity of student language production, by carefully structuring the introduction of vocabulary items and grammatical features, and constructing contexts in which students can use languages whilst ensuring the accuracy of their free production by building toward autonomy within classes (i.e. students begin by listening to a new input, they then repeat what they have heard, they participate in drill exercises, and eventually work toward small group discussions).

3.2.2   In contrast, some other approaches to teaching languages regard languages as being malleable, and move away from the notion of 'correct' *languaging*. In the English Lingua Franca movement, Seidlehofer (Seidlehofer, 2011) is a prominent proponent for this approach, which allows participants in the learning environment to value communicative function over form. An example of a coherent teaching approach that conceptualises language in this less static way is the Communicative Approach, the three founding ideas of which are: a) language is a system for conveying meaning; b) the primary purposes of language is interaction and communication; c) language can be analysed in terms of grammatical structures and also categories of meaning as used in speech events (Cook 2008). What this means for the teacher in a Communicative Approach classroom is that there tends to be greater leniency to students' use of non-standard or 'inauthentic' pronunciation and grammatical constructions. Teachers working in this approach are seeking to create a safe and challenging environment, in which students prepare for real-world use of a language by internalising their understanding and building a receptive and productive skill set that will allow them to engage in unscripted interactions outside of the classroom context. Just as individuals produce errors when *languaging* outwith the classroom in both their L1 and L2s, a student in the Communicative Approach may be allowed to produce errors within the

classroom, with the tutor continuously assessing and evaluating the benefits and drawbacks of providing a correction.

3.2.3   Although contemporary research has demonstrated the benefits associated with an ethos in which language is conceptualised as being more fluid than static (see, for example, Davies, 2003 and Wray *et al*., 2011, in relation to pronunciation), some learners and teachers appreciate an approach that strives toward 'authenticness' and/or 'accuracy' of the target language. Thus, it is the preferences and desires of the student and teacher that qualify 'best' practice in a situated context.

3.3   How we learn an L2

3.3.1   Just as approaches to language teaching may conceptualise a 'language' differently, so too can they differ in the way in which they presume students learn additional languages. Some more dated approaches (i.e. Direct or Natural Method) attempt to teach languages by allowing learners to mimic the processes by which they learned their L1 in the L2 classroom (and this functionally means a focus on oracy, contextualised and graded input). As evidence has accumulated in the field of Applied Linguistics and Psycholinguistics, however, this premise has been put under serious doubt (see, for example, the related criticism of Krashen's *Comprehensible Input Hypothesis* in Long, 1991). The lack of evidence to support the founding premises of language teaching methods does not necessarily constitute a major fault of any method. Some methods have been shown through evidence to be highly effective at achieving particular linguistic outcomes in student populations, although the premises upon which the methods have been based are ultimately faulty. For example, the Audio-Lingual Method asks teachers and learners to engage in learning activities that are derived from the principles of Behaviourism. Modelling, imitation and repetition feature heavily in Audio-Lingual learning activities. However, there is no conclusive evidence that Behaviourism explains additional language learning; there is serious doubt as to the explanatory capacity of Behaviourism in the development of complex behaviours, such as language (e.g. Churchland, 1984); and the theoretical work of Vygostky has largely overtaken Behaviourism in contemporary pedagogy. All of this does not, however, mean that the Audio-Lingual Method is ineffective at teaching students an additional language, and one of the hidden benefits of using a coherent method to inform teaching

choices is that it can help individual tutors plan lessons and progression with greater ease.

3.4   Skills being aimed toward

3.4.1   There are four skills areas that can be targeted in languages teaching: speaking and listening/understanding (oracy skills), reading and writing (literacy skills). These skills can also be classified into productive (speaking and writing) and receptive (listening/understanding and reading) skills areas. While there may be a tendency to assume that all L2 teaching approaches will enable students to use their new language in every skill area, the reality is that many coherent approaches aim to teach only a selection of skills, or may seek to build varying degrees of competency in skills areas. As an illustration of this point, an approach for teaching additional languages to adults that is still commonly employed for the teaching of Classical languages, Grammar-Translation, is literacy-centric in design and delivery. The intensive use of literacy-based activities and the infrequent use of the target language in oral capacities within the classroom context mean that Grammar-Translation is often highly efficient at producing biliterate learners in short timespans (Baker, 2001). For learners desiring to read and write in an additional language, the limited focus of Grammar-Translation on literacy makes it a highly appropriate teaching method. In contrast, for learners desiring to speak and understand spoken inputs in a language, Grammar-Translation would be a highly inappropriate approach.

3.4.2   Other approaches to language teaching may intentionally target certain skills before others. For example, a new development in languages teaching called the Silent Method focuses first on building students' listening/understanding skills in a language, before encouraging them toward the production of speech. In fact, it is very common for languages teaching to postpone the introduction of literacy until after students have demonstrated oral/aural capability. The justification for staggering input in this way has to do with students' tendency to read new language input using the phonics system associated with their first language, rather than the target language (Cook, 2008). Ensuring students have had ample opportunity to focus on oracy skills before introducing literacy elements can be beneficial to some students, although it can equally cause frustration, particularly to adults whose literacy repertoire can be an asset in the L2 learning process. For approaches that do opt to postpone the introduction of literacy components, there can be substantial differences in terms of the length

of postponement: literacy may feature in each lesson, but only after oracy has been developed; literacy may be introduced to students after a number of lessons have been completed, or literacy may never feature in teaching. Again, these divergences do not constitute failures of the approaches, but differences that might make an approach more or less suited to a particular learner.

3.5 Proficiency criteria

3.5.1 The final component of language teaching that can be used to meaningfully describe and differentiate approaches has to do with the way in which the approach will determine proficiency. The Audio-Lingual Method, which was created by the United States Army to help rapidly prepare soldiers to function in new linguistic environments when on tour, is well-known as an approach that does not seek high levels of proficiency, whereas a Communicative approach aims for its students to be able to engage in real-world use, and this demands high levels of proficiency and creative capacity. Many self-study language teaching approaches boast the ability to give students' communicative proficiency in a defined number of hours, whilst some more interactive approaches will emphasise to students the need to find extracurricular and informal learning opportunities in order to gain proficiency.

3.5.2 As with all other areas, the way in which a language teaching approach defines its targeted proficiency level and criteria of success does not *ipso facto* relate to its goodness of fit. It is not the case that an approach seeking high levels of communicative competence is better than one seeking more modest targets. Rather, it is the relationship between student expectations and the pedagogic approach that dictates how a teaching approach can or cannot be described as meeting students' proficiency needs and desires. This is well illustrated by consulting data on GfA, in which it is previously documented that a significant minority of learners do not desire to gain high levels of proficiency in Gaelic (McLeod *et al.,* 2010). For these learners, an approach that does not aim toward high levels of proficiency in any skill area might be appropriate and desirable. In contrast, a learner seeking *to do* something in Gaelic (e.g. to support a child in Gaelic Medium Education, to have a conversation at a pub, to gain a Scottish National certification) will require to learn under an approach that does have crafted and ambitious proficiency targets.

3.6 Ùlpan's overall approach to language teaching

3.6.1 Although it may be inaccurate to describe Ùlpan as a method or approach of language teaching, the programme does draw clear influence from coherent approaches. For example, each unit's structure shares many similarities with Situational Language Teaching, in which a tutor would begin by modelling language for their students, before having these students repeat what they have heard. Similarly, in both the Ùlpan programme and Situational Language Teaching students participate in drill exercises and highly structured short dialogues before exploring unscripted production.

3.6.2 Where the Ùlpan programme diverges from Situational Language Teaching is in the use of concrete versus abstract language – Situational Language Teaching aims to found early language inputs in the learning environment to ensure that the proficiency being developed is functional, whereas Ùlpan often makes use of vocabulary items that are more abstract or of less immediate relevance to learners in order to meet the proficiency target of authentic pronunciation and native-like prosody. There are also obvious parallels between the Gaelic Ùlpan programme and the Audio-Lingual Method, with its strong focus on memorisation, rote repetition, and oracy skills. The influence of Behaviourism is strong in both, with teaching strategies that involve the tutor providing modelling, whilst the learner is responsible for repetition to form habit formation that results in high phonological and prosodic accuracy.

3.6.3 There is little consensus on the most effective methods for additional language acquisition for adults among the experts. Rather, best practise emphasises that no single method is the most effective; it is the flexibility of teachers to respond to learner needs by combining methods which affects the efficacy of a course. "This implies that teachers must have the freedom, confidence, materials, knowledge and skills to respond to what their learners need" (Wray *et al.*, 2011: 26). The use of Ùlpan course materials is prescriptive and the classes highly scheduled, thus it is unlikely that it will be appropriate for *all* adult learners. However, as our key informants stressed, there are a range of advantages of such a rigid model of delivery for the student, as well as for the tutor. These are discussed more fully in Sections 9 and 10.

3.7 Summary

3.7.1 In summary, the quality of one particular teaching approach cannot be assessed in any conclusive way. The literature emphasises that no single method is the most effective; rather, it is the flexibility of teachers to respond to learner needs by *combining* methods which affects the efficacy of a course. Indeed, the evidence suggests that many different teaching methods will work fairly well, if the tutors are good and the students motivated and committed (Mac Giolla Chríost *et al.,* 2012)

3.7.2 Each approach will have perceived strengths and weaknesses for individual learners based on their learning preferences, desires, and needs. With this proviso in mind, 'best' practice in the teaching of additional languages to adults might best be considered in relation to the unique set of challenges that adults face when learning a new language.

3.7.3 From a language planning perspective, it is important, however, that investment in additional language courses for adults reflects the needs of that community, as identified in language policy. As such, the level and type of proficiency needs of the community should directly inform the learning objectives, teaching materials and classroom methods.

3.7.4 The following section reviews additional language courses, including types of *ulpan* courses, in relation to the language revitalisation context and the language in education frameworks in which they are being delivered.

4. Additional Language Acquisition in Minority Language Contexts

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section provides an overview of language education for adults in contexts where their support forms part of a national language revitalisation strategy. It briefly summarises Gaelic for Adults provision in Scotland, prior to reviewing the role of *ulpan*, and equivalent additional language programmes, for the teaching of Hebrew in Israel, Welsh in Wales, and Basque in the Autonomous Basque Community (BAC). It then briefly mentions the adaptation of *ulpan* courses in two other contexts: for teaching Breton in Brittany and Sámi in Nordland. In doing so, it enables us to compare Ùlpan to adult language programmes in broadly comparable minority language contexts.

4.2 Gaelic for Adults (GfA) in Scotland

4.2.1 The primary rationale for public investment in the development of the Ùlpan course was the lack of a national curriculum for Gaelic for Adults (GfA). Adult learning provision for Gaelic in Scotland is extremely diverse, having long been characterised by a "traditional" evening class structure, in which individual tutors work in isolation to produce syllabi and coursework to meet the needs of teaching and learning preferences. Within this structure, there has been consistent criticism and concern raised over the quality of instruction being provided to adult learners (see MacCaluim 2007, McLeod *et al.,* 2010, Milligan *et al.,* 2011). With no regulations or quality assurance being applied to "traditional" evening classes for Gaelic learners, student experience, progress and attainment can vary greatly. Previous to the introduction of Ùlpan in Scotland, pathways through learning Gaelic to proficiency were limited and there was little quality assurance for individual tutors, nor a coherent training programme for interested Gaelic tutors. This did not mean that all adult learning of Gaelic was of a poor quality, but it did create logistic challenges for adult learners who desired cumulative learning (MacCaluim, 2007).

4.2.2 Although there were limited pathways for adult learners of Gaelic previous to the creation and introduction of Ùlpan in Scotland, there have been some attempts to provide a coherent and rigorous structure for adult learning. Some of these pathways have been outlined in McLeod *et al*.'s 2010 review of provision for Gaelic adult learning in Scotland. Here, the authors note the now defunct Total

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Immersion Plus approach to learning Gaelic, as well as the distance learning opportunities made available through Sabhal Mòr Ostaig: *An Cùrsa Inntrigidh* and *An Cùrsa Adhartais* for beginners and intermediate learners, respectively. The latter of the two courses allows students to achieve Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) accreditation at Level 7. For adult learners who are able to dedicate longer periods of time to their language development in face-to-face contexts, Stow College in Glasgow also offers a comprehensive pathway to learning Gaelic over two years for adult learners, culminating in SCQF accreditation at Level 6. Additionally, the University of the Highlands and Islands runs *An Cùrsa Comais* as a year-long intensive immersion programme at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and Lews Castle College campuses.

4.2.3   McLeod *et al.*'s (2010) review of GfA provision in Scotland recorded data from 50 providers on 160 classes. McLeod *et al.* (*ibid.*) identified that GfA provision was highly concentrated in Highland Council Area, the Western Isles, Edinburgh and Greater Glasgow. Classifying the various forms for adult learning of Gaelic is challenging, due to the diversity in provision both in terms of course design and delivery. Focusing only on provision with Glasgow City Council, the following categories were used to classify individual teaching provisions by Milligan *et al.* in 2011: a) Novel approaches (otherwise known as "traditional" evening classes); b) Ùlpan; c) Conversation classes, in which Gaelic learners meet to engage in conversation without formal tuition; d) Content and Language Integrated Learning, in which students learn other skills or about topics unrelated to Gaelic language through the medium of Gaelic; e) Distance learning; and, f) Self-instruction. As with teaching methods, the form for adult learning helps to dictate the kinds of learners who might be attracted to particular learning designs. It is well documented that adult learners face a wide range of challenges when seeking to learn an additional language, ranging from financial barriers, to competing family/work commitments, to simply feeling alienated from the speech community into which they desire to enter (McEwan-Fujita, 2010).

4.2.4   The relative strengths and weaknesses of Ùlpan relative to other forms of GfA are usefully summarised by Milligan *et al*. (2011), in the context of their study into GfA provision in Greater Glasgow (Table 3). McLeod *et al.* (2010) concluded that there has not been a meaningful growth in the number of courses offered since Ùlpan was introduced in 2007, which suggests that, instead, the Ùlpan course is often replacing other courses. McLeod *et al.* (*op. cit.*) also found that there had been a striking decline in immersion courses (as opposed to distance

learning) run by the FE college sector, from 14 in the 1990s to only three providers: Lews Castle College (Western Isles), Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (Isle of Skye) and Stow College (Glasgow) at the time of study. As such, adults living outwith these catchment areas or who are unable to relocate for learning may be able to access an Ùlpan course in their locality.

Table 3: SWOT analysis of Ùlpan by Milligan *et al*. (2011)

Area	Considerations
Strengths	• Tutors are trained, which provides some assurance that they will meet a minimum standard of quality; • Tutors are provided with materials for teaching which cuts down on class preparation time; • Deiseal ensures that tutors are paid a minimum salary; • Ùlpan units follow a clear pathway designed to build students' spoken skills, quality of pronunciation and confidence when speaking; • Ùlpan is strongly supported by Bòrd na Gàidhlig; • Students can change classes without halting their learning pathway as all tutors follow the same curriculum; • Students can access ILA to help pay tuition fees
Weaknesses	• The cost of tutor training is high; • There is, at present, no quality control that would prevent individuals with poor Gaelic skills from receiving tutor training for Ùlpan. However, Because of the lax criteria for trainee tutors in the past, there are some qualified Ùlpan tutors working throughout the country who, reportedly, have poor Gaelic skills; • There is a cost for learners, although this can be subsidised by an organisation; • There is less focus on writing and reading Gaelic; Students are not encouraged to ask questions, which may not suit all adults' learning preferences or build on their strengths. For example, adults may be able to apply the rules they know about one language's grammar to Gaelic, but Ùlpan doesn't explain grammar to students. This can be frustrating to adult learners.
Opportunities	• Tutors have told us that they tend to allow for discussion after formal teaching, and that this allows them to address questions from students and to explain grammatical points. Allowing for a question and answer session after formal instruction could be encouraged as 'best practice'; • A literacy programme could be designed to be offered to interested students at the end of each 12 week session, when certain spoken skills have been entrenched in the students' minds.
Threats	• If Ùlpan is too heavily promoted, we might find there is a lack of diversity in the learning market for adults of Gaelic. This could be problematic as Ùlpan will not be a satisfactory learning method for all learners for the simple reason that people learn in different ways and that learning preferences can vary.

4.2.5 It is important to note that Ùlpan differs from most other forms of structured pathway provision in several key ways. First, as has been discussed, it is the only course relying on face-to-face tuition which currently runs in different parts of Scotland, and because Ùlpan tutors all teach using the same course materials, a student relocating from, say, Glasgow to Edinburgh could,

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theoretically, continue their course of study in Ùlpan with minimal disruption to their progression by finding a Ùlpan course into which to transfer.

4.2.6 Second, it is the only structured course which centres on oracy skills, with very little attention to literacy. In the Ùlpan approach, students may explore literacy in their home-based study, and they will be presented with the written form of Gaelic to enable them to complete classroom-based activities. However, literacy is considered to be secondary to the development of listening and speaking skills.

4.2.7 A third way in which Ùlpan differs from other available intensive courses provided by Stow College and UHI, is that assessment has not been built into its design. Relatedly, there are no published learning outcomes or milestones set for each Level. Accreditation of Ùlpan is, however, now a goal of the course writers and funders.

4.2.8 Finally, and fourthly, Ùlpan tutors have all been trained to deliver Ùlpan in a carefully structured, uniform way whereas most other courses allow some flexibility on the part of the tutor as to how materials are used and classes structured. A concluding point of difference is in terms of its delivery model – Ùlpan differs from alternative courses for it is owned and authored by a private sector company which, through licensee agreements, determines and regulates the way in which the course is supplied to students, and sets a standard fee for suppliers to access Ùlpan course materials on a student *per capita* basis.

4.3 The teaching of Hebrew at *ulpanim*

4.3.1 *Ulpan* as a method of L2 minority language teaching to adults originates, of course, in Israel where the first *ulpan* (pl. *ulpanim*) was set up in Jerusalem in 1949. The *ulpan* language schools, which were established shortly after the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 and funded by the government Department for Absorption and the Ministry of Education and Culture, have been widely accredited with the success of reviving Hebrew as a national language and lingua franca as Zionists from many parts of the world have learned the language upon settling in Israel.

4.3.2 *Ulpanim* have been open to all new immigrants, providing room and board as well as intensive Hebrew language and Israeli culture lessons in five-month courses, which teach Hebrew for five hours a day, five days a week. It is estimated that over 30,000 university-trained men and women have been taught

on these courses since 1949 (Meyers, 2006: 1). It is typically expected that learners need to complete a minimum of 500 – 600 contact hours in order to become proficient in Hebrew (Rees, 2000: 30). Those students who do not achieve 'a reasonable level of Hebrew' during the five-month full-time course are provided with another five months of courses at a part-time *ulpan*. Shlomit Pilzer, director of *Ulpan Etzion* has described *ulpan* schools as "far more than just a Berlitz-style language school; [they are] also an absorption centre that is dedicated to helping its students to become acquainted with various aspects of Israeli culture and solving the variety of problems that are bound to arise when moving from one country to another" (cited in Meyers, 2006). In the late 1990s, there were 220 ulpanim teaching 27,000 students at 350 sites.[2] While most *ulpanim* provide language courses for new immigrants, a few provide courses for older citizens to improve their Hebrew. The sociolinguistic context, funding model and the intensity of language teaching offered by the *ulpanim* diverge, therefore, significantly from the Gaelic Ùlpan model.

4.3.3 From a pedagogical perspective, *ulpanim* were founded on the following core principles: "the use of Hebrew as the sole language of teaching; the introduction of conversation as the central feature of the lesson; the study of functional grammar through inductional means; and practice through dramatization" (Haramati, 1966: 532). Ùlpan for Gaelic is founded, therefore, upon similar, but not identical, principles: conversation is not a central feature of Ùlpan. Moreover, in Israel, *ulpan* teachers are given significant autonomy when it comes to the curriculum and methods of instruction, and can employ "whatever techniques he considers suited to the pupils – all within the framework of the binding principles" (*ibid.*). Content is structured by topics pertaining to everyday life and, whilst vocabulary and grammatical structures are provided, the tutor has a lot of discretion as to how to teach these subjects (Dolève-Gandelman, 1989). This flexibility is not allowed for in the Gaelic Ùlpan model. The earlier *ulpan* were divided into four stages, whereby the first and second stage placed emphasis on oral communication, the third stage on reading and writing, and the fourth stage to specialised language for the workplace (Haramati, *op. cit.*). The skills aimed for change, therefore, as the course progresses and, unlike Ùlpan for Gaelic, they aim for competence in all four skills, over a long period of tuition.

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[2] Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1998).

4.3.4   Naturally, the subjects, methods and syllabus had been adapted over time to take into account the changing needs of student groups (e.g. professional and non-professional immigrants; literate and illiterate immigrants), new resources (such as the daily newspaper, *Lamathil*, written specifically for immigrants) and new trends in language teaching. There is little published research which explores whether *ulpan* teaching instruction is effective (Spolsky and Shohamy, 1999). The main mark of success has been the volume of learners who have attended *ulpanim*, and the funding model being used to facilitate this. What is distinctive about the standard *ulpanim* is the intensive instruction in an immersion, residential context, and 600 hours of class tuition.[3]

4.3.5   Due to their perceived success in effectively teaching a minoritised language to adult speakers of many other different languages, the Israeli *ulpan* scheme methods have been studied and appropriated by several minority language groups who are engaged in efforts to foster their own minoritised national language and culture. The remainder of this section will focus upon the adoption of *ulpan* as a method of teaching Welsh to adults in Wales and a comparison with the teaching of Basque to adults in the Basque Autonomous Community in Spain.

4.4   *Wlpan* and the Welsh for Adults (WfA) programme

4.4.1   Formal Welsh lessons for learners began during the 1940s and 1950s, during a period of rapid decline in the number of Welsh speakers (Andrews, 2011: 38). During the 1960s the demand for Welsh lessons for learners increased as did an awareness of the importance of Welsh language learners. Accompanying the increased provision of lessons for learners came the realisation of "the need to maximise learner contact time with the target language" (Powell and Smith, 2003: 2). Prior to the introduction of *Wlpan* courses, Welsh language courses were based on night classes that were usually held once a week (Andrews, 2011: 38). Moreover, Welsh as a second language was of a literary nature, and bore "little resemblance to the Welsh learners would hear spoken in the community" (Newcombe and Newcombe, 2001: 332). It was common for adults to have gained "qualifications in the language and yet be unable to speak it" (*ibid.*). The weaknesses in the system for teaching Welsh to adults in the 1970s, prior to the introduction of *Wlpan,* also characterised the GfA sector prior to the

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[3] A more extensive system of study, *ulpanit* (pl. *ulpaniyot*) has been used to deliver evening classes, as well as non-residential models.

introduction of Ùlpan. The role of adult learners in language revitalisation policy for Gaelic in Scotland also closely mirrors the policy concerns of the 1970s in Wales.

4.4.2   *Wlpan* courses were structured with the specific aim of addressing these concerns through a focus on oral skills and intensive learning. Following the visit of an Israeli scholar, Shoshana Eytan, the first Welsh *ulpan* course, *Wlpan*, was loosely based on the *ulpan* methodology used in Israel to teach Hebrew to immigrants (Powell and Smith, 2003: 2). In the original *Wlpan*, each unit is divided into Drills and vocabulary; Activity; Dialogue; Soap Opera; Work Sheet, and there are grammar and vocabulary appendices for the overall course. This is the structure upon which Ùlpan (Gaelic) has been designed. Launched in Cardiff in 1973, the first *Wlpan* course offered 10 hours of lessons per week, over a period of 10 weeks (Rees, 2000). This early, intensive model of *Wlpan* was hailed a "great success" (Rhys, 1986 in Baker *et al.,* 2011), and also contributed to the development of *Wlpan* based residential courses.

4.4.3   By the early 1990s, a clear structure had evolved through a national Welsh for Adults programme (WfA), delivered through eight regional consortia. A series of external reviews highlighted, however, a lack of strategic planning and funding for provision, a steady decline in the number of adults learning Welsh, and low levels of progression from beginner to advanced Welsh courses. Against this background, in 2006 the Welsh Assembly Government established six regional WfA centres, and invested an average of £2.2m per annum over a five year period (Old Bell 3 Ltd *et al*., 2011). Five of the six centres are based in higher education institutions (the other in a further education institution), and they are responsible for the delivery of the WfA programme.

4.4.4   Targets concerned with numbers of courses, learner recruitment, progression, completion and attainment are set by the Welsh Government. There are also targets concerned with tutor training and tutor CPD. Under the Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (Wales) Regulations 2002, all WfA tutors must hold an appropriate teaching qualification, or equivalent experience. In 2009 there were 670 tutors, the majority (87%) of which work on a sessional basis for the six centres, and their third-party providers (ibid.).[4] The WfA Centre work is governed by statutory requirements, and the centres are required to report

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[4] In 2013, there were 587 tutors, of which 335 taught for less than 6hrs a week (Welsh Government, 2013)

annually against these target and requirements. The national inspectorate for education and training, Estyn, is responsible for the inspection of WfA centres on a six-yearly cycle. The framework for WfA is, therefore, nationally co-ordinated, centrally funded and regulated as part of national language in education policy.

4.4.5 The provision of *Wlpan* courses is today co-ordinated through these six Welsh for Adults centres.[5] The new WfA framework is structured by five levels, (Entry, Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced and Proficiency) of which *Wlpan* courses are offered at Entry (*Mynediad)* as *Wlpan* 1 (equivalent to A1 on the CEFR) and at Foundation (*Sylfaen)* as *Wlpan* 2 (equivalent to A2 on the CEFR). There are currently four versions of the *Wlpan* course (south east, south west, north and mid Wales), which have developed over the years by staff now based in the centres, and which reflect dialectal variation.

4.4.6 In 2009 – 10 there were some 18,000 adult enrolments in Welsh language courses, of which 51 percent were enrolled on entry and 25 percent on foundation level courses (Old Bell 3 Ltd *et al.,* 2011). There is no separate national data on *Wlpan* courses; in Glamorgan, *Wlpan* students accounted for 43 percent (146) of entry level enrolments in 2012 – 13. Whilst *Wlpan* today does not have a very prominent role in the WfA structure, its legacy is still evident in other entry and foundation courses, which include, for example, "initial pattern introduction and drilling, and minimal English in class" (Wray *et al.*, 2011: 40) and little attention to writing, beyond 'filling in gaps' exercises. Most intensive beginner courses (3+ hrs) are based on *Wlpan* methods.

4.4.7 The existence of six centres has led to variation in the provision of *Wlpan* courses, perhaps most noticeably in terms of scheduling. Generally, the intensity of *Wlpan* provision has decreased since the 1970s, with the number of hours per week and frequency of classes significantly less than they were. *Wlpan* courses are customarily referred to as 'intensive' courses, but typically amount to only three or four hours per week, meeting twice weekly, in contrast to non-intensive courses of two hours per week, meeting once weekly. The intermediate *Wlpan* course at Glamorgan is offered for between 3 – 9 hours a week. At Bangor University, a range of schedules are the norm offered today: conventional *Wlpan* courses meet for three to five hours a week, for courses lasting for up to 32

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[5] A recently published government review has announced that the WfA centres will be abolished and the third-party organisations currently contracted to deliver courses by WfA centres will directly manage delivery, appropriate to local conditions (Welsh Government, 2013).

weeks; more intensive term-time courses run for five hours once-weekly (daytime) or three hours once-weekly (evening); a new *Swper Wlpan* intensive course teaches for 23 hours per week, over 10 – 11 weeks; and, summer courses include a 90-hour course over three weeks. The scheduling of *Wlpan* is, therefore, devolved to the centres, and a range of provision options is supported by relatively large volumes of students.

4.4.8   WfA centres have invested staff time in revising, updating and generating new *Wlpan* materials since their creation. Among other things, they take into account the teaching of local dialects to learners. Tutor guidance "devolves responsibility for local pronunciation and speed of delivery to the tutor" (*ibid*.), leading to differences in classes as a result of individual tutors in addition to differences caused by variation in institutional practice across the six language centres. Welsh language tutors have argued that the "most appropriate version of Welsh imparted to learners should be a combination of local oral forms ... bolstered by modern standard written language in course materials" (*ibid*.).

4.4.9   There are also local variations in the methods used to teach *Wlpan*. In the Bangor WfA Centre, the tutor has considerable flexibility in how the course is taught, drawing on the extensive range of tutor materials which accompany the course book. The deputy director told us:

> *"There are high expectations on tutors here to prepare and design each class. Our tutors would use quite different ways of teaching the same lesson." (Elwyn Hughes, Bangor WfA Centre)*

In Glamorgan, the course format, structure and timing is generally uniform, but tutors are "encouraged to teach well and thoroughly and to adapt as necessary to suit themselves and their students" (Helen Prosser, Head of Glamorgan WfA Centre). In Cardiff, the approach is more rigid, and tutors are required to follow the *Wlpan* script. Today there is no single *Wlpan* method or even approach: what defines most *Wlpan* courses is their intensity, not their methods.

4.4.10 The use of English by students in *Wlpan* classes has been relaxed over time: although the Cardiff WfA stipulates a unit after which no English is allowed. Elsewhere, generally students are expected to use Welsh increasingly as the course progresses, but English is used by tutors to ensure students understand what they are being taught. *Wlpan* classes have traditionally discouraged learners from taking notes. However, in recognition of the learning techniques prevalent in Western societies, some *Wlpan* courses have adjusted this rule, as

imposing a rule against taking notes can "compromise the preferences and needs of certain types of learners" (Wray *et al.,* 2011: 10).

4.4.11 However, the relaxing of the rules in relation to taking notes has not led to grammatically-based teaching methods. The *ulpan* principle of encouraging inference from the observation of drill patterns is largely respected, has been maintained from the first *Wlpan* of the 1970s:

> *"Formal grammar was not taught but it was ensured that every Step or Unit, in the drills, presented new grammatical items and that all of the language's main sentence patterns and grammatical variations were conveyed within the course's 60 steps." (Rees, 2000: 35, cited in Mac Giolla Chríost et al., 2011: 61)*

The avoidance of grammar is linked to the concept of immersion in the language. The intensity of *Wlpan* courses is designed to immerse the learner in a Welsh-language environment and, as a result, the use of English during lessons is a minimum. Assuming that discussions regarding grammar would take place in English, and the inevitable thought process linked to translation that would arise from comparing English and Welsh grammar provides further justification for avoiding grammar. Instead the emphasis is on repetition, using sentences, tempo and patterns (Rees, 2000: 35-36).

4.4.12 Successive revisions of the four regional *Wlpans* have also adapted the methodologies used to deliver them to reflect developments in language teaching and to meet their students' needs. Elwyn Hughes, deputy director at Bangor, was involved in writing the original *Wlpan* course with Chris Rees, and in trialling these early materials. He explained that the current course at Bangor, which is now in its fourth edition, does not use the teaching of four sentences *per* language pattern without a link between the blocks. Rather, it uses a question and answer structure to generate student's natural speech, and seeks to contextualise the new structures being learnt. This course has been purchased for use by the mid-Wales WfA for use in locations where a north-Wales version is required. All other WfA centres use a version of *Wlpan* which has been developed by employees, who have typically taken responsibility for revising the materials in their own time (although in Swansea, the Curriculum and Resources officer received a year sabbatical to produce a new edition of the *Wlpan*). Each course contains, therefore, original material and unoriginal material. Only in Cardiff (Cardiff University) is the *Wlpan* course copyrighted; we are told that in Ceredigion (Aberystwyth University), Glamorgan (University of Glamorgan), Swansea (Swansea University) and Bangor (Bangor University), the course materials are not.

4.4.13 In 2012 a national e-learning platform for students and tutors was established, called *Y Bont* (the Bridge).[6] It enables the sharing of teaching and student materials nationally among the six WfA centres and for local WfA centres to share materials amongst their tutor pool. This initiative aims to encourage the sharing of best practice and to maximise the cost-effectiveness of the government's investment in the WfA sector. It also acts as an access point for prospective students of Welsh, and has a chat room facility for learners and students. *Y Bont* is managed by WJEC (Welsh Joint Education Committee). Our informants told us, however, that *Wlpan* materials are generally now outdated and in need of modernisation. Government investment in a single intensive course is anticipated, supported by recent research by Cardiff University and the recommendations of the WfA Review Group. Whether the new materials would favour the more traditional methodologies of the original *Wlpan*, as used in Cardiff, or the revised methodologies used elsewhere is uncertain: the review group recommends that alternative methods for intensive learning are reviewed, and an e-version of the course to be available for tutors to adapt.

4.4.14 The impact of *Wlpan* is not well understood and, to date, has typically been measured in terms of student numbers. The main purpose of *Wlpan* courses are increasing engagement with the language for entry-level learners, and generally, it is successful in achieving this aim. The potential to use Welsh outside the classroom is regarded as a key factor in the success of *Wlpan* courses (Morris, 2000). To this end, the centres have specific grants to fund informal learning activities, with the objective of increasing learners' use of Welsh outside of class. In areas with low levels of Welsh speakers, buildings which house centres for Welsh are considered to be vital (Welsh Government, 2013). One of the main criticisms of the traditional *Wlpan* method is that teaching through mimicry means that learners are taught 'what to say' but not 'why they say it'. A possible consequence is that learners aren't able to apply their knowledge and expand their use of the language. The rapid rate of progression in lessons and the intensity of Wlpan courses can lead to learners being either overworked or stressed. Baker *et al.* (2011) demonstrate the main reasons for not completing a course are 'other commitments more important' and 'lack of time'.

4.4.15 It is important to note that progression through the Welsh language learning system does eventually lead to a greater emphasis on written Welsh and on

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[6] http://www.ybont.org/

grammar. The focus is "on oral primacy up to *Canolradd* (intermediate*)* and then switching from oral to more literary forms from *Canolradd* onwards" (Mac Giolla Chríost *et al.*, 2012: 165). This change in focus is an important aspect in the continuation of learning Welsh; it is not considered that the oral focus in entry-level and beginner courses is detrimental to becoming fluent in Welsh.

4.4.16 In this context, it must be emphasised that *Wlpan* forms only part of the provision available to learners, that includes progression to intermediate and advanced levels, and residential courses – an estimated 1500 class hours are recognised as 'essential' for creating fluent Welsh speakers (Gruffudd and Morris, 2012). In Bangor, the intensive courses at entry, beginner and intermediate level provides around 400 of these hours (pers. comm. Elwyn Hughes, Bangor WfA Centre), but elsewhere *Wlpan* might provide only 100 of these hours (Gruffudd and Morris, 2012). Generally, learners will be quite fluent after 600 hours (*ibid*.).

4.4.17 The WfA programme has been under review in 2012 – 13, and a new national entity is proposed to co-ordinate what has been identified as haphazard provision in Wales. The national entity would liaise directly with the providers that are currently contracted via WfA centres, therefore abolishing the strategic and management functions at a regional level (Welsh Government, 2013).

4.5 *Euskara* for adults in the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC)

4.5.1 The number of Basque speakers is approximately 800,000, in an area of just over three million people (Gardner, 2013: 3). This is comparable to the number and proportion of Welsh-language speakers. Gaelic speakers in Scotland form a linguistic group roughly comparable to the situation in the French Basque Country, though they lack the "moral, practical and financial support that comes from having a relatively stronger kindred group just over the international border" (Gardner, 2013: 3). The Basque language attracts a "substantial number of second-language learners", which is regarded as unusual amongst minority languages and contributes to the study of Basque language provision as a case study of good practice (Gardner, 2013: 4).

4.5.2 Basque language education has expanded significantly since the expansion of democracy in Spain. The establishment of the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC) in 1978 led to efforts to "increase the number of Basque speakers and 'normalize' the situation of Basque" (Powell and Smith, 2003: 71). One of the main components of this strategy has been the provision of Basque lessons for adults. The Basque programme does not use the *ulpan* method, as, "after a

thorough review of the processes of language recovery and revival in Israel and in Canada, we developed our own model" (pers. comm. HABE).

4.5.3 HABE (Institute for Basquisation and Literacy in Adults), which was established in 1983, is the Basque government agency which regulates Basque for Adults, and administers subsidies to language schools or *euskaltegiak*. In 2010 it employed 67 staff and had an annual budget of 45 million euros (NPLD, 2010). In 2013, HABE administered 37 million to the *euskaltegiak* (pers. comm. HABE). Whilst the majority of its funding is spent on the *euskaltegiak,* it is also charged with designing a national Basque language curriculum and with preparing and publishing teaching materials to teach Basque for adults. It is responsible for training and for professionalising the teaching of Basque to adults, including provision of a programme of ongoing continuing professional development. Finally, it manages the certification system, by preparing the accreditation tests and by managing the implementation of the language testing, which is aligned with the CEFR reference levels (A1-C2). The model for funding is recognised as being a leader in the field of minority language learning provision (Gruffudd and Morris, 2012: 21). The 'vigorous' support of the Basque Government to the Basque for Adults sector is acknowledged as "indispensable, essential and fundamental" (Langabaster, 2001: 408)

4.5.4 In 2007 – 08 there were 36,571 learners in 107 Basque language centres (Gruffudd and Morris, 2012: 20). The number of adult learners is, therefore, double the number of Welsh learners. In 2010, there were 1500 teachers, whose entry requirement is a 3-year University degree.

4.5.5 The *euskaltegiak* are divided into three categories based on the level of public funding provided to them; the three types of *euskaltegiak* are public, officially approved private and free private (Powell and Smith, 2003: 75). The majority of private *euskaltegis* are run as teaching co-operatives. All the language schools receive regional government funding to varying degrees, and it is the level of funding which affects their categorisation (Mercator, 2005: 29). HABE set targets for the language schools in accordance with a range of indicators, and cooperates with all *euskaltegiak* with regard to the provision of materials, training for teachers and publications (Powell and Smith, 2003: 75). Funding is allocated against these targets.

4.5.6 In addition, there are two specialised schools for civil servants undertaking Basque language courses, one in the BAC and one in Navarre (Mercator 2005:

28). The two specialist centres underline the strong official status of the Basque language in the BAC, and demonstrate the encouragement and opportunity provided to civil servants to learn the language. Proficiency in Basque is seen as a favourable trait for civil servants, and the provision for civil servants is differentiated from the usual provision through different examination procedures (Mercator, 2005: 28).

4.5.7   The learner who commenced the learning of Basque *ab initio* previously had twelve levels or stages to follow to achieve a competence similar to that of a native speaker. An initial estimation of 125–150 hours was made to achieve one level. A learner who started from the first level would, in theory, reach level 12 in between 1,500 and 1,800 hours. The curriculum was revised in 1999 to consultation with stakeholders, and established four stages (beginner, intermediate, advanced and higher) instead of the previous twelve levels. The number of hours and the stages have subsequently been mapped on the CEFR (see Appendix 1), and thus 1715 hours of class time are required to reach C2, as well as 1725 hours of self-study and use, a total of 3440 hours. The main aim of *euskaltegiak* is, "to develop linguistic competence in the four skills" (Azkue and Perales, 2005: 81). Importance is placed on oral skills, however, in beginners classes.

4.5.8   The earlier materials were 'grammatically' led. During the 1970s drilling 'abounded', and subsequently communicative, and later task-based learning approaches prevailed. The current materials are based on a task-based approach. According to Azkue and Perales (*ibid*.), the teaching methods are 'eclectic' and have "reflected the prevailing trends of the moment". They explain:

> *"[I]n general the two mainstays in the teaching of Basque to adults in the euskaltegis have been (a) a sequence of grammatical structures and (b) a considerable communicative component, in which emphasis is placed on the oral use of the language" (ibid. 81).*

4.5.9   The use of drilling is no longer a central component. The revised curriculum focuses on transforming knowledge into use by developing communicative capacity against the four-level system, which corresponds to the B1, B2, C1 and C2 levels of the CEFR. HABE accredit these four levels, although this is optional.

4.5.10 The 'basic curriculum' is designed to be adopted by *euskaltegiak* to their local sociolinguistic context and the needs of their students. The significant amount of hours required to achieve fluency in Basque is reflected in the number of class hours that learners attend weekly, with the majority of learners attending classes

for more than 10 hours per week (Powell and Smith, 2003: 75). In 2002, 51.9 percent of enrolments were on language courses that consisted of 10 – 19 hours a week (Powell and Smith, 2003: 76). Powell and Smith argue that "this was at least partly due to arrangements for the release of learners from employment to attend classes" (*ibid.* 76). Additionally, students who successfully pass exams are eligible for grant-funding to support their tuition and exam fees, on a decreasing scale (B1: 400€; B2: 300€; C1L 100€ and C2: 100€.) The 2013 budget for student funding is 700,000 euros.

4.5.11   The courses vary according to their intensity from 6 hours a week to more than 20 hours a week, or residential. Individual classes are typically between 2 – 5 hours in duration. Class sizes are small, on average 13 – 15 students, and "follow a structural-functional syllabus which devotes plenty of time to oral communication" (Cenoz and Perales, 2001: 103). In addition to language schools, like the WfA Centres, HABE subsidises a range of extra-curricular activities, which include special programmes, such as residential courses, *barnetegia*, which give total immersion, or staying with a Basque-speaking family in a rural area (Cenoz, 2009).

4.5.12   As in most of the WfA centres, teachers in the *euskaltegiak* have considerable flexibility in how the courses are taught and which materials to use. Indeed, whilst HABE has a role in developing course materials, and publishes such materials for purchase by *euskaltegiak*, "teaching centres have a strong tradition of working with homemade materials" (pers. comm.). There is a strategic focus on drawing on teaching innovations to publish new materials for students and tutors, through the *Primeran! Euskara ikasteko metodoa* project, as well as through an online students' portal www.ikasbil.net. HABE purchases the exploitation rights for some of its materials, and then makes them freely available to the *euskaltegiak* to adapt for their teaching.

4.5.13   The Basque programme is understood as successful in attracting students, retaining students (around 50 percent of students continue to study in a successive study year), in providing intensive courses and in securing a funding and policy model fit for supporting language revitalisation through adult learning. On the other hand, the number of passes in accreditations is relatively low, and this year varied from 55 to 29.2 percent from B1 to C2 examinations. Improving these results is a primary objective of HABE (pers. comm. HABE). Interestingly, a study on contextual factors affecting proficiency of students who had received c. 300 hours of classes (B1), found metalinguistic awareness (e.g. knowledge

about how to structure and use language) as the greatest predictor of oral fluency in Basque (Perales and Cenoz, 2002).

4.6   *Oulpann* for teaching Brezhoneg (Breton)

4.6.1   There are an estimated 240,000 Breton speakers, of which some 20,000 are estimated to have learnt Breton as an additional language (Hornsby, 2005). The teaching of Breton to adults is not, however, a major plank in language planning for Breton, and its provision is primarily found in the community and private sector (Mercator, 2003).

4.6.2   *Skol an Emsav* has developed an *ulpan*-style course in Breton (*Brezhoneg*), written by Nikolas Davalan, and adapted for the teaching of Breton to adults in evening classes. It is based on the traditional *Wlpan* course, and aims to teach Breton as quickly as possible, using short dialogues, games and repetition. The *Skol an Emsav* courses are available in four levels, which are available to purchase in the form of three course books, with accompanying CDs, from the *Skol an Emsav* website.[7] A vocabulary book is also available of the first 1000 words, and learners are offered a subscription to the learners' magazine, *Bremon*, also published by *Skol an Emsav*. *Oulpann* is described as "a modern and lively method focusing on oral skills, allowing rapid acquisition to a good level of the language" (website).

4.6.3   Based on games, dialogues and exercises, the *ulpan* method is used to underpin courses at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. The beginner classes run from the end of September to June (excluding holidays), and involves 30 sessions of 1.5 hours duration e.g. 45 hours at a cost of 185 Euros (or 125 Euros for unemployed/students). The classes are taught by teachers and trained volunteers, who are affiliated to the federation dedicated to the teaching of Breton to adults, and whose members comprise 41 organisations and 2,500 learners.

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[7] http://www.skolanemsav.com/apprendre-le-breton/methode-d-enseignement-pedagogie.html

Figure 2: Excerpt from Unit 1 of *Oulpann* – the negative

05	Le négatif

Rappel : Pour mettre la copule au négatif, il suffit de la placer entre **n'** et **ket**. *Voilà.*

Rappel : On commence souvent la phrase par la négation.

A. Traduire du breton

N'eo ket gwir.
N'eo ket dañjerus.
N'eo ket Yann.

B. Traduire du français

Ce n'est pas mauvais.
Elle n'est pas triste.
Ce n'est pas ça.

Source: *Oulpann*. Volume 1

4.6.4   The classes are primarily taught through the medium of Breton, but tutors have flexibility in how they teach the course materials. All students purchase the relevant course book. For each unit, the book provides the 'vocabulary', 'language drills' and 'dialogue' which form the structure of the *Oulpann* lesson. Written exercises are followed by extensive grammatical explanation, with examples in French and Breton, and metalinguistic commentary, all of which are to be studied at home. The addition of this explanation and commentary reflects the pedagogical tradition of teaching additional languages in France, which focus on language analysis and translation. The book cautions, "explanations, structural exercises and translation exercises shouldn't mislead you, they are only there for those of you who would be frustrated without them" (*Oulpann* 1, page 3: translation by Dr Michael Hornsby). As such, the course text book for *Oulpann,* as in many *Wlpan* courses texts, provides explanation to satisfy students' diverse learning preferences.

4.6.5   Learners perceive there to be a significant gap between the written and spoken Breton register. To address this, the course book provides the written register through examples, before explaining in the metalinguistic commentary what contractions, for example, arise in speech. Interestingly, the vocabulary is given in IPA, to support students' pronunciation (this possibly reflects the fact that the course textbook can support self-study of adults who are not attending an *Oulpann* course). Finally, the answers to the written exercises are provided to enable students to correct their own work. The course materials are, therefore, more extensive than those provided by Ùlpan for Gaelic, and this reflects the target group and their preferred learning styles.

4.7 *Ulpan* **for Sámi in Nordland**

A dialect of Sámi in Nordland is designing an *ulpan* course targeted at young people and those in upper secondary and high school level in particular. Until now 'traditional' class-room teaching methods (language camps and distance learning have also been available) have been used and students are typically proficient writers, but their ability and confidence in speaking Sámi is typically low. As such, the *ulpan* course will be taught through immersion to increase aural input, and will focus initially on teaching oral skills using drilling and other methods. It is intended that the course be in two parts, with each part involving c. 80 hours of class contact e.g. 160 hours in total. The courses development is being funded by the government and the materials will be free for everyone to use.

4.8 **Summary**

4.8.1 There is no single ulpan teaching approach or methodology, even for teaching Hebrew; ulpan courses have in common several principles, however. These are (a) teaching in the target language, following the Ivrit Be 'Ivrit (Hebrew in Hebrew) model, insofar as possible; (b) a focus on spoken language and oral attainment; and, (c) the teaching of language forms based on sentence patterns, through oral/aural or/and written exercises. These approaches share in common an emphasis on achieving basic oral skills in a second language in a short time through 'intensive' learning.

4.8.2 There are, however, significant variations in the intensity in which *ulpan* courses are delivered, both in terms of the weekly hours of tuition and the frequency of tuition. The literature suggests that two parameters of intensity are important: number of hours per week and the frequency of classes, with research suggesting the latter is the more important. *Ulpanim* in Israel, Basque *euskaltegiak* and *Wlpan* residential programmes share a high level of intensity of learning, in contexts in which students receive extensive L2 input as well as opportunities for output. However, even Wlpan is rarely offered as an intensive model and certainly does not compare to the 10 hours plus of weekly classes typical of learners in Basque *euskaltegiak*, or the 20 hours a week which characterised the learning of Hebrew in *ulpanim* in Israel. There are also significant divergences in terms of the total number of contact hours for courses. The Ùlpan contact hours, and the intensity at which it is being delivered, are roughly equivalent to an average *Wlpan* entry + beginners course.

4.8.3   The Gaelic Ùlpan, *Wlpan* courses at Cardiff WfA centre, and the *Oulpann* course in Breton, continue to teach using a highly scripted and scheduled course, modelled on the original *Wlpan* course. However, in most contexts *ulpan* tutors have considerable flexibility in their lesson structure, methods and schedule. This is also true of the Basque programme for adults. It is noteworthy that the relative success of ulpanim and equivalent intensive courses for beginners are largely measured by student numbers, rather than any proficiency outcomes.

4.8.4   There is no common model for the development and use of modern materials. This is a matter of policy concern for the teaching of Welsh and Basque, where different centres are producing a range of materials, not all of which is published or made available for others to use. The most recent innovations have focused on creating the infrastructure for the sharing of tutor and student materials, and projects which take advantage of different learning modalities and resources made possible through modern learning technologies.

4.8.5   The most fundamental differences relate to the level of national planning for adult language acquisition as part of broader language in education policy. The Basque and Welsh language in education policies have addressed issues of access; resourcing; curriculum and accreditation; methods and materials; and, professionalisation of the workforce in a strategic way.

4.8.6   In Wales, *Wlpan* courses are part of a much wider suite of WfA courses. Government bodies are responsible for designing and regulating the national language curriculum for adults, and funding is channelled through distributed network of centres, or providers, whose performance is measured against a range of targets. WfA centres and *euskaltegiak* are, therefore, accountable to the Welsh government and their effectiveness is subject to inspection by the national body. All these measures promote quality and public accountability.

4.8.7   Finally, there are vast differences in the level of funding for the sector: in Wales, the annual level of funding per enrolled student in the Welsh for Adults programme is roughly £122 whereas in the BAC, it is approximately £1075. There is no such framework for Breton. The fragmented nature of funding for adult learning of Gaelic prohibits a direct cost comparison; however, a crude comparison based on Ùlpan's core-funding in 2012-13 generates a figure of £144 per Ùlpan learner.

4.8.8   Whilst lessons can be learned from all these contexts, it must be emphasised that the delivery model, and the teaching methods and approach, for adult

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language learning are designed to be appropriate to the local sociolinguistic circumstances and that the effectiveness of Ùlpan in Scotland must be considered within its specific social, linguistic and policy context. The following section explores the nature of the implementation of Ùlpan in Scotland.

5. The Ùlpan Implementation Model

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section provides an overview of the implementation model, as designed by Deiseal Ltd and supported by public funding. It explores the rationale for public investment in the programme, and explains the role of third-party organisations, and accredited tutors, in its delivery and roll out across Scotland.

5.2 Funding for the development of Ùlpan

5.2.1 Deiseal has received public funding for the development of the Ùlpan programme since 2006. Until 2011, funding was on a piecemeal basis. Six awards to the value of £301,007 were awarded between 2005 – 10 from Bòrd na Gàidhlig to Deiseal, specifically for course development and tutor training costs. The current four-year funding package, co-funded by Bòrd na Gàidhlig (BnG), Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), is to support Deiseal to complete the programme, address national certification and to create an online lesson maintenance system. A proportion of the funding is ring-fenced for the funding of this online lesson maintenance system, which is being developed by Napier University. The funding agreement ends in March 2014. Ultimately, the funders expect that their capital support for investment in software and information-enabled systems will contribute to the sustainability of Ùlpan as a model for delivering Gaelic to adults in Scotland, and to the sustainability of Deiseal as a commercially viable company beyond this date.

Table 4: 2010 – 14 public funding package (£)

Funding Body	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Total
BnG*	112,000	250,000	250,000	90,000	702,000
SDS*	35,500	52,000	52,500	35,500	175,500
HIE **	-	71,572	66,440	61,988	200,000
Total	147,500	373,572	368,940	187,488	1,077,500

*Source: Bòrd na Gàidhlig. **Source: Highlands and Islands Enterprise

5.2.2 The core-funding package as agreed in principle is given in

5.2.3 Table 4. According to Deiseal, this public funding represents approximately 70 percent of Deiseal's income, the remaining 30 percent being derived from training tutors and selling access to course materials (Deiseal, 2013, Frequently Asked Questions). Between 2006 and 2014 the Bòrd alone will have invested

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£1,017,577 in Deiseal for the development of Ùlpan. This represents an unprecedented level of investment in Gaelic for Adults, and reflects the ambitious goals set in the *National Plan for Gaelic 2007 – 12* for increasing the number of adult learners progressing to fluency. There is, however, no national funding structure for the provision of GfA. Rather, GfA in Scotland is supported from a range of sources. The most important streams of GfA funding are provided to Clì Gàidhlig, which supports a part-time position specifically for the administration of Ùlpan courses by Clì Gàidhlig; and, the BnG-administered Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund (GLAIF), which supports Gaelic learning for staff, community education provision, as well as other training and administration costs. The Scottish Government's system of Specific Grants for Gaelic Education, under which Local Authorities can bid for up to 75 percent of the costs of community learning and special GfA projects, accounts for a small proportion of GfA funding. The complexity of funding for GfA is such, however, that it defies easy quantification. McLeod *et al.* (2010:18) note, however, "it is certain that the scale of funding for GfA is very small when compared to the cost of school education in Gaelic (GME and GLE) or to the Welsh for Adults structure". The report recommended that "[s]mall cohort funding is necessary for GfA provision organised by both local authorities and FE/HE institutions". However, despite the increased role Gaelic adult learners' play in Gaelic language revitalisation, this recommendation has not been implemented. Public expenditure on the delivery of Ùlpan cannot, therefore, be measured.

5.3 Rationale for Ùlpan's development funding

5.3.1 The significance of adult L2 speakers to the reproduction of the Gaelic speech community arises due to the near cessation of inter-generational transmission and the decline in use in what were formerly Gaelic-speaking communities.[8] Yet previous research has highlighted the gulf between the policy aspirations for, and the outcomes of, Gaelic for Adults (GfA) provision. All research to date (Wells, 1997; MacCaluim, 2007; McLeod *et al*., 2010; Milligan, Chalmers and Danson, 2011) has found that few learners are achieving high levels of fluency, even when these adults are motivated to do so. McLeod *et al*.'s (2010: vi) research report also concluded that "Gaelic for Adults provision in Scotland

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[8] Rothach *et al*.'s research, for example, concluded, that, "intergenerational transmission of Gaelic in Shawbost is broken" (2011: 12), and that "Gaelic as a community language in Shawbost is at the tipping point" (2011:7).

tends to be patchy, uncoordinated, poorly promoted, inadequately funded and often lacking in professional rigour". Developing an effective form of Gaelic adult education has been, therefore, a policy priority for Bòrd na Gàidhlig:

"[Our priorities] were very much to…create, support, develop a curriculum for Gaelic adult learning in Scotland which didn't exist. Lots and lots of courses, lots of good courses out there, but very localised, you know, connected with the individual. The thing that was attractive about Ùlpan from our point of view was the consistency, the transferability, the progression and actually, as I say, creating a curriculum." (Representative, Bòrd na Gàidhlig).

The Bòrd's primary rationale for investment is, therefore, to support a progressive curriculum for adult learning, which can be delivered on a national level.

5.3.2 Highlands and Islands Enterprise is the development agency for the named region and works in partnership with other agencies to implement a three-pronged model of private sector support, inward investment and community development. Credited with producing the first coherent language strategy for Gaelic, *Strategy for Gaelic Development in the Highlands and Islands* (Lingard *et al*., 1993), HIE's revenue and project funding for Gaelic language initiatives from the early 1980s onwards has consistently been underpinned by an economic rationale: the rationale for investment in Ùlpan is no different. First, it is to exploit the potential for business growth through the Ùlpan dispersed 'franchise' model. Whilst Deiseal is not based in the region, the region is a main beneficiary of Ùlpan services. Second, the model supports job creation, particularly in the fragile areas, where income from Ùlpan tutoring can "make a significant enhancement to their income" under the franchise model. Third, HIE believes Gaelic language skills are a cultural and linguistic asset and economic resource for the HIE area. HIE's objectives do not include the generation of new Gaelic speakers *per se*, but to support initiatives which can help enable Gaelic to be used as an economic asset. HIE has allocated 200k to the development of Ùlpan over the 4-year period, of which the initial £40k is part of the organisation's GLAIF monies. The expectation is that, at the end of the project it can be said that:

"[Deiseal] needed public sector finance to get it through that software development stage, and to grow the number of tutors, and so on, but it's a solid, commercial success as a business now and it's using Gaelic very directly as the asset it works in." (Representative, HIE)

5.3.3 Skills Development Scotland's (SDS) work, as detailed in its Gaelic Language Plan, is based on a recognition of "the wide economic potential the development of Gaelic brings and the importance of the contribution Gaelic plays in the culture and heritage of Scotland" (SDS, 2011). The work of SDS aims to support Bòrd

na Gàidhlig in achieving increased acquisition and usage of Gaelic as described in the Bòrd's former action plan, *Ginealach Ùr na Gàidhlig* (A New Generation of Gaelic Speakers). SDS has co-funded two sectoral studies into the skills needs of the so-called 'Gaelic labour market' (HECLA Consulting *et al.,* 2008 and forthcoming), and sees its investment in Ùlpan as a means to "lift the skills base and professionalism of Gaelic language tuition right across Scotland" (SDS).

5.3.4   Collectively, therefore, the funders have invested in Deiseal in return for a public service identified as necessary for fulfilling a range of policy goals, on the premise that the organisation would not be commercially viable without public support, and that the Ùlpan course would not make it to market without this intervention. The management of risk is secured through a contractual clause that, should Deiseal (the Licensor), for any reason, cease trading, then Deiseal's IPR for Ùlpan course materials would be transferred to Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the main investor.

5.4   Authorship, ownership and licensee agreements

5.4.1   The Ùlpan course is written by course developers, Deiseal Ltd. These materials include the Ùlpan units, the teaching notes and the training materials for Ùlpan tutors. Deiseal holds the IPR (including copyright) for these materials and it protects this IPR through legal licensee agreements between Deiseal and Ùlpan tutors. These materials are not published, thus ensuring that language tutors able to use them are only those accredited by Deiseal, once they have satisfied the company that they have achieved the requirements to pass their Ùlpan training course. The Ùlpan Tutor Licence Agreement gives tutors the right to derive income from teaching Ùlpan in return for paying for access to course materials at a fee levied on a student *per capita* basis. Deiseal's income is generated from the sale of training courses to Ùlpan tutors (the Tutor Licence Fees) and this subscription fee, referred to by Deiseal as a Course Materials Fee. The pricing structure has changed since the programme's inception in 2007 (**Error! Reference source not found.**), but the principle remains the same.

5.4.2   Under new license agreements, tutors are not permitted to derive new materials from Ùlpan without prior written consent of Deiseal; and tutors are required to notify and inform Deiseal of any innovations arising from their teaching of Ùlpan, and to assign any IPR to Deiseal.

Table 5: Course materials fee structure per student enrolled

Period	Timing of Payment	Fee (£)	*Per capita* cost
2007 – Nov 2012	Unit 1	£50	
	Unit 73	£50	£100
Nov 2012 –	Unit 1, 25, 49, 73, 97, 121.	£25	£150

5.4.3 Deiseal's original business model was predicated on a network of sole-trader tutors, therefore enabling them to "break free from the established patterns of course provision that have badly hampered the availability of tuition to the most of Scotland in the past" (Deiseal, 2010:5). By establishing classes to meet local demand, tutors would run classes on a commercial basis, and generate an income through course fees:

> *We had to do it not based on institutions because I saw that the culture was death to what we were trying to do. So the main focus was on building a franchise model. So that tutors would essentially be sole-traders. They could align themselves with an organisation, they could become employees of an organisation but we weren't, at least in the original model, we weren't going to have a service-level agreement with the college, what we would do is collect our revenues because the tutor was deriving income. And it's a good model but it kind of didn't work. (Stiùiriche, Deiseal)*

Section 6 explains what has happened in practice.

5.5   Ùlpan tutors and tutor training

5.5.1 To enter into a licence agreement with Deiseal, an Ùlpan tutor must first be accredited by Deiseal. Deiseal has designed a tutor-training course to ensure a uniform approach to teaching Ùlpan across Scotland, at the required standard. No previous experience of teaching Gaelic is required, but the following are criteria are specified by Deiseal:

- 17 years old or above
- fluent in Gaelic with a good accent (literacy would be a bonus)
- keen to teach the language
- a strong communicator (www.ulpan.co.uk/home/teaching Accessed 12 April 2013).

5.5.2 Since 2011 Deiseal has conducted a pre-test of prospective trainees' Gaelic through a telephone conversation, if they are identified as L2 speakers of Gaelic. Other prospective tutors apply to teach the course based on their own evaluations of their fluency. Indeed, Deiseal explain that they don't "sit in judgement" of trainee's Gaelic, rather competence is demonstrated by the trainee's ability to follow the Ùlpan 'recipe', for "to be able to deliver it, they need

to be able to deliver it" (Stiùiriche, Deiseal). Ùlpan trainees fall into three broad categories:

- Employees of FE colleges
- Full-time employees of public or quasi-public sector bodies, such as Local Authorities, HIE and Scottish Natural Heritage
- Independent tutors, employed by public sector or FE/HE providers on a sessional (or zero-hour contract) basis.

A minority work as sole-traders.

5.5.3   The above categories are not mutually exclusive, with it being possible for a tutor to provide one course/s as an independent tutor, and another course as a part-time employee of a local authority, for example. Some organisations, such as Clì Gàidhlig, enter into a service agreement with Ùlpan tutors, rather than employing tutors directly on a sessional or fractional basis.

5.5.4   The pathway to tutor accreditation has changed since Ùlpan's inception. Between 2007 and 2011, the standardised tutor-training was provided through a 2-day *skills course*, with the Deiseal director as the primary trainer, together with a 4 – 6 day training course to which Ùlpan students were co-taught Units 1 – 24 by the trainees, who were under observation for assessment. In March 2011, Deiseal reviewed the pathway to accreditation and proposed four pathways to improve cost-effectiveness, which would take advantage of a growing network of experienced Ùlpan tutors and therefore reduce the reliance on Deiseal's core staff to deliver training. Deiseal subsequently recruited Ùlpan tutor-trainers from its cohort of tutors, who can run Ùlpan trainee courses and assess trainees. To create economies of scale, Deiseal proposed that two-day skills conferences (for up to 48 trainees) replace skills courses (for up to c. 12 trainees), followed by a six day 'training course', where trainees practise 'live' teaching, under the supervision and assessment of an Ùlpan trainer. Additionally, it was proposed that mentoring by accredited tutors be used as an alternative to a 'training course', over a period of 18 Ùlpan units. Currently, therefore, Ùlpan tutor-training combines the skills conference with local mentoring schemes or week-long immersion courses.

5.5.5   The cost of training to be an Ùlpan tutor is levied by Deiseal as a *Tutor Licence Fee*. This fee covers both the Ùlpan tutor materials, and the training itself, and is currently £400.00+ VAT when applicable, e.g. when places are paid for by organisations (and levied only on the training element, which accounts for 70

percent of the fee). The cost to trainees has also been subsidised through a number of mechanisms, including through tutors applying for Individual Learning Accounts (ILA) and, typically, by finding a public funded body to subsidise all or part of the trainees' costs. Of the 216 people who have commenced an Ùlpan training course, to date only 53 have not been sponsored by an organisation. In 2010 Clì Gàidhlig opened the CLIÙ grant scheme, which is a small-grants scheme designed to support new tutors or, specifically, for tutors using the Ùlpan method to run revision classes. Under CLIÙ, any new tutor of Gaelic can apply for a one-off grant for teaching aids up to a maximum of £100, and tutors using the Ùlpan method are eligible for grants to run a 4-hour revision class at the end of each block of 24 units, to the value of £120.

5.6 Tutor licensee obligations and requirements

5.6.1 Once accredited, Ùlpan tutors enter a licensee agreement with Deiseal, which gives the tutor the right to use these materials to teach Ùlpan, under the terms and conditions of the agreement and according to the rules and procedures set out in the teaching notes for each unit. The charge for using these materials is then levied on a student per capita basis by Deiseal (see 5.4). This system means that tutors gain access to materials via the online tutor portal, for which they are then responsible for printing, reproducing and preparing for use in class (unless they are available from their provider). The tutor area of the website offers a dedicated news feed, the ability for tutors to add their classes for Deiseal to market to potential students, sound files for Units 1 – 24, and Course Materials for Units 1 – 144 in PDF format for download. These materials include Lesson Plans, Learning Activity Materials and Student Notes.

5.6.2 The new agreements also require licensees to supply student and tutor data. On registration, Deiseal are to be supplied with the name, date of birth, personal email address, phone number and home address and post-code of the student. Previously, tutors (or their employers) were responsible for collecting these data manually but this can now be done online using the online student registration system; tutors (or employers) are responsible to ensure that self-registration is fully completed, using one or other system. Deiseal also request data on student withdrawals, by asking providers to supply the date at which a student ceases to attend. These data will enable Deiseal to invoice the employer or the tutor as appropriate for the *per capita* Course Materials Fee, and to maintain records on withdrawals and completions, as well as a database of all students for marketing

and monitoring purposes. Tutors are obligated to notify Deiseal if a class size falls below the minimum requirement, for example when withdrawals lower the number of students in a course.

5.6.3   Under the Ùlpan Tutor Licence Agreement, the control and distribution of the course materials is the responsibility of the licensee and it is their responsibility to ensure that course materials (including student notes) are not copied, modified or used to create derivative works.

5.6.4   All tutors are required to notify Deiseal if they are to be employed by a course provider, and this ensures that all employers can be requested to sign an Ùlpan Tutor Employer Agreement. Similarly, Employers are required to give written notification of any tutor whose contract with the provider is terminated.

5.6.5   Finally, the license permits Deiseal to conduct checks on the standard of quality and uniformity of delivery through site visits and inspections of books and records held by the tutor or employer. Any failure to comply with the terms and conditions, or to remedy such breaches, would lead to Deiseal terminating the agreement. These draft contracts were issued to all Ùlpan tutors in November 2012, and Deiseal employees are currently consulting with tutors to put in place amended contracts, for those who want them.

Table 6: Registered Ùlpan course providers (June 2013)

Organisation	Sector	Local Authority Area	ILA Registered
University of Aberdeen	HE	Aberdeen	No
Ionad Chaluim Chille Ìle	FE	Argyll and Bute	No
Argyll & Bute Council	LA	Argyll and Bute	No
Argyll College	FE	Argyll and Bute	Yes
City of Edinburgh Council	LA	City of Edinburgh	No
University of Glasgow Centre for Open Learning	HE	Glasgow City	No
Highland Council	LA	Highland	No
Scottish Natural Heritage	Public	Highland	No
North West Training Centre	Voluntary	Highland	Yes
Assynt Leisure Sport Youth & Learning Centre	Voluntary	Highland	Yes
Lews Castle College	FE	Eilean Siar	Yes
Deiseal Ltd	Private	National	Yes
Clì Gàidhlig	Voluntary	National	Yes
Perth & Kinross Council	LA	Perth and Kinross	No
Deans Community High School	LA	West Lothian	No

Code: LA (Local Authority) FE (Further Education) HE (Higher Education).
Sources: www.ilascotland.org.uk (Accessed 15 January 2013); Deiseal Ltd June 2013.

5.7 Ùlpan Course Providers

5.7.1 In contrast to the franchise model which Deiseal planned for at the outset, the vast majority of Ùlpan courses are provided by organisations which employ accredited Ùlpan tutors to deliver Ùlpan courses. Table 6 lists current course providers by Local Authority area and by sector. It also notes those which are registered to offer Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) for Ùlpan courses.[9] The table shows that Ùlpan course providers are concentrated in the FE/HE and Local Authority sectors. Geographically speaking, there is currently no provision in the cities of Stirling and Dundee and there is surprisingly little competition in areas where Gaelic speakers are concentrated, such as Glasgow and the Western Isles. The University of Aberdeen became an Ùlpan course provider in March 2013, therefore filling a geographical gap in provision. According to Deiseal fourteen organisations have provided Ùlpan in the past, but no longer do so: five are local authorities, four are colleges, one is an NDPB and the remainder are small voluntary organisations.

5.8 The minimum model of delivery

5.8.1 In November 2012, Deiseal introduced new licensee arrangements which asked Course Providers and tutors to legally commit to a minimum model of delivery. The new agreements effectively seek to control the way in which Course Providers and tutors deliver Ùlpan, and are designed to ensure that the licensor, Deiseal Ltd, is supplied with enrolment data to facilitate programme monitoring and payment for the use of the course materials.

5.8.2 The minimum model of delivery affects the scheduling of courses by requiring Ùlpan to be standardised according to the following requirements:

- To offer Ùlpan in whole Levels of 24 units;
- To teach at least two Ùlpan units during a seven day period;
- To have no more than five days between classes;
- To have a break of no more than four weeks between blocks of twelve;
- To ensure class sizes of between 8 – 14 students;
- To offer progression by offering all Ùlpan units, and continuity to the next level where demand exists from 10 or more students.

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[9] ILAs are administered by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and provide up to £200 of support a year to adults towards the costs of learning or training, as long as individuals earn less than £22,000 a year and meet other criteria.

5.8.3   The minimum model of delivery came into immediate effect for Level 1 courses commencing after 1 November 2012, whereas existing courses were granted a transition period to 1 August 2013. It is the expectation of Deiseal that course providers will work in partnership with a pool of tutors to deliver the minimum model of teaching Ùlpan. However, in relatively remote areas where delivery has been based on weekly provision, classes are reliant on single Ùlpan tutors and small class sizes prevail, the opportunities for partnership delivery models are curbed.

5.8.4   Since November 2012, new Course Providers are liable for tutor's obligations under new *Ùlpan Tutor Employer Agreements*, should they have signed these. Under these agreements, the Course Provider assumes responsibility for payment of the Course Materials Fee and other tutor obligations, such as those governing the pattern of course delivery and the notification of Deiseal of any teaching innovations.

5.8.5   Deiseal is currently negotiating the terms and conditions of these new contracts with third-party organizations: only three of the course providers who participated in our interviews during the spring were in a position to sign them, the remainder was negotiating some level of flexibility.

5.9   Summary

5.9.1   Ùlpan in Scotland has addressed the previously fragmented forms of evening Gaelic classes in Scotland with a structured and uniform product for entry-level learners.

5.9.2   The original business model, based on licensees delivering Ùlpan courses on a self-employed and commercial basis, has not been fully realised; instead, Ùlpan is primarily delivered through a group of course providers that have existing experience in delivering adult education classes in the community. This business model is now under review, and Deiseal has introduced new governing structures in order to gain greater control over the way in which Ùlpan is delivered by these third-party organisations.

5.9.3   The new minimum model of delivery is designed to standardise the rate of delivery. The following section will examine in more detail the supply of Ùlpan courses in Scotland in order to explain patterns of implementation thus far, and to highlight structural factors which support, or challenge, the effectiveness of the Ùlpan programme in bringing adults to 'functional fluency' in Gaelic.

6. The Delivery of Ùlpan in Scotland

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 In this section we consider factors affecting the supply-side of the Ùlpan programme, based on interviews with key informants involved in the provision of Ùlpan programmes across Scotland together with existing secondary data on course provision. This section addresses the following topics:

- Student registrations and patterns;
- The Ùlpan workforce;
- Ùlpan course provision;
- Funding structures;
- Links to GfA provision and informal learning;
- Policy effectiveness; and,
- A comparison with delivery models elsewhere.

6.2 Student registrations

6.2.1 Prior to the recent introduction of a new online registration system, administrative data collected by Deiseal was limited. The data presented is derived from Deiseal's quarterly reports to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for the period March 2010 to March 2013, and the student database maintained by Deiseal to June 2013. Prior to the introduction of the online student registration system, Deiseal maintained records of student enrolment through invoice data on the payment of the *per capita* Course Materials Fee. As such, prior to January 2013, Deiseal data only records the number of students who:

- Started Unit 1 of Ùlpan
- Started Unit 73 of Ùlpan.

6.2.2 There is no longitudinal data on student progression, continuity or completions. Moreover, these data should be treated with caution given they do not indicate that a student has completed a block of Ùlpan tuition (only that they have *started* a block of tuition) and are dependent on the quality of data which Deiseal derives from course providers and independent tutors.

6.2.3 Since the Ùlpan programme's inception in 2007 to June 2013, 2586 students in Scotland have enrolled for Unit 1 of the Ùlpan course and, of those, 310 students have enrolled for Unit 73 (formally known as Part 2, currently as Level 4). That is, 12 percent of all Ùlpan students have progressed more than half-way

through the course by June 2013 (Note: this figure includes five students in Canada). The pattern of growth to March 2013 is given in

6.2.4   Figure 3.

Figure 3: Ùlpan student registrations 2009 – 13
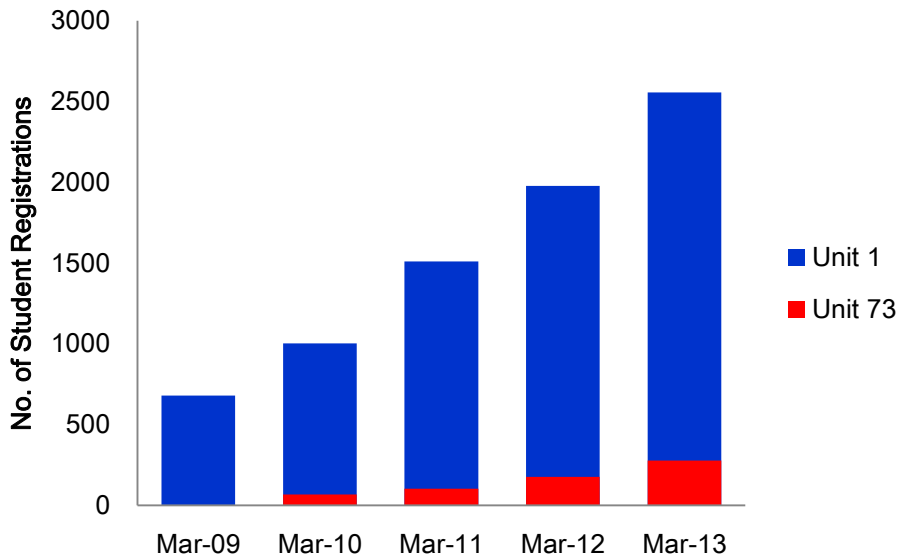
Source: Deiseal quarterly progress reports to Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

6.2.5   The distribution of student enrolments according to Local Authority area is given in Table 7. It shows that 55 percent of Ùlpan students live in the modern-era *Gàidhealtachd* local authority areas of Highland, Eilear Siar and Argyll and Bute. Significant populations of students also live in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

6.2.6   The Ùlpan course is targeted at entry-level learners: only a handful of providers have offered entry at other points in the course and placement has usually been determined through a 'suck it and see' method. Course providers told us how they followed the advice of Deiseal, which is for all students to start at Unit 1:

> *"We have always advised that even advanced 'grammar students' can benefit greatly from entry at Unit 1 because the emphasis is on usage, phonology and real-time communication, even if all the vocabulary and structures are known metalinguistically. Ùlpan aims at competence rather than knowledge." (Stiùiriche, Deiseal)*

6.2.7   There are two other factors which have mitigated against continuous intake or higher entry points. These are: (a) relatively low levels of provision of higher units/levels in a locality due to student numbers; and, (b) the historic Course Materials Fee pricing structure, which charged £50 for access to the materials 1 – 73, regardless of entry point. We were told both these factors were disincentives to students and to tutors to accept students at later entry points. This has perpetuated a situation whereby providers normally start provision at

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Unit 1. One consequence of this, we were told, is that many Ùlpan students have previously attended GfA courses and have basic oral skills but, in the absence of alternative provision, start Ùlpan at Level 1 regardless. A lack of clear entry points has been a weakness in the course implementation. The results of the student survey let us explore the extent and impact of this.

Table 7: Ùlpan registration data by Local Authority area

Local Authority Area	Unit 1 No.	Unit 1 %	Unit 73 No.	Unit 73 %
Highland	766	29.6	129	41.6
Na h-Eileanan Siar	481	18.6	46	14.8
Edinburgh City	277	10.7	48	15.5
Argyll & Bute	180	7.0	12	3.9
Glasgow City	177	6.8	12	3.9
North Lanarkshire	116	4.5	22	7.1
Dumfries & Galloway	88	3.4	1	0.3
West Dunbartonshire	60	2.3	1	0.3
Perth and Kinross	74	2.9	1	0.3
Fife	36	1.4	2	0.6
Other areas	331	12.8	36	11.6
TOTAL	2586	100.0	310	100.0

Source: Deiseal Student Database, June 2013.

6.2.8 Deiseal estimate that 53 students have completed all 144 units. In the absence of better course and student data, it is not possible to ascertain what the typical rate of progression is for a student and what factors are affecting the rate of progression. If we examine the period of time taken between the date of invoice for a student to commence at Level 1, and the data of invoice for a student to commence at Level 4 (see

6.2.9 Figure 5), a pattern can be observed, however. Based only on the invoice data of those students who have registered for Level 4, the rate at which students are reaching Level 4 is increasing over time: only 19 percent of students who registered in 2008 and who have registered for Level 4 did so in less than one year, whereas 36 percent of students who registered in 2011 and who reached Level 4 did so in less than 12 months. These data should, however, be treated with caution as the date of invoice will not always coincide with the students' start data and invoice data is only available for 215 of the 305 students who have progressed to Level 4 in Scotland.

Figure 4: No. of years to reach level 4 by % of level 4 registrations
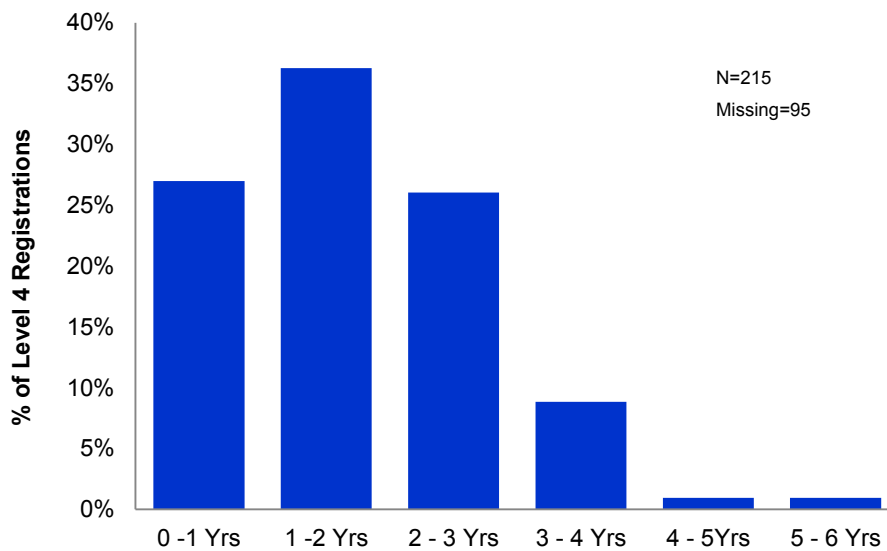
Source: Deiseal Student Database.

Note: N = population size.

6.3   The Ùlpan workforce

6.3.1   Between 2007 and 2013, 187 tutors were trained and accredited as Ùlpan tutors, of which 72 percent are classified by Deiseal as having 'begun to teach'. The number which has begun to teach refers to a tutor who has registered a class with Deiseal and does not refer to those who are currently engaged in teaching Ùlpan. Of the 187 tutors accredited, six have subsequently been disaccredited and further nine are classified as 'retired', and will not teach again. Deiseal record 111 as 'teaching'; this does not mean, however, that these tutors are currently practising Ùlpan.

6.3.2   Between 2007 and 2011, 39 Skills Courses offered places to 214 trainee places, resulting in 154 tutors accredited under this model. The average length of training was eight days. By January 2012, 160 tutors were trained under this model. Since then, tutors have been trained using Skills Conferences. Five Skills Conferences have been held roughly bi-annually at *Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu* (Glasgow Gaelic School) followed by five days of training at a week-long immersion course at a Glasgow community centre or, less typically through mentoring at scheduled and or weekend immersion courses. At March 2013, 27 tutors were accredited through the new model, and a further eight were part-way through their training. A lack of mentors means the latter has been ineffective: only three people have mentored a total of 21 students as of June 2013.

6.3.3 Despite the number of tutors accredited, we were told of areas of tutor shortages. One provider told us:

> *"The problem for us is getting a tutor ...* Comann na Gàidhlig *put me in touch with [Calum] from [Ardmòr] and without [Calum] we would be nowhere. He just travels once a week and it takes him two hours; it's huge, huge dedication – we pay him mileage and what have you, but without him we'd never have got this far. There was no other tutor available. And we wouldn't have got any better than him. He's also got a wealth of experience in the language itself, he's not just one of those who learnt up* Ùlpan*, you know, and could parrot it out. He's one of those who's got the breadth and wealth of the language." (Course Provider)*

6.3.4 Most public sector course providers have used GLAIF monies to subsidise tutor training costs, either for employees to teach Ùlpan internally, or to support the costs of training for tutors who live in the community. This was the case when Gaelic course providers were seeking new tutors for new Gaelic classes, or when they encouraged their existing sessional tutors to train as Ùlpan tutors:

> *"It was kind of the replacement of classes, we were kind of using tutors that we had used before, and we were paying their training fees to be an* Ùlpan *tutor…(…)….if they would agree to tutor with us for a year." (Course Provider)*

6.3.5 In some instances third-party providers covered the full costs of training, and in others they paid a contribution to the costs. However, in some cases, there has been no conditions attached to this investment, which means that the tutor hasn't necessarily been available to teach in that area (or been supported to find a class administered by a course provider). One Local Authority provider told us that it had invested in tutor training for ten individuals, yet none of these individuals are currently available to teach. Subsequent investment by this Local Authority has been accompanied by a sessional contract which specifies the teaching of a minimum number of units and prioritisation of Ùlpan classes for the course provider, over others. Indeed, the matching of trained tutors to students has been a key challenge in the delivery of Ùlpan.

6.3.6 Since 2011, it has been the remit of Deiseal to support tutors to find a class, usually through working with Course Providers, but this has proved challenging:

> *"So one of our biggest problems is getting people who are trained to start teaching. It's a real hurdle, to get them into a class. And to get all the pieces joined up. You can often set up a class, and they don't train. Or you set up a class and they find they don't like it. So you've got all these students waiting for a new tutor. And often we're not delivering the course, obviously, we're doing it through a third party. So the whole thing is really, really complex to try and get those 14 people in that room at that time, with that newly trained person to start the week after they've trained." (Stiùiriche, Deiseal)*

6.3.7 Several Course Providers have a pool of Ùlpan tutors to provide courses, thus enabling the course provider to pool Ùlpan teaching materials in a materials library and to co-deliver blocks of Ùlpan courses. For example, Lews Castle College has seven accredited tutors to deliver community, work-based and

residential courses. In Edinburgh, a consortium of tutors (independent and sponsored) received GLAIF funding to produce a materials library. Perth and Kinross Council has similarly attracted external funding for the production of a materials library, though classes are not co-delivered.

6.3.8   Tutors are now required by Deiseal to sign revised contracts and, if appropriate, tutors are requested to 'cease and desist'. It is not known how many tutors have signed the contracts; this figure could be a reasonably good indicator of how many Ùlpan tutors are active and potentially available to teach Ùlpan in the future, however, it is noted that some tutors will sign this contract regardless in order to keep open the option of tutoring in the future.

6.4   Ùlpan course provision

6.4.1   There is no comprehensive or longitudinal data available on the number of courses provided or the distribution of Ùlpan students according to tutor or course provider, unit, frequency of classes and place of delivery. From consultations with key informants, and data on existing Ùlpan courses, three general models of delivery can be identified, as follows, based on the place of delivery relative to the student:

a) *Community learning:* classes open to the public and generally scheduled to run once or twice weekly, typically in the evening although sometimes in the daytime for specific target groups, such as parents of children in GME. Some providers, such as Deiseal and Glasgow University, have offered a block of Ùlpan units in a week-long course and Clì Gàidhlig offer weekend courses.

b) *Residential learning***:** residential learning has primarily been offered as week-long Easter or summer courses. Lews Castle College has organised residential Ùlpan courses at Ravenspoint in collaboration with *Co-chomunn na Pàirc*, and at Lews Castle College campus in Stornoway, for Gaelic students from Stow and Kilmarnock colleges. Both these residential models combine Ùlpan language teaching with a cultural programme.

c) *Work-based learning***:** Several employers have used GLAIF funding to subsidise Ùlpan classes for its employees and have either sponsored staff members to train as Ùlpan tutors, and therefore have provided Ùlpan in-house, or have collaborated with a local provider to offer courses during working hours, and often at the employees' place of work. These are typically once or twice weekly classes. One example is Ùlpan courses at *Taigh a' Ghlinne Mhòir*, Inverness, by a tutor employed by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and to which employees of

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the Crofting Commission and SNH have enrolled. A cluster of organisations in Stornoway, including NHS Eilean Siar, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, MG ALBA and SNH, similarly sponsor staff to enrol in Ùlpan courses and work in partnership with Lews Castle College. The Glasgow University Centre for Open Studies runs classes for Glasgow City Council employees.

6.4.2   When considering the role of course providers, it has come to light that collaborations between organisations to deliver a course mean that two organisations can act as course providers of a single course. For example, Highland Council has, in the past, collaborated with Inverness College so that students' can be registered with an ILA accredited provider. Inverness College was, therefore, responsible for payment of the Course Materials Fee whereas Highland Council organised the course, paid the tutor and recruited the students. Several, would-be independent tutors are similarly involved in partnerships with ILA accredited providers, and bear the burden of responsibility for course management. Similarly, Clì Gàidhlig has entered into partnerships with local organisations in order to, for example, obtain class space at a lower cost, a saving which can then be passed on to the Ùlpan students.

6.4.3   Invoicing data supplied by Deiseal reveals that nearly fifty different organisations have paid Course Materials Fee, whilst the number of organisations identified as acting as course providers is significantly less (see Table 6). This suggests that the funding arrangements underpinning the delivery of Ùlpan by third-party organisations are leading to varied and complex forms of administration, which place a burden on course providers and, in doing so, are likely to reduce the overall cost-effectiveness of delivery.

6.4.4   The three most important providers of Ùlpan courses, in terms of the number of Ùlpan student registrations, are Clì Gàidhlig (28.8% of enrolments – although course material fees collected by Clì Gàidhlig form part of this figure); Lews Castle College (19% of enrolments) and Highland Council (8.4% of enrolments). Collectively, these three providers account for 56 percent of all student enrolments to June 2013. Glasgow University, with 3.7 percent of enrolments, is the fourth largest provider to date.

6.4.5   The scheduling of Ùlpan courses by any course provider has seemingly been highly variable across and within course providers. The four largest Ùlpan course providers have, however, more consistent patterns of provision, due to higher numbers of students.

6.4.6 Lews Castle College has provided Ùlpan since 2008, and has scheduled the majority of its Ùlpan classes on a twice-weekly model, delivering one unit in 90 minutes. It runs Ùlpan courses of 24 units in each of its three teaching semesters. In 2012 – 13, 95 of the 164 (58%) students enrolled in Ùlpan classes were employees of *Comhairle nan Eilean Siar*, whose places are fully subsidised by the Council. Classes were run in this academic year in Harris, Barra and in Stornoway at the college, the Council and the Nicholson Institute secondary school. The classes in Stornoway are all co-taught by the five core college staff members, and sessional tutors are employed to run other classes. We were told that continuity is high, even exceptional for some classes. Those who have completed Ùlpan have the option of attending a day-time conversational class on a weekly basis at the college. The college has worked in partnership with the Council and other partners to attract financial support to fund the training of Ùlpan tutors, fund a materials library which is housed at the college, and to market and administer courses. It is the only provider to offer accreditation (the SQA Single Skills Unit – Speaking), and to date some 30 students have chosen this option.

6.4.7 Clì Gàidhlig and Highland Council were two of the first providers of Ùlpan. From 2007, Clì Gàidhlig worked in partnership with Deiseal and Bòrd na Gàidhlig to help administer ILAs for Ùlpan students, recruit tutors for Deiseal to train to teach Ùlpan, and to help tutors to find students and establish new classes. In this capacity, Clì collected the course materials fee on behalf of Deiseal. Whilst Clì has not had these responsibilities since 2010, it continues to be a significant course provider, having enrolled 199 students since 2011 (7.7% of all enrolments). The dataset of courses maintained by Clì Gàidhlig is very comprehensive, and gives us some insights into course delivery patterns across Scotland (the dataset does not give individual student data).

6.4.8 Based on data received from Clì Gàidhlig in March 2013, Clì has provided 213 courses, and has taught 1893 Ùlpan units. The average class size was eight students, and the minimum three students: as would be expected, class size was associated with the Ùlpan level taught, with the average class size decreasing as the unit number increases, and falling below eight for Level 6. The proportion of students who have completed each of the six levels delivered by Clì Gàidhlig is given in

6.4.9 Figure 5: these figures are based on the number of students who have registered for a class which delivers the last unit for that level. 42 percent of Clì

Gàidhlig's enrolments have completed its Level 1 courses, but only 4 percent of students have completed Level 6 to courses to date. The majority (58%) of courses run by Clì are weekend courses, with weekly courses accounting for the majority of the remainder (28%). It has not run twice-weekly courses to date.

Figure 5: % of Clì Gàidhlig enrolments by Ùlpan level completed
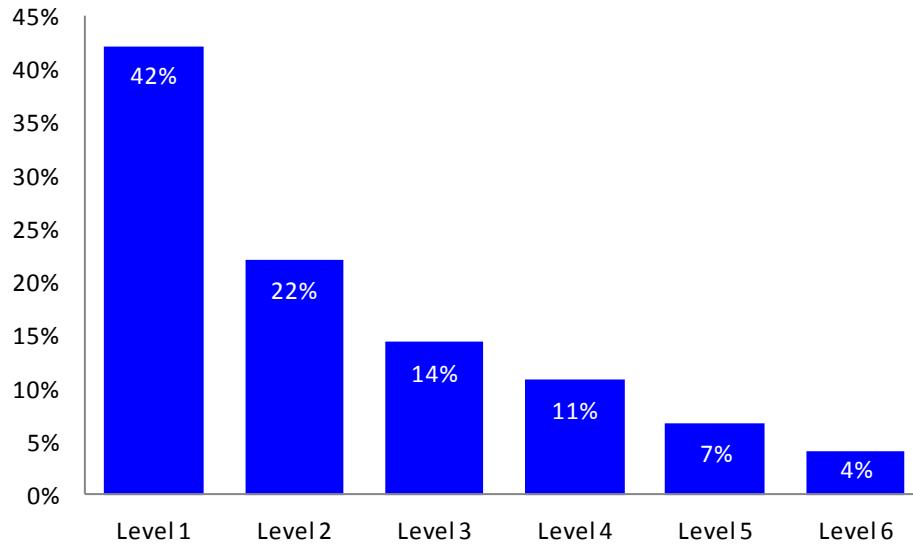
Source: Clì Gàidhlig, March 2013

6.4.10 As an example of continuity of provision, Clì Gàidhlig has provided Units 1 – 144 over a period of three years in Coatbridge through regular weekend classes which typically teach 6 or 8 units. Continuity of provision for the first intake was broken between June 2010 and October 2011, a period of 16 months, when Part 1 concluded and Part 2 (Unit 73) commenced with an intake of eight students. The gap in provision gave time for two other class cohorts to reach the same Level, therefore securing the minimum number of eight students. Six students have completed Unit 144. Meanwhile, another cohort that started Ùlpan in October 2011 was part way through Level 6 during March 2013, and thus it is likely that this cohort of students will complete the course in less than two years. Ùlpan is free of charge to North Lanarkshire residents, due to the Local Authority policy, and Clì Gàidhlig has worked in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council to deliver these classes.

6.4.11 The Centre for Open Studies at the University of Glasgow is a more recent provider of Ùlpan, and runs all Ùlpan classes twice-weekly, for two academic semesters: regular courses do not run between Easter and September. Initially the classes were 'start – stop', because, like other providers, "one of the difficulties we've had is getting the minimum [numbers] for twice a week

classes". Students who completed Level 4 in 2011 – 12, were not able to progress to Level 5 the following semester. This course provider has grown student numbers, however, and, like several other providers, in 2012 – 13 it ran multiple Ùlpan courses at the same level in different parts of the locality, to cater for the different market segments. In 2012 – 13 the Centre provided three Level 1 Ùlpan courses: one at the Centre itself, a class at Glasgow City Council for council employees, and a final community class at *Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu* (Glasgow Gaelic School), which is primarily attended by staff of the school. The Centre also delivered two Level 2 Ùlpan courses, one Level 3 course and one Level 4 course. In 2013 – 14, the provider expects that the three cohorts who have completed Level 1, will secure the minimum numbers to offer at least one Level 2 course, and that the new cohort completing Level 4 will generate sufficient numbers to enable a Level 5 course to proceed. The average number of students in 2012 – 13 was nine, but the Centre has a minimum policy of 10 students. The advantage of the Centre's model is four fold:

- Students who miss their regular class, can informally and flexibly attend a class elsewhere in the area, given class start dates are usually staggered;
- There is a sufficient pool of students to support continuity in provision;
- Tutors are able to co-deliver classes for the one provider;
- The relatively high numbers mean the courses are 'self-financing'.

6.4.12 This model depends upon, however, economies of scale which cannot be achieved in many other parts of Scotland by providers. These successful examples highlight variation in course scheduling and opportunities for progression for students. By contrast, an intake in St. Andrews of eight students for a Saturday course provided by Clì had dwindled to three students by Unit 48. Classes which ran fortnightly in Thurso started with seven students, and had reduced to four by Unit 16. Student attrition is commonplace in language learning courses: these data simply illustrate the challenge to providers of maintaining classes in areas of relatively low demand.[10] Provision in rural areas is typically more sporadic and patchy and the costs of implementation are higher.

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[10] Retention on evening classes are typically higher than degree programmes for modern L2 teaching. Dropout rates are estimated to range from 25% (Watt and Roessingh, 2001) to over 80% (Asher, 1986). Old Bell 3 Ltd *et al*., (2011) note that c 51% fewer students enrol on beginner Welsh courses than do entry level Welsh courses. The BAC programme has a c. 50% yearly retention rate.

6.4.13 Deiseal stress that inconsistencies in patterns of delivery weaken the efficacy of the course in supporting language acquisition; contribute to student attrition between units; negate the potential for people to change their class with their location; and affect the ability of students' to reach fluency in the shortest time. It is for these and for business reasons that Deiseal asked its tutor licensees, and tutor employers (e.g. course providers) in November 2012 to agree to the minimum model of delivery, following a standardised schedule, and governed by the new agreements. The restructuring of the course into six blocks of 24 units is designed such that course providers will now offer Ùlpan courses in blocks of 12 weeks only, and that the rate of progression will be a minimum of two units per week.

6.4.14 These patterns of delivery demonstrate, however, that the minimum model of delivery is difficult to implement given:

- The majority of course providers have established summer breaks and the schedule for Ùlpan classes follow the same, established schedule as for other classes for adults, both in the FE and Local Authority sector. This means breaks of more than four weeks are the 'norm';

- Several of the established, major providers of Ùlpan have scheduled courses on a once-weekly or weekend model, and do not perceive there to be sufficient demand for twice-weekly classes;

- The minimum number of students (eight) is above the average class size achieved for Part 2 for classes run and/or supported by Clì Gàidhlig, and this is likely to represent the reality of many Ùlpan classes in Scotland.

6.4.15 Course providers told us that they recognise there are sound pedagogical reasons for moving to a minimum model of delivery, and support these in principal, but on a practical level they told us that financial and other resources constraints, on the part of students and providers, are barriers. By effectively doubling the rate at which once-weekly provision has been scheduled, the cost of provision and the cost to the student would double within a given period of provision. Feedback has been elicited from students, and several providers told us that their students were not willing or able to commit to twice-weekly classes. Providers in less densely populated areas also cite a lack of tutors as problematic, given the existing tutors in the locality are already stretched to full capacity. For these reasons, Deiseal told us:

"But the fact is that four out of five Scots live in the Central Belt. And that's where the growth market will be. So although it's delightful to train in Portree or

wherever, in Sutherland, most of our classes as it develops are going to be in Cumbernauld and places like that." (Stiùiriche, Deiseal)

6.4.16 Three course providers we have consulted have committed to this minimum model of delivery to date, but with special provisions or amendments to take into account, for example, the difficulty of maintaining only a four week gap in provision.

6.5 Funding structures for supporting provision

The cost of provision to any single provider is highly variable. The following factors were found to affect the variability of costs to third-party organisations:

- Availability of premises in which to hold an Ùlpan class;
- The payment of mileage expenses to tutors;
- The payment of preparation time to tutors;
- Administrative overheads;
- The number of students enrolled;
- Level of grant-income from e.g. GLAIF or other sources.

6.5.1 These factors reflect inconsistencies in costs by geographies (e.g. payment of mileage to tutors in rural areas), sector (e.g. Council providers can use premises free of charge) and organisational policies (e.g. to generate an income from Ùlpan courses or not). All course providers incur the *per capita* cost of the tutors' use of the course materials (see Table 5), and the tutor(s) fee. The tutor(s) fee is usually paid per Ùlpan unit and we are told accounts for the largest proportion of spending on Ùlpan classes. For some providers, this is the *only* overhead. Typically, third-party providers told us that they had no accurate account of the indirect costs of providing Ùlpan given the administration of the courses is often absorbed by the organisation.

6.5.2 The model for the payment of sessional tutors varies according to *ex ante* organisational policies. The FE/HE sector pay tutors at the standard rate that all sessional language tutors are paid, which is typically based on an hourly rate and preparation time is built into this rate. Some providers separate preparation time from class contact time, arguing this better reflects the time required:

"We always ran our classes for two hours. So we paid our tutors two hours for delivery time and two hours for preparation time." (Course Provider)

Providers in remote areas have built the costs of the tutor's mileage into their funding applications for the delivery of Ùlpan.

6.5.3   The inconsistency in costs across providers means there is variation in the price charged to students, depending on the provider. There is no single model for the structuring of Ùlpan course fees. Some providers have adopted a standard rate per unit for students, irrespective of variability in the overheads for classes. This flat rate then makes administration of the course more straightforward, regardless of how many units are being provided in a block of tuition or the numbers of students enrolled. The rate per unit varies from £4.50 – £6.00. This is equivalent to £108 – £144 for one Level of Ùlpan. One provider explains:

> *"It was pretty much based on previous pricing. Obviously because we're adult learning, we try to make our classes as cheaply priced as possible. Because we're trying to be as inclusive as possible….We always kept our prices down, we always ran our classes at a loss." (Course Provider)*

6.5.4   Other providers set a fee according to the specific costs of that block of tuition, which is thus dependent upon the number of students who have indicated an interest in enrolling, the cost of the tutor, accommodation and other administrative overheads and the level of public funding available. A typical fee based on this approach is around £200 for one Level (e.g. 24 Units), with a minimum of £70 and a maximum of £205 identified in this academic year.

6.5.5   Several Local Authority providers have opted to make all Ùlpan classes free of charge. For example, one Local Authority told us how the level of provision has been determined by the level of funding the organisation has secured from GLAIF or other Council budgets. By removing a course fee, the burden of administration is removed and greater flexibility is allowed in terms of course scheduling, which is done on a rolling basis. One provider told us:

> *"We simply do as many [units] as we can to meet demand in a term … Again, when you're planning, you look at how much can you afford to do. You obviously want to do as much as possible. So you might look at dropping one before and after Christmas, so you won't do any for two weeks. So you might actually have a month when you're not doing one, because you're actually saving a 100 quid and then you can do actually more in lots of different places." (Course Provider)*

This flexibility will be curbed by the new minimum model of delivery, however.

6.5.6   From a course providers' perspective, one of the most challenging aspects of provision has been the administration of the Course Materials Fee on a *per capita* basis. The original payment schedule of the course materials fee, payable at Unit 1 (Part 1) and Unit 73 (Part 2), caused many providers to charge students £50 on registration (typically described as an Ùlpan registration fee), and charge separately for the cost of the course. Providers told us that this was necessary in order to avoid unusually high course costs for the first block of Ùlpan and for public accountability:

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> *"[Deiseal] didn't want us to tell people that there was this £50 registration fee. But we felt that in all our publicity that it was important that that was said, because we're a public body and anybody could come up to us and ask, what's this? Why is this price different from that price? We have to be able to be transparent to people. And if you were running a class at Unit 1, there would this £50 registration fee, it would make that class more expensive than the class running at Unit 30, which didn't have the registration fee. So any member from the public would say 'why is this class £80 and that class 25 (pounds)'? So you couldn't hide these things from the public". (Course provider)*

6.5.7 The intrinsic problems associated with charging this fee for each 'Part' of Ùlpan, such as students having 'credit' for outstanding units as they move between course providers, have recently been addressed through the new, standardised delivery format. The provision of Ùlpan in block of 24 units (levels) will enable the course materials fee to be costed into the course fee for each level. However, a lack of consistency in pricing structure, or the real cost per unit, across the different providers and between different levels offered by the same provider is likely to remain.

6.6 Subsidisation of Ùlpan programme for students

6.6.1 The vast majority of providers we consulted subsidise Ùlpan classes through the Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund (GLAIF) or other sources of public funding to varying degrees (only one course provider consulted has run Ùlpan classes on a profit-making basis, without external support. This course provider called for funding for GfA to be made available to any provider, independent of sector). This subsidy is passed on to the student.

6.6.2 Public sector organisations have typically subsidised Ùlpan language training in fulfilment of their Gaelic Language Plan (GLPs). Many local authorities have used GLAIF funding to reduce the costs of Ùlpan for their employees. Glasgow City Council subsidises employees' Ùlpan course according to a sliding scale, with the level of funding decreasing as the student progresses up the Ùlpan levels. Highland Council offers a 50 percent discount for Council employees and members, and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Scottish Natural Heritage fully subsidise employees' course fees.

6.6.3 GLAIF funding is also used to part-fund the costs for target groups, such as parents with children in Gaelic Medium Education (GME). Should an individual not qualify for a discounted place with a provider, then two national schemes are open to prospective students of Ùlpan who meet the scheme criteria: Individual learning accounts (ILAs) and CLIÙ (*Cuideachadh do Luchd-Ionnsachaidh Ùra / Support for New Learners*). ILAs were, until recently, available to all Scottish

residents with an income of less than £22,000 to the value of £200.[11] Individual students of Ùlpan could apply for an ILA to help subsidise course costs. Recently, the criteria for ILAs changed and it now excludes people with a UK degree or who are engaged in further or higher education. CLIÙ is a new scheme which targets funding support to support new students attend Gaelic language programmes, as well as 'lapsed' learners through an 'improvers grant'. Managed by Clì Gàidhlig, and funded by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the scheme aims to increase Gaelic 'users', by offering funding to people who have no other funding support as long as they are not enrolled in another further education course.

6.6.4   The affordability of courses is identified as crucial for attracting new students. There was no consensus, however, on the most desirable pricing structure for students. One informant strongly emphasised that students should expect to pay for GfA courses, given it acted as an incentive for progression and placed a value on the language, whereas an opposing view was that all GfA should be free of charge, or heavily subsidised, to increase the numbers of adults learning Gaelic in Scotland.

6.7   Links to other GfA Provision and informal learning activity

6.7.1   Ùlpan is typically viewed as a stand-alone method by key informants: the simultaneous use of other taught courses in conjunction with Ùlpan is not expected. Deiseal stated that "this is the thing we've been trying to do from the beginning, with some resistance, is to link to other people. Because we don't want Ùlpan to be stand alone at all. It's supposed to be a backbone of everything else" (Stiùiriche, Deiseal). Our informants widely acknowledged that, like any other course, Gaelic language learning through Ùlpan needs to be reinforced outside the classroom and that, in particular, students need informal learning opportunities, particularly with fluent speakers or more advanced learners, to support their own language development. Key informants stressed that a lack of opportunities for conversation outside the class has a negative effect on Ùlpan students' capacity to develop their Gaelic skills. This was not the opinion of those in Eilean Siar, however: there, course providers and tutors believe students' learning needs are being met by Ùlpan alone, reflecting the strength of the local sociolinguistic context.

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[11] The ILA 200 has recently been replaced by the SDS Individual Learning Account.

6.7.2   Some Course Providers are responding to the gap in opportunities for learners to hear and speak Gaelic by initiating follow on conversation classes or complementary classes using Ùlpan tutors (see section 9.7). Follow on conversational classes in Inverness, Edinburgh and Stornoway were identified; these have the potential to maintain student support and networks on completion of Ùlpan.

6.7.3   There were relatively few examples, however, of course providers or tutors encouraging students to organise learning activities outside the classroom. Whilst several course providers, including Clì Gàidhlig, Local Authorities and a voluntary sector organise *ad hoc* Gaelic events in the community which bring learners together, there is generally a lack of co-ordination and cohesion between different groups of learners who are learning Gaelic through Ùlpan or through other methods, at the local level. Course providers in the FE and HE sector do not have a formal responsibility for organising such informal learning activities and Ùlpan tutors generally did not see it as their remit to encourage out-of-class social activity between students. One course provider told us that their tutor had planned to bring different Ùlpan classes together, at his own initiative, for an informal learning day but practical problems arising from the geographical distance between the two groups had prevented this. In Glasgow, a provider has organised a monthly Gaelic reading group, which is run on a voluntary basis.

6.7.4   The lack of informal learning activities is a reflection of a lack of, (a) a co-ordinating structure for GfA in Scotland in general; (b) insufficient funding to support the organisation of extra-curricular activities; and, (c) the relatively low numbers of learners in some parts of Scotland which make it difficult to make such extra-curricular activities work.

6.8   Policy effectiveness

6.8.1   There is a strong consensus amongst key informants of the need for a structured, progressive course and providers stress that the Ùlpan course addresses a significant gap in the market. The quality of course materials, consistency in teaching method, the focus on pronunciation, the progression through structured learning, and the potential intensity of the learning experience were cited as positive qualities and, generally, installed a confidence in the Ùlpan product.

6.8.2   Generally, there is a strong commitment amongst stakeholders to make Ùlpan work, and a desire for it to be a success. Course providers relayed that, as stakeholders, they felt they had an important part to play in generating a return for the public investment in the course's development, through supporting the effective implementation and delivery of Ùlpan. Some of the pitfalls identified with this public investment in Ùlpan were:

- The investment in a single curriculum is leading to a market monopoly - the Ùlpan teaching principles and methods are not suited to all kinds of learners;

- The level of investment in Ùlpan means there is little public funding for the development of other kinds of GfA courses, which may be more suited to some learners.

We also heard from public bodies how they select Ùlpan over other courses for staff training, because they perceive that BnG will fund Ùlpan, whereas it might not readily support funding applications for alternative courses. In such cases, the choice of course provision is informed, not by an understanding of the course being most appropriate in terms of skills needed or teaching methods, but by the funding structure for GfA and a lack of alternative structured courses.

6.8.3   The historic absence of a formal relationship between Ùlpan course providers, or third-party organisations, and Deiseal, together with a lack of clear functional boundaries between these key delivery institutions, cloud the lines of public accountability for the effective delivery of Ùlpan. Recurring themes in our stakeholder interviews were that Deiseal should be more accountable; should implement quality control more effectively; should be better aligned with course provider partners; and should have closer communication with tutors. One provider said:

"We work really hard as providers, I think, to push Ùlpan and to basically you know, we're supporting a private business here. I think in return that business should have, before they came out with all these contracts, listened to the course providers." (Course Provider)

Deiseal, on the other hand, voiced frustration at what was described as the entrenched attitudes of some course providers that were resistant to changing the way in which their organisation delivered Gaelic courses for adults or which didn't administer the course effectively or professionally. These comments point to tensions between the interests of course providers and Deiseal, and the challenges of imposing a free-market model on third-sector providers.

6.8.4 The primary goal of Ùlpan is to produce new *speakers* of Gaelic; that is, that students acquire knowledge to use Gaelic. Stakeholders in Eilean Siar believe that the course is appropriate to its' learner community, as one informant told us:

Dìreach bruidhinn anecdotally…(…)…ann a bhith bruidhinn ri daoine a tha a' frithealadh can, clasaichean aig ìre, Unit 80 no rudan mar sin, tha iad an dà chuid, dèidheil an cànan a cleachdadh, tha iad a' faireachdainn misneachail gu leòr, agus tha a' Ghàidhlig a tha iad a' bruidhinn, tha e math…tha mi a' faicinn gu bheil tòrr feum anns na clasaichean, tha iad ag obair. Agus 's e an rud mu dheidhinn, an dòigh sa bheil iad a' teagasg na clasaichean. Tha iad a' toirt misneach do dhaoine a bhith a' bruidhinn Gàidhlig". (Course provider)

This view was not unanimously held, however, and many tutors and key informants raised concerns over the effectiveness of Ùlpan in producing new speakers. The lack of consensus amongst stakeholders on whether Ùlpan was effective in achieving its aim is likely, in part, to stem a lack of clarity over the language proficiency outcomes which Ùlpan aims, or can expect, to achieve.

6.8.5 Interviews carried out found that there was a common expectation that, on completion of Ùlpan, students should be 'fluent' Gaelic speakers. When prompted, interviewees explained that the expectation of 'fluency' was derived from publicity material produced by Deiseal, and from briefing sessions when the company first took the Ùlpan product to market. The Ùlpan course was originally planned to be delivered in 324 contact hours, over 216 units and in 1.5 hour sessions at least twice-weekly. Earlier examples of promotional materials stated the course was designed to 'bring learners to fluency' in Gaelic and, indeed, information for several Ùlpan courses continue to use this description.[12] The Ùlpan course was modified in 2011 to 216 contact hours delivered in 144 units, and the current aim of the course is to bring learners 'towards fluency' by achieving 'functional fluency' (see Section 2.6). 'Functional fluency' means different things to different people. One course provider told us:

"At last, out of all the Gaelic classes that have been developed over all those years, somebody was promising to bring learners to be fluent in the language. That was exciting! It was very popular and lapsed learners were queuing up at the door. 'There's a course after all these years of struggling, which would bring me to fluency.'"

6.8.6 Many course providers felt that the expectation of 'fluency' was not borne out in practice, however. If one considered that Ùlpan provides only 216 class contact hours as compared to the 1500 hours expected to learn Welsh, or up to 1715

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[12] For example: http://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/coursechoices/course/5f5ff3b8-3b6a-470a-9ee8-8021fc5b21f6?tab=0&s=&pid=&h=&l=&lp=Lews+Castle+College&d=200&dl=1&qt=&start=1%2F5%2F2012&att=-1&qual=&sortby=&auth=&pg=3&ss=gen&cso=&epo=val1&cost=-1&pc=0 (Accessed 21 June 2013)

hours to learn Basque, expectations might be adjusted – particularly given the rate of acquisition for Gaelic can be expected, on average, to be slower given the schedule for learning with Ùlpan is not very intensive, and given the relatively fewer opportunities to speak Gaelic, especially to a native speaker, or to passively encounter Gaelic in public life. The absence of published learning outcomes for Ùlpan, at a programme level or at each Ùlpan 'level', contribute to such unrealistic expectations.

6.9 Comparison with delivery models elsewhere

6.9.1 From our review of delivery models elsewhere in the context of minority language revitalisation, the structure for delivering Ùlpan is unique in that:

- It is based on a licensor – licences model;
- Ùlpan tutors are not required to be qualified to teach language, have any qualifications, or to have any language teaching experience.

6.9.2 Other factors which differentiate it from many Basque beginner courses, most *Wlpan* courses and the *Oulpann* course are that:

- The student materials are not available for purchase by learners; rather students gain access through their supplier providing a *per capita* fee to the owner;
- Local Ùlpan providers have, through the new minimum model of delivery, no flexibility in how they schedule and organise classes.

6.9.3 Finally, the context of support for GfA in general differs significantly from other contexts in that:

- The third-party organisations which employ licensees to teach Ùlpan are not centrally funded to deliver GfA, but can apply to subsidise their Ùlpan courses through GLAIF and other funding streams, should they be eligible – not all are;
- There is no central funding available to support course providers to run informal-learning activities, to increase opportunities to use Gaelic socially.

6.10 Summary

6.10.1 The Ùlpan course has succeeded in enrolling 2586 students, of which 12 percent have progressed more than half-way through the course. 55 percent of students live in Argyll and Bute, Eilean Siar and Highland council areas, and 45 percent elsewhere

6.10.2 Weaknesses in programme data on the number of courses, student numbers, rates of progression and completions reflect the complexities and ambiguities in the administration of Ùlpan courses in Scotland.

6.10.3 The Ùlpan teacher training course has succeeded in training 187 tutors: however, far fewer are available to teach. The majority have been sponsored by a third-party organisation, and not all have attached conditions to this funding.

6.10.4 Course provision has been concentrated in three main providers in Scotland: Clì Gàidhlig, Lews Castle College and Highland Council. Glasgow University is increasing its student enrolments and it is likely that it will become a key provider. Each of these providers has adopted different forms of provision, reflecting local variations in funding, student demand and organisational structures. Three distinct models can be identified, however: community learning, residential learning and work-place learning.

6.10.5 Complex funding structures impede insights into the scale of public investment for delivering Ùlpan courses in Scotland, and the ramifications these funding structures have for the provision of Ùlpan at affordable prices.

6.10.6 There is a disjuncture between Deiseal's understanding of Ùlpan as a course which should be delivered in conjunction with other methods, and key informants understanding of the course (and its delivery) as a standalone method. There are some good examples of course providers or tutors actively encouraging students to organise learning activities outside the classroom, but these are largely dependent on individual enthusiasm and voluntary effort.

6.10.7 There is strong support for a national curriculum for adults learning Gaelic. The Ùlpan course is valued by key stakeholders; however, it is acknowledged that a diversity of courses should be available for beginners, including courses which simultaneously develop writing and oral skills and which cater for a broader range of student learning styles and preferences. The need for follow-on courses is also highlighted.

6.10.8 Ùlpan provision is concentrated in the public and third-sector. The successful delivery of Ùlpan requires, therefore, a collaborative approach based on a shared understanding of the needs of the Gaelic learner community and shared ownership of the programme. There is, however, a concern that Ùlpan is determining the strategic direction of GfA in Scotland. These reflect broader concerns that a satisfactory balance is not being struck between commercial interests and the interests of the adult learning community.

6.10.9 The following sections draw on student and tutor experiences of Ùlpan in the classroom to explore the effectiveness of the course and structure in delivering Gaelic to adults in Scotland.

7. Student Experiences of Ùlpan

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 This section draws on the findings of the student survey to address the following questions:

- Is Ùlpan attracting the right kind of learners?
- How are learners accessing Ùlpan?
- How do other forms of learning contribute to the Ùlpan learning experience?
- And, do learners consider the course to be of good quality?

Prior to exploring these issues, we briefly summarise the design and administration of the survey.

7.2 Survey of current and former Ùlpan students

7.2.1 An online survey was selected as the most cost-effective method of eliciting information on learners' experiences of learning Gaelic through Ùlpan (Appendix 2). The survey used, insofar as met the requirements of the research questions, the measurements used in McLeod *et al.*'s (2010) survey of adult learners to aid comparison of the effects of Ùlpan learning with GfA provision in general[13]. The survey was piloted in July with a small cohort of Ùlpan students, and then revised according to feedback, prior to being subject to expert review. The survey was released in August, in order to avoid the busiest holiday period and, therefore, to maximise the response rate.

7.2.2 The sampling frame was generated from an anonymised version of the student database provided by Deiseal. A stratified random sample of 1200 students was generated, from the population of students of valid students for whom Deiseal held an email address (1892). Not all course providers had provided email addresses to Deiseal and for this, the sample was stratified according to the total number of students registered and living in Argyll and Bute (7.1%), Highland (30.3%), Eilean Siar (18.4%) and the Rest of Scotland (44.2%). The survey sought to generate 333 returns based on a 28 percent sample, thus constructing a 95 percent confidence interval with a margin of error of +/- 5%.

7.2.3 Deiseal distributed the link to the online survey through its student database, which was embedded within an invitation to participate from the *Ceannard* of *Bòrd na Gàidhlig*. Recipients were sent a reminder one week later, and all recipients who completed the

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[13] McLeod *et al*. (2010) designed their survey to enable comparison with the 1998-9 survey of learners conducted by MacCaluim (2007). Comparisons will also be drawn here with the 1998-9 survey, when appropriate.

survey were invited to enter a prize draw for £50 worth of vouchers to spend in Comhairle nan Leabhraichean, as an incentive and as a thanks for participation. These measures were designed to increase the credibility of the survey, and maximise the response. The email invitation identified 75 cases invalid, thus generating a valid sample of 1125. The response rate is given in Table 8.

Table 8: Survey sampling frame and response

Sampling Area	Sample	Sample	Valid Sample	Return	Return
	No.	%	No.	No.	%
Argyll & Bute	85	7.1	-	23	8.2
Highland	364	30.3	-	81	28.7
Eilean Siar	221	18.4	-	30	10.6
Rest of Scotland	530	44.2	-	139	49.3
Missing	-	-	-	9	3.2
Total	1200	100.0	1125	282	100.0

329 responses were received; however, some were partial or rendered invalid for other reasons, therefore generating 282 valid responses. This represents a response rate of 25 percent, which falls just under the target response, giving a margin of error of +/-10%. The lapse of time between attending an Ùlpan class and receiving the invitation to participate in this research is likely to explain this fairly typical level of non-response. Respondents were given 14 days to complete the survey, with a reminder issued by Deiseal after one week.

7.3 Is Ùlpan attracting the 'right' kind of learners?

7.3.1 The Ùlpan course aims to make learning more accessible to people from all educational backgrounds; to be aimed at learners who aim to become active Gaelic users in the home or the workplace (who are, therefore, not of retirement age); and, to attract learners who aim for oral fluency in Gaelic.

7.3.2 Of those who returned a questionnaire, 68 percent are female and 32 percent are male: the sample population closely reflects the total population of Ùlpan learners, which records 67 percent as female and 33 percent as male. When asked about their experience of learning Gaelic prior to joining an Ùlpan class, 27.2 percent replied that they were lapsed Gaelic learners, suggesting previous methods were not meeting their learning needs or had been replaced by Ùlpan, and 16.1 percent were active Gaelic learners. Only 1.1 percent described themselves as lapsed native speakers. We categorise this group as 'continuing learners'. It is important to note that 55.6 percent had no previous experience of learning Gaelic, therefore showing the importance of

Ùlpan provision for new adult learners of Gaelic in Scotland. We categorise this group as 'new learners'.

7.3.3 Continuing learners were asked what their main method of learning Gaelic had been prior to commencing Ùlpan: 37 percent had attended evening classes, 13 percent had engaged in distance learning and 11 percent had self-taught. Only six percent had selected 'school' as the main method, and informal learning in the community or in the home/family was negligible. Six percent had also studied Gaelic at college or at University degree level. Table 9 highlights the background characteristics of the sample, including their educational attainment, prior experience of learning Gaelic and economic status.

Table 9: Background profile of the sample

	Percentage (%)
Highest qualification	
'O' or Standard Grade, GCSE	2.5
Highers, 'A' level or equivalent	6.1
Vocational/trade qualification	3.2
HNC, HND or equivalent	12.6
University/college first degree	26.6
Postgraduate qualification/professional qualification	47.8
None of the above	1.1
Prior experience of learning Gaelic	
New Gaelic learner	55.6
Lapsed Gaelic learner	27.2
Active Gaelic learner	16.1
Lapsed native Gaelic speaker	1.1
Economic Status	
Employed or self-employed	61.7
Looking after family	2.6
Long-term sick or disabled	1.1
Unemployed	.7
Retired	31.4
Student	2.6

N=282

7.3.4 The sample is highly qualified: 47.8 percent hold a postgraduate qualification, and a further 39.2 percent has a tertiary or higher degree qualification. Deiseal has designed the course to be as inclusive as possible, with a view to the course being accessible to those with little or no experience of further or higher education and who have minimal experience of language learning and knowledge of grammatical terminology:

> *"We needed to break the mould; we needed to break the culture of the night class. We needed to inspire non-middle class, non-academically minded people, that they could learn the language." (Stiùiriche, Deiseal)*

It seems, however, that the profile of Ùlpan learners is even more qualified than for GfA courses in general: 68.4 percent of adult learners in Scotland surveyed by MacCaluim (2007) in 1998 – 9 had post-school qualifications as compared with 87 percent of Ùlpan learners, and of those, only 15.3 percent of adults had a post-graduate qualification as compared to 47.8 percent of Ùlpan students. The course is, therefore, attracting a highly qualified and literate learner population and is not meeting the course aim of widening access to Gaelic learning.

Figure 6: Age profile of the sample (No.)
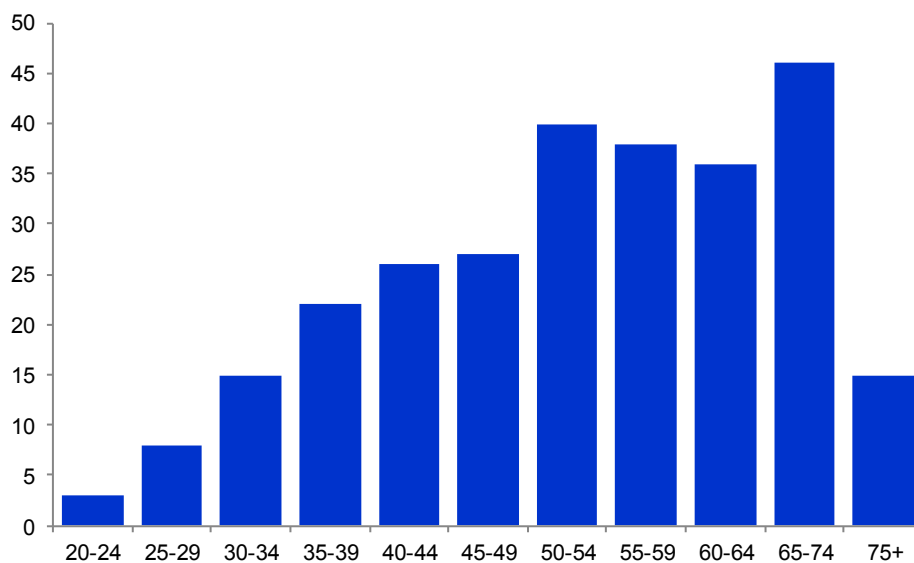
N=276, Missing=6

7.3.5   The majority of Ùlpan learners are economically active and 31.4 percent are retired. The number of people of official retirement age is, however, lower, perhaps reflecting the high representation of women in the sample: only 22.1 percent of the sample is aged 65 and over. The age distribution is given in Figure 6. Only four percent is aged under 30, as compared to 15 percent of adult learners surveyed by McLeod *et al.* (2010), and 61 percent is aged between 30 and 49 as compared to 50 percent surveyed by McLeod *et al.* (*ibid.*). The profile of Ùlpan students is, therefore, older with the largest 5-year cohorts in the over 50s. Correspondingly, parents account for a small proportion of respondents.

7.3.6   To ascertain the potential contribution of this group of adult learners to Gaelic language planning goals in Scotland, and to understand whether the course was attracting the groups it aims to, we asked respondents, 'how important to you are the following

reasons for learning Gaelic?', and presented them with twelve motivations. The motivations of this sample are given in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Learner motivations (%)
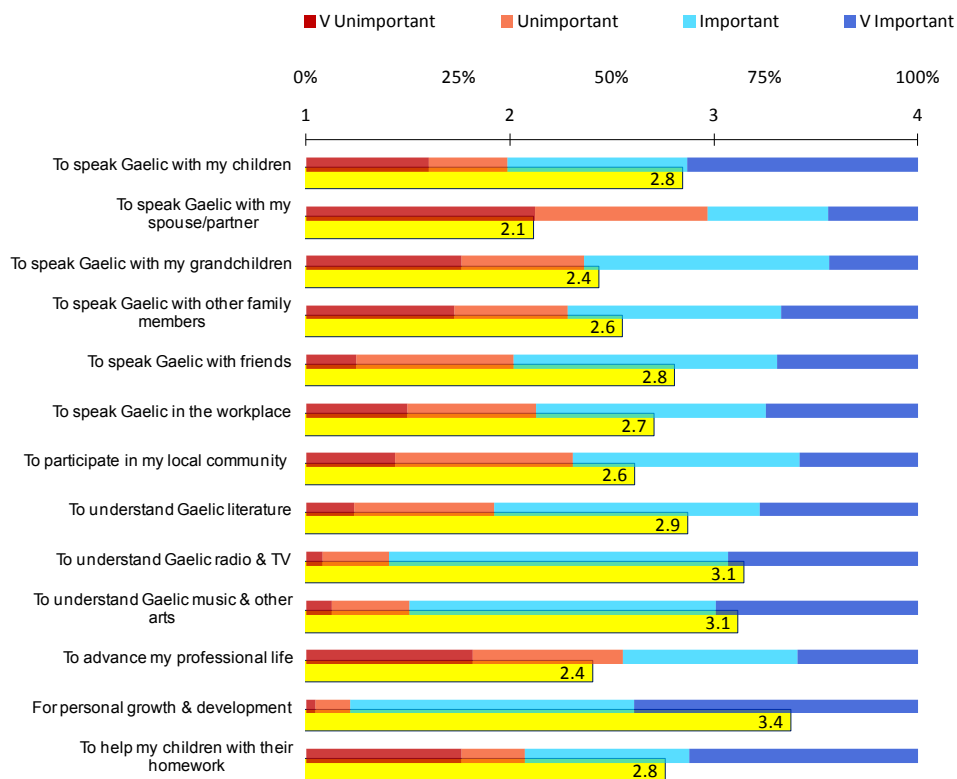
Notes: The yellow bar illustrates the mean value e.g. the average value selected, where 1 is very unimportant and 4 is very important. Respondents were also given the option of 'not applicable' e.g. if they don't live with a spouse, have children or grandchildren, or are retired and thus have no motivation to learn Gaelic to advance their professional life. The non-applicable category has been excluded in this graph.

7.3.7 The survey found that only 20 percent of respondents lived with another Gaelic speaker. Only 32 respondents have Gaelic-speaking children living at home, for whom all identify 'to speak Gaelic with my children' as a very important motivation. Only 24 learners live with a Gaelic-speaking spouse. The motivation of speaking Gaelic in the domestic and familial domains is, therefore, relatively weak. Overall, 'personal growth and development' is rated the most important factor, followed by factors which might be described as passively experiencing Gaelic in the media, the arts and Gaelic literature. Instrumental motivations were particularly weak, whereas as integrative motivations, such as 'to speak Gaelic with friends' and 'to participate in my local community' were relatively stronger.

7.3.8 The findings suggest too that the key groups of 'vocational learners' being targeted by the course authors account for less than half of learners: only 30 percent of learners identify 'to speak Gaelic at work' or 'to advance my professional life' as important

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motivations for learning Gaelic and only 12 percent of learners identify 'to speak Gaelic with my children' or 'to help my children with their homework' as important motivations. It is important to note, however, that motivations of learners are not static.

7.3.9   If we compare the motivational profile of Ùlpan learners to adult learners in general in 1998 – 9, as reported by MacCaluim (2007) (Table 10), we find that it is broadly similar: the five most common motivations remain unchanged. MacLeod *et al.* (2010) asked learners to select the most important reasons for learning Gaelic, and of the equivalent options given in this survey, the most important were 'my children are in GME' (10%) followed by 'interested in languages' (9%), 'Gaelic in the family (8%) 'live in a Gaelic area'(8%) and 'useful in employment' (7%). Only 11 percent of Ùlpan learners surveyed have children at home who can speak Gaelic, suggesting that Ùlpan learners are not more likely to be parents of children in GME than Gaelic learners in general.

7.3.10 When we examined for motivational differences between new and continuing learners, we found that continuing learners are more likely to place an importance on accessing Gaelic literature, music and media, and on speaking Gaelic to their children. No other statistically significant relationships were observed.

Table 10: Learner motivations ranked & compared to learners in 1998 – 9

Motivation important or very important	No.	Rank: Learners 2013	Rank: Learners 1998-9
For personal growth & development	246	1	4
To understand Gaelic radio & TV	229	2	2
To understand Gaelic music & other arts	217	3	3
To understand Gaelic literature	169	4	1
To speak Gaelic with friends	138	5	5
To participate in my local community	105	6	8
To speak Gaelic in the workplace	83	7	8
To advance my professional life	69	7	6
To speak Gaelic with other family members	59	8	7
To speak Gaelic with my children	57	9	9
To help children with their homework	43	9	9
To speak Gaelic with my spouse/partner	33	10	7
To speak Gaelic with my grandchildren	30	11	N/A

Note: The 1998 – 9 data is sourced from MacCaluim (2007). Not all motivation items were included in both surveys. The closest categories have been used to enable comparison.

Figure 8: Ultimate Gaelic learning goals (%)
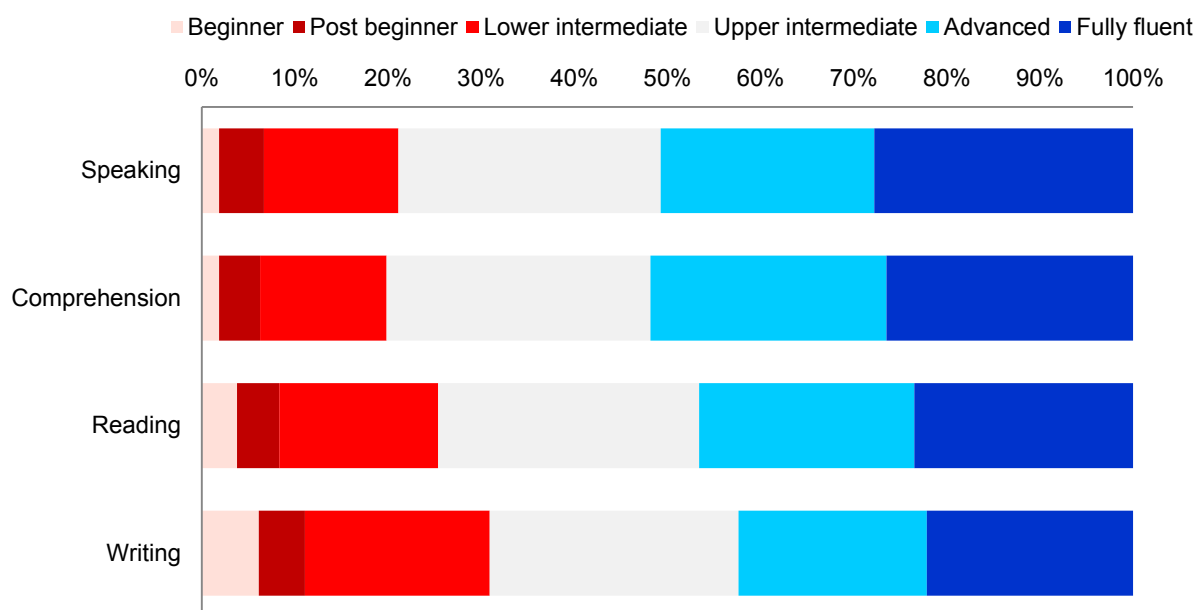
7.3.11 The survey asked all learners what level of Gaelic they wanted to ultimately achieve for each of the four skills (Figure 8). Interestingly, the majority of learners want to ultimately achieve literacy as well as oracy skills: however, more respondents want to achieve full fluency in speaking Gaelic than fluency in the other core language skills. If we compare the findings to earlier studies of Gaelic learners, we find that the percentage of Ùlpan learners who aim for oral fluency is lower: MacCaluim's 1998 – 9 survey found that 85.6 percent of learners aspired to be 'fluent' speakers and McLeod *et al.*'s 2010 survey found that 75 percent wanted to be 'fluent' speakers. Further research would be required to understand why the learner goals are lower, but it suggests that Ùlpan learners are, on average, not as confident in their ability to achieve fluency as are adult learners in general.

7.4 How are learners accessing Ùlpan?

The practical challenges faced by course providers in providing continuity of Ùlpan provision were highlighted in Section 6. In our learner survey, we gathered data to better understand models of delivery which were being accessed by students.

7.4.1 Table 11 gives an overview of the characteristics of the sample according to their engagement in Ùlpan. Only 10.7 percent are currently attending an Ùlpan course. This low figure is explained by the scarcity of Ùlpan courses running at the time the survey was administered, during the summer period.

Table 11: Profile of Ùlpan courses attended by the sample

	Percentage (%)
Ùlpan student status	
I have completed all 144 units of the Ùlpan course	7.5
I am currently attending an Ùlpan course	10.7
I am committed to attending an Ùlpan course	6.4
I am considering attending another Ùlpan course	47.1
I don't plan to attend another Ùlpan course	28.2
Current or last Ùlpan class schedule	
Once-weekly class	57.4
Twice-weekly class	18.8
Short course	19.1
Other	4.6
Location of current or last Ùlpan class	
Highland	29.3
Eilean Siar	12.7
Argyll & Bute	7.6
Glasgow City	14.9
Edinburgh City	14.9
Rest of Scotland	20.7
Year last attended an Ùlpan class	
2013	43.9
2012	21.6
2011	18.2
2010 or earlier	16.3
Current or last Ùlpan course provider	
Local Authority	24.6
College or University	24.6
Clì Gàidhlig	15.9
Independent Ùlpan tutor	9.3
Employer	8.7
Community organisation	5.1
Other or don't know	11.7

Notes: course provider figures do not round to 100% as some courses are jointly organised. Percentages are based on valid counts (e.g. missing values are omitted).

7.4.2   In total, 64 percent (180 people) are engaged in learning Gaelic through Ùlpan, either by attending, 'committed' to attending or 'considering' attending a course. We categorise these learners as being currently 'engaged in Ùlpan'. Respondents were asked to give details about their current or last Ùlpan course. The location of classes are divided

evenly between Lowland and Highland Scotland. Highland Council is the most common location, but provision in Eilean Siar (Lews Castle College), Edinburgh (primarily by independent Ùlpan tutors and Clì Gàidhlig) and in Glasgow (Glasgow University and Glasgow City Council) is also important. The geographical distribution of Ùlpan class attendance is positively associated with the residential location of respondents. The residency of the survey sample is well matched to the known population (see Section 6.4): 49.3 percent live in the Highlands and Islands and 50.7 percent elsewhere in Scotland.

7.4.3 Students are typically following a once-weekly class schedule, although 18.8 percent attend twice-weekly classes. Local Authority and Colleges/Universities organise nearly half of respondents' Ùlpan courses. The majority of twice-weekly classes are organised by College or Universities (which include Lews Castle College and Glasgow University) whereas no one type of course provider dominates the provision of short courses. Local Authorities and Clì Gàidhlig courses account for the majority of once-weekly courses. Only 16 respondents attended courses at their place of work organised by their employer and/or another provider.

Figure 9: Reasons for choosing to enrol in Ùlpan classes

Legend:
- Timing / convenience
- My employer sponsored my place
- Quality of the tutor/s
- Intensity of learning
- Quality of course materials
- The teaching method
- It was the only Gaelic course available for my level of Gaelic
- Other
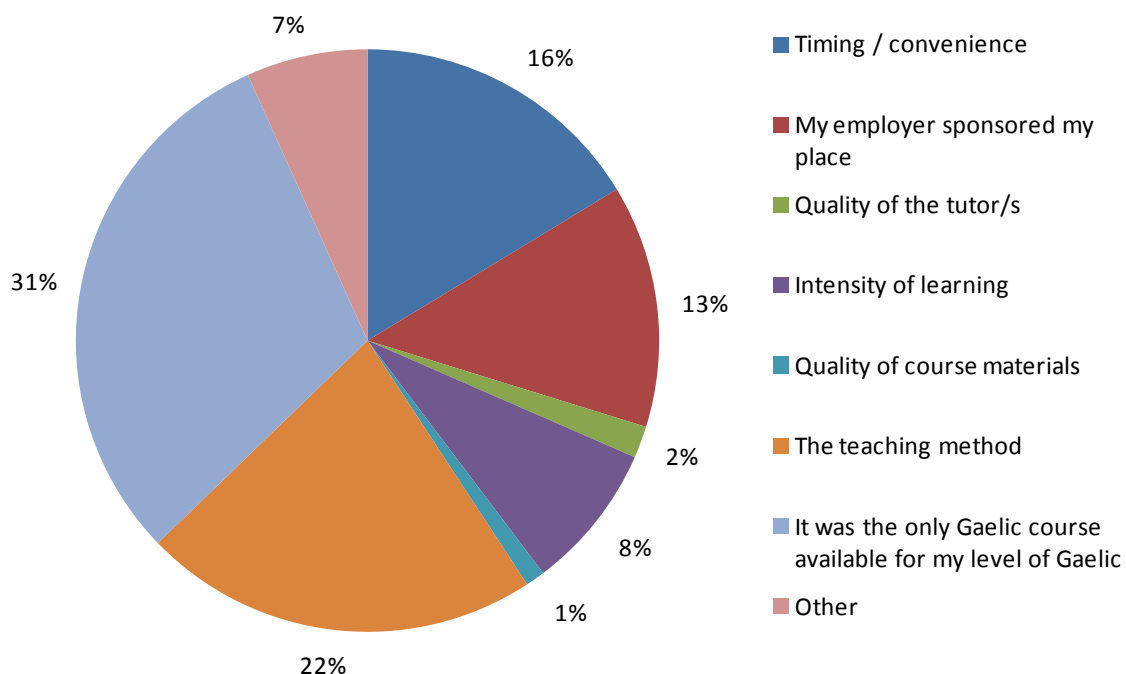
7.4.4 Respondents were asked for their main reason for learning Gaelic with Ùlpan (Figure 9). The most common response, 30.5 percent, is that 'it was the only Gaelic course available for my level of Gaelic', reflecting the lack of alternative provision in some parts

of Scotland. A further 16.3 percent have chosen Ùlpan because of 'timing' or 'convenience'. 46.8 percent of Ùlpan learners' choice to learn Gaelic with Ùlpan was guided mainly by availability. If we combine the results for 'intensity of learning', the 'teaching method', 'the quality of the tutors', and the 'quality of the course materials', we find that 33.2 percent of respondents have chosen to learn Gaelic with Ùlpan because of characteristics specific to its teaching and learning approach. Employer incentives are also important, as 13.5 percent of respondents have attended Ùlpan classes mainly because their employer sponsored their place. If we examine the main reasons for choosing to learn Gaelic with Ùlpan, and examine for differences between new and continuing learners, we find that there are statistically significant differences (χ^2= 11.337(df. 3)) p <0.003). New learners are more likely to cite external factors, such as employer sponsorship and a lack of alternative provision (52.9%), and less likely to have cited internal factors, such as the Ùlpan teaching method (25.2%). This suggests that, for new learners, the availability of a course for Gaelic was more important than the type of learning pathway Ùlpan offered.

7.4.5   44 percent of respondents have accessed financial support to attend their current or last Ùlpan class. The most common form of support is employer sponsorship (22%) and Individual Learning Accounts (19%). As reported above, only 11 percent of respondents have children living at home who can speak Gaelic, and only 2 percent have received a discounted Ùlpan place for being a parent of a child in Gaelic medium education (GME). Only one respondent has received both ILA support and a financial discount from an employer.

7.5   Continuity of learning and the use of other GfA provision

7.5.1   69 percent of learners surveyed, who have yet to complete Ùlpan, had attended an Ùlpan class in 2013. When we exclude the learners who have chosen to discontinue learning Gaelic through Ùlpan, the figure drops to 56 percent. Yet 65 percent of learners part-way through the course intend completing *all 1*44 units at some point. This suggests that learners are motivated to continue to learn Gaelic through Ùlpan, but that, for many, learning Gaelic through Ùlpan is not a continuous process. The explanation for this lack of continuity involves a combination of individual and external/organisational factors.

7.5.2   Firstly, Ùlpan is not the main method for all learners who attend courses: 66 percent of students who are 'currently', 'committed to' or 'considering' attending an Ùlpan class consider Ùlpan to be their *main method* of learning Gaelic. The remaining 34 percent are using Ùlpan to complement their main method, by attending weekend or short

courses, for example. Connectedly, when students are following an Ùlpan course schedule, 33.8 percent have received other kinds of structured tuition on a weekly or monthly basis. These learners do not rely solely on Ùlpan instructed learning.

Table 12: Other GfA courses accessed by learners

Type of courses	No.	%
Conversation circle or group	42	37%
Evening classes	42	37%
Short course/s	25	22%
An Cùrsa Inntrigidh	12	10%
An Cùrsa Adhartais	5	4%
University or College degree course	5	4%
Intensive/immersion course/s	10	9%
Private tuition	9	8%
Other	33	29%

N=252, Missing=2

7.5.3   Secondly, learners who would like to follow the Ùlpan learning pathway cannot always access the course locally, at the level appropriate for them. We asked learners not currently enrolled on an Ùlpan course, whether they had used other types of courses or tuition since their last Ùlpan class, of which 45 percent responded in the affirmative. The range of courses accessed by learners since their last Ùlpan class is given in Table 12. These data suggest, therefore, that multiple learning options are common and that this is due to a combination of learners' educational preferences and practical reasons of course accessibility.

7.5.4   In addition to formal learning opportunities to reinforce language learning in class, are a range of informal learning options. We asked learners to tell us about the types of reinforcement they used when enrolled on an Ùlpan course. We were particularly interested in the opportunities learners had to practise speaking Gaelic, as the opportunity for input, as well as for output, in a target language are known to be important for language development. This is particularly the case in a course which does not include many activities based on genuine, personalised conversations.

7.5.5   We found learners' use of Gaelic in unstructured and informal settings to be relatively low, suggesting that adult learners have little opportunities to practise speaking Gaelic outside of the classroom. In light of the finding that only 20 percent of respondents tell us that somebody else in their household speaks Gaelic, opportunities for using Gaelic are in other domains for the majority of learners. Overall, 40.1 percent of learners have the opportunity to use Gaelic at least weekly when enrolled on an Ùlpan course. The

survey examined three types of interlocutors, as reported in Table 13, and in Figure 10. The regularity of Gaelic use is highest with learners or non-fluent Gaelic speakers. Strikingly, over a third of respondents have had no access to native or fluent Gaelic speakers outside of the formal learning environment whilst learning Gaelic through Ùlpan. Daily or weekly participation in conversation circles is reported by 23.1 percent of respondents.

Table 13: Respondents interactional use of Gaelic as an Ùlpan student (%)

	Learners/ non-fluent speakers	Native or fluent speakers	Conversation Circles
Daily	5.6	6.5	2.6
Weekly	29.6	21.4	20.5
Monthly	11.6	14.4	11.4
Less than monthly	19.4	21.4	13.5
Not at all	33.8	36.3	52.0
Total	100	100	100
N	216	201	229

7.5.6   Several learners explained to that they elected to attend conversational classes as well as weekly Ùlpan classes as a way of reinforcing their language learning, as one learner explained:

> *"As I live in Edinburgh, I have little or no chance of hearing Gaelic regularly spoken in the city and my conversation class was very important to me. Last year I found the ideal was to have one Ùlpan class and one conversation class per week. However, now that it is threatening to be compulsory to take two Ùlpan classes a week, I would have to choose between conversation and Ùlpan as I cannot manage three classes a week - much as I would like to." (New learner, Level 2)*

The increase in the number of Ùlpan classes per week to twice a week increases the time commitment for students who attend conversational classes also, thus makes it less likely that attending both in this way can be sustained.

7.5.7   In addition to looking at oral practice and use, we asked learners to tell us about other forms of self-study they used whilst learning Gaelic with Ùlpan, excluding use of the Ùlpan materials (e.g. worksheets and the sound files for units 1 – 24). To report these findings, we combine daily and weekly into 'frequent', monthly or less than monthly into 'occasional' and not at all into 'never' (Figure 10). Non-interactional forms of reinforcement, including radio, TV and self-learning with books and CDs, were the most common. Taking into account all forms of out-of-class reinforcement, we found that 60 percent of learners engaged in at least monthly Gaelic self-learning or study; but that a significant minority, 40 percent, did not. This highlights the reliance learners place on their in-class learning and the use of the student worksheets for progressing their Gaelic skills. Some students acknowledged that they didn't do sufficient out-of-class revision

and vocabulary learning, and others stressed that the type of self-study was often restricted to writing and reading, with little opportunity to speak Gaelic and interact with 'real' Gaelic speakers. It is somewhat ironic that, in a course which does not aim to teach literacy skills, that some learners find that writing is the only way to develop their productive Gaelic skills out of class.

Figure 10: Additional learning methods used alongside Ùlpan (%)
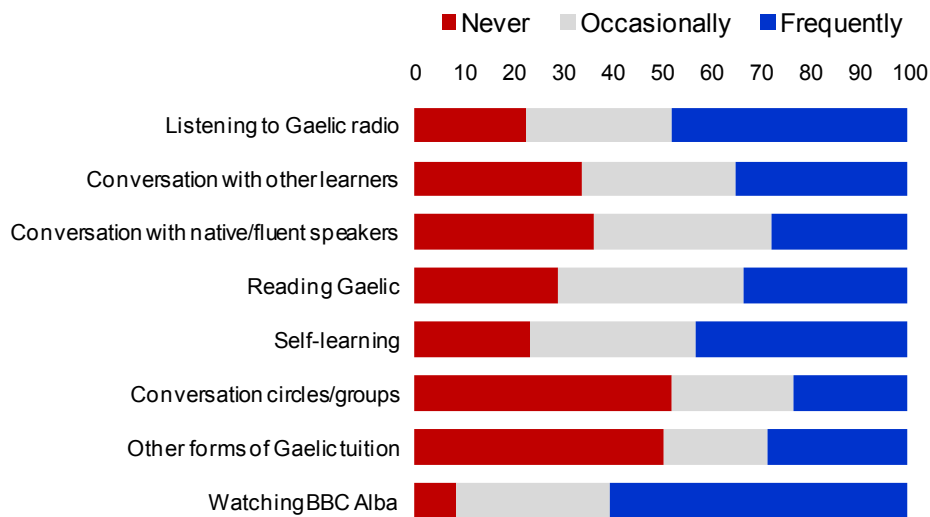
7.5.8   Finally, we explored the level of support and feedback learners gained from their tutors, when learning through Ùlpan. Table 14 highlights that opportunities for feedback on homework, to use conversational Gaelic, to attend revision classes and to ask questions in class are uneven, and vary from tutor to tutor and provider to provider.

Table 14: Availability of support to Ùlpan learners

|	No	%
Feedback on homework	150	53.2
Time at the end of the class to ask questions	170	60.3
Extra revision classes	35	12.4
Opportunity to practise Gaelic conversation	92	32.6
Separate conversation classes with an Ùlpan tutor	16	5.7
None of the above	64	22.7

N = 282, Missing = 0

7.6   Do learners consider the course to be of good quality?

7.6.1   The survey asked students their opinion of the Ùlpan course, and the quality of the learning experience, according to several dimensions. Generally, 64.9 percent of students' expectations of how well Ùlpan would teach them to speak Gaelic have been

met or exceeded. Overall, just over half (53 percent) of learners believe Ùlpan teaches Gaelic either 'well' or 'very well'.

Figure 11: Student satisfaction with Ùlpan delivery, teaching and learning (No.)
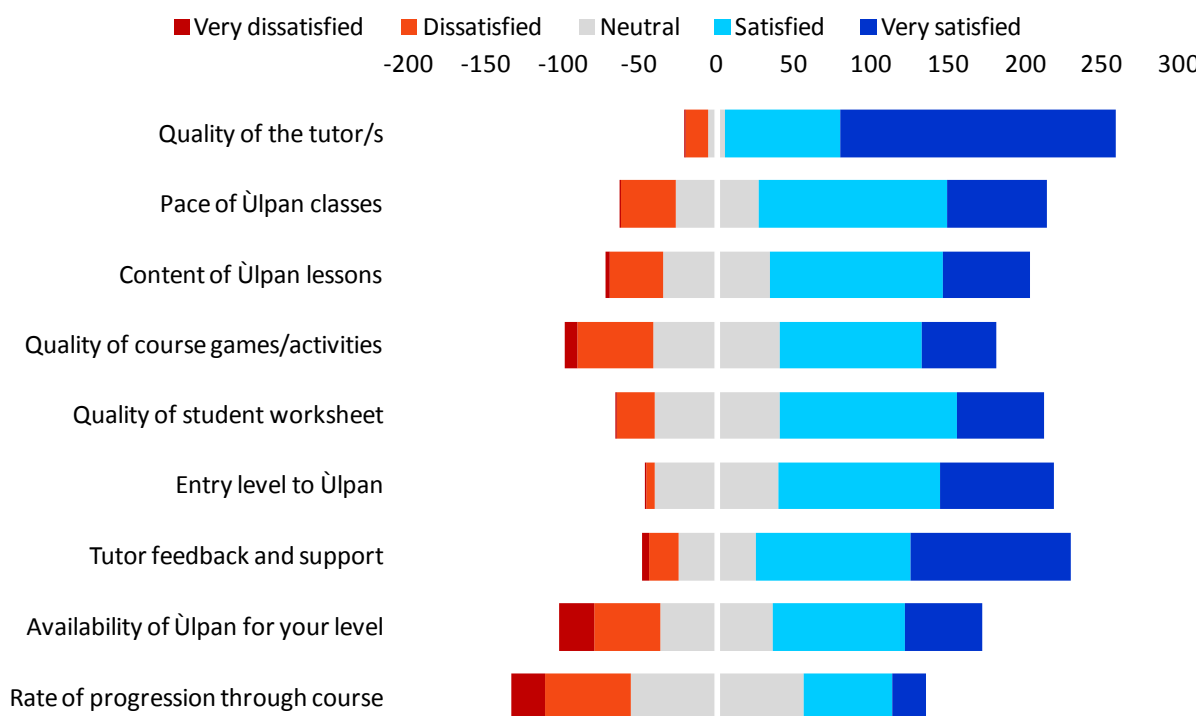
7.6.2 We found educational attainment is related to learners' opinion of how well Ùlpan teaches Gaelic: 50 percent of learners with qualifications from college or University believe Ùlpan teaches Gaelic well or very well, as compared with 69.4 percent of those had had no college or university qualifications (χ_2=4.726 (df. 1) p <0.030). This suggests that the course is not as well suited to the learning styles and preferences of those with higher educational attainment, who account for a significant majority of learners. Learner status (new or continuing) has no effect, but a higher proportion of learners attending an Ùlpan short course consider Ùlpan to teach Gaelic 'well or 'very well', than learners attending either once- or twice-weekly classes.

7.6.3 In addition to examining overall satisfaction with the Ùlpan course, the survey asked respondents to rate specific elements of the course. These are given above in Generally, 64.9 percent of students' expectations of how well Ùlpan would teach them to speak Gaelic have been met or exceeded. Overall, just over half (53 percent) of learners believe Ùlpan teaches Gaelic either 'well' or 'very well'.

7.6.4 Figure 11. The high level of satisfaction with Ùlpan tutors, and their feedback, is marked. A majority is also satisfied with the course content and pace. We discussed above, in Section 6.2, the lack of clear entry points for learners to the course. Despite

32 percent of students who had already learnt some Gaelic starting Ùlpan at the beginning, few are dissatisfied with doing so. This suggests that a lack of clear entry points has not been problematic for learners.

7.6.5   The responses do suggest that there is potential to improve the quality of the course games and activities. Learners are less satisfied with access to the course: only 30 percent are either satisfied or very satisfied with their rate of progression through the course, and just under 50 percent are either satisfied or very satisfied with the availability of Ùlpan for their level. This confirms the findings reported above on the availability of Ùlpan to learners.

Figure 12: Students' reactions to their current or last Ùlpan course (%)
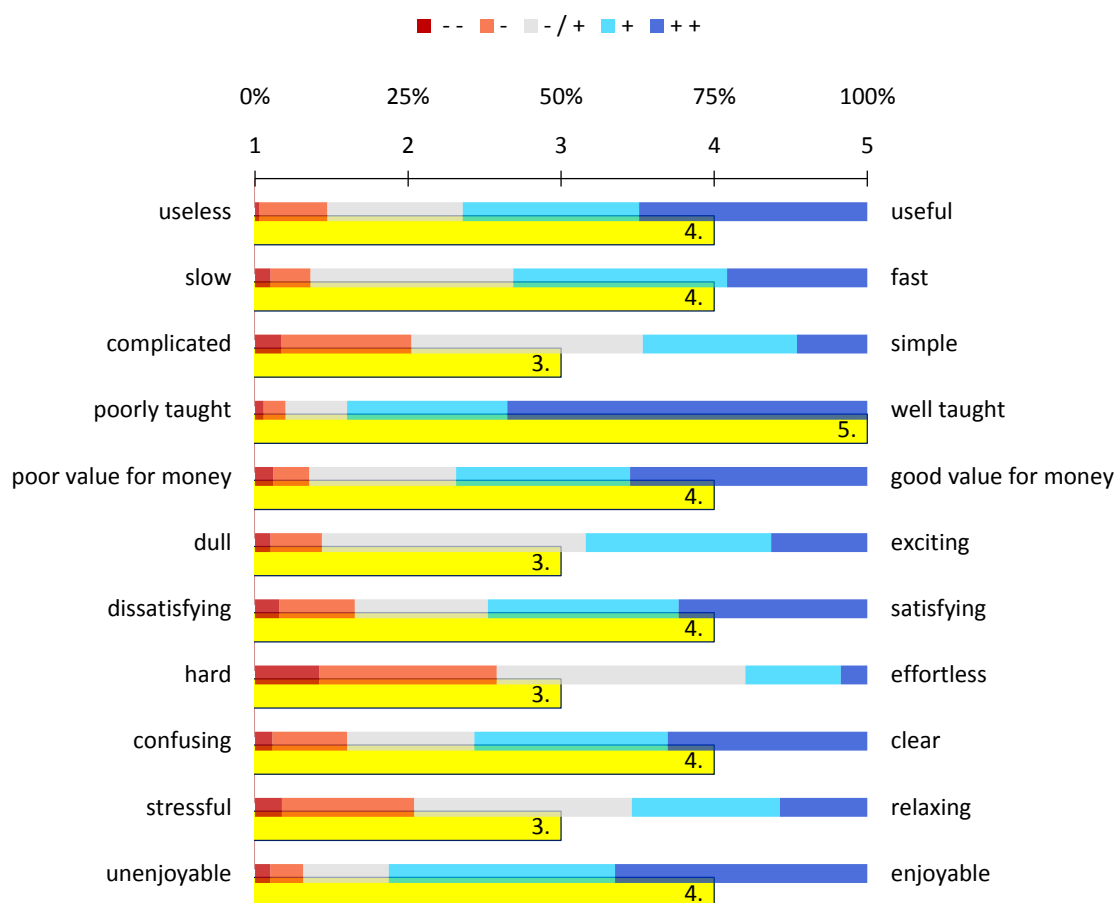
Note: the yellow bar shows the median score for each reaction.

7.6.6   Finally, respondents were asked to reflect on their current or last Ùlpan course (bearing in mind that students can have experience of multiple course providers, tutors and of course content as they move up the levels). The students rated their experience of their current or last course against eleven bipolar 5-point scales, defined with contrasting adjectives. The results, presented in Figure 12, capture students' general reactions to

their course according to four dimensions: general evaluation; difficulty; utility and interest. The graph shows the median (e.g. the most commonly selected score) for each bipolar scale, as well as the distribution of ratings across the five-point scale. The results tell us that the majority of students feel the course is challenging, useful and enjoyable. This is further verified by the reported high level of attendance: 89.3 percent of respondents attended 75 – 100 percent of their last Ùlpan course, or their current course thus far.

7.6.7   We asked learners who plan to complete Ùlpan if they expected they would require further Gaelic classes: 67 percent replied in the affirmative, 29 percent told us that they 'did not know'. There was a higher level of ambiguity over learner preferences for Ùlpan to be accredited: 36.9 percent said that they would choose accreditation, if available, and 31.8 percent said they wouldn't. The remainder were unsure.

7.6.8   28 percent (79) of all respondents do not plan to continue learning Gaelic with Ùlpan. Their reasons for discontinuing with the course were explored according to internal, individual and external factors. Internal factors, specific to the Ùlpan course content and teaching method, are cited by 60.8 percent of these respondents, closely followed by external factors, which are identified by 50.8 percent. The most common reason (49.4%) is, 'I didn't like the teaching method' followed by, 'I have insufficient opportunity to practise outside the class' (39.4%). There is an obvious relationship between these two options, as one respondent explained, "The method is of only limited value when undertaken without the realistic prospect of immersion in it". A lack of 'availability of Ùlpan locally' is selected by only 20 percent. Only one respondent selected the option, 'I met my learning goals', suggesting that the vast majority of students who have exited Ùlpan are interested in continuing to learn Gaelic. Additional comments reveal that some have switched to other Gaelic-learning classes, which are cheaper or more convenient to them. Most students, however, considered their last or Ùlpan course to be good value for money.

7.7   Summary

7.7.1   This section has summarised the key quantitative findings from the learner survey, which was based on a random sample survey of current and former Ùlpan students. An analysis of the social profile of learners, and their motivations, suggest that learners engaging in Ùlpan are generally, older, better educated, and less likely to use Gaelic at work or with family than surveys of previous Gaelic learners. This suggests that the course is not successful in reaching the 'vocational' learners it aims to target.

7.7.2   The course has been successful in attracting new Gaelic learners, who account for 55.6 percent of all learners. As such, a significant proportion of learners (44.4%) had previous experience of learning Gaelic. Some have replaced their previous course with Ùlpan, others have recommended learning Gaelic after a break, and a significant minority (34%) are using Ùlpan to complement other methods of learning.

7.7.3   The majority of learners last attended a once-weekly class (57.4%), and twice-weekly learners accounted for 18.8 percent. The continuity of learning aimed for in the programme, has not, however, been realised. Overall, 65 percent of learners who are part-way through Ùlpan attended a course in 2013 and this percentage reduces to 56 percent when we exclude those who have discontinued learning with Ùlpan. A significant minority (28%) has decided to discontinue learning with Ùlpan; this is primarily because the course does not suit their learning needs or context.

7.7.4   Nearly 50 percent of learners told us that they were not satisfied with the availability of Ùlpan courses locally. For others, a lack of continuity of learning through Ùlpan is explained by the competing demands of family and work life and the use of multiple courses support learning under this life pattern.

7.7.5   Overall, we find that learners are generally highly satisfied with the quality of their tutors and the way Ùlpan is being taught in the classroom, and that they enjoy their Ùlpan classes. This is reflected in the high level of learners who plan to complete all 144 units of Ùlpan. Students are less united in opinion about how well Ùlpan teaches Gaelic. As we go on to explain in the following sections, the experience of learning Gaelic through Ùlpan can be varied, reflecting individual learner differences and preferences and the challenges they face in their learning context.

8. Language Outcomes

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 This section addresses one of the main research questions in the original tender document, namely: *How effective is Ùlpan in taking the greatest number of Gaelic adult learners to the highest levels of fluency and literacy in the shortest time?* In addition to the student survey, the research team conducted case studies of three groups of learners. The case-studies included interviews with local tutors; facility/classroom observations; a group discussion with learners; completion of a simple form on language outcomes; and, outcomes testing with learners. We supplemented these data with two personal, in-depth interviews with students who had completed Ùlpan in one locality. The main aim of using mixed-methods is to be able to triangulate our findings, by drawing on the strengths of each and minimising the weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, for out study of language learning.

8.1.2 This section draws on these mixed methods, to:
- Describe the approach we have taken to assess students' attainment;
- Explore the language skills learners had on commencing Ùlpan, through the learners' survey;
- Examine the impact of Ùlpan on learners' oral language skills;
- Discuss the results of language assessment undertaken for three case-studies;
- Summarise learners' current use of Gaelic.

In doing so, we address the main issue of what level of language proficiency and range of abilities might be expected from the average student at various stages of the course, and therefore, the effect Ùlpan is having on learners' Gaelic proficiency.

8.2 Methodology for language assessment

8.2.1 There is currently no single official language proficiency scale, against which Ùlpan students' language can be characterised. It would have been our preferred method to evaluate student success based on the learning aims of the course in conjunction with other national and international measures. However, the research team only received a small sample of Ùlpan units (24 out of 144) and did not receive a list of learning outcomes for the remaining units. Without the Ùlpan learning outcomes, a thorough review of alternative proficiency measures and scales determined that the Common European Framework for Reference (CEFR) of Languages was the most useful framework for describing learners language skills (see Appendix 1). The CEFR has six proficiency levels: A1 and A2, B1 and B2, C1 and C2, and while it has not yet been

prepared for specific use with Gaelic, the it has been developed for learners of Irish.[14] Whilst it is outwith the scope of this research to undertake this valuable work, McLeod *et al.* (2010) note that a structured syllabus and examination system based on the CEFR for Gaelic could build on the work of the CEFR developed for learners of Irish:

> *"Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge provides a compelling model for GfA in Scotland. While it would be unrealistic to think that the materials developed in this context could simply be translated from Irish to Scottish Gaelic, there is certainly sufficient linguistic connection between the two to consider this a very valuable head start."*

Of particular relevance to our study is the number of hours that have been assigned to each level, based on hours of tuition:

- A1: 80 – 100 hours
- A2: 160 – 200 hours
- B1: 250 – 400 hours
- B2: 500 – 600 hours
- C1: 1000 hours
- C2: 1500 hours

8.2.2   This would suggest that learners of Scots Gaelic completing Ùlpan might reach A2 on the CEFR mid-way through Level 5. We used the CEFR self-assessment scales in our survey. Well-designed self-assessment scales have been shown to be very accurate in terms or predicting language proficiency, as tested for through face-to-face language elicitation techniques (Alderson, 2003; Perales and Cenoz, 2002). We combined self-assessment scales with objective language testing with students in our three case-study areas. We asked case-study participants to participate in an oral assessment using moderated SCQF targets for assessment in levels 3, 4 & 5 Gaelic: Speaking (as appropriate). Students were given a hand-out with guidelines and suggested topics for conversation (see Appendix 3 for further detail). We then invited them to engage in an open-ended conversation with an experienced language teacher, appropriate to their placement in the Ùlpan course and using material from the selection of units available to us. This enabled us to place the volunteers on the CEFR oral proficiency scale, and to compare their own self-assessment with our objective assessment of their spoken Gaelic skills. The two main parameters which we use to investigate learners' language outcomes are, firstly, previous learning and secondly, the Ùlpan Level which they have reached or completed.

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[14] http://www.teg.ie/english/info_advice_candidates.htm

8.3 What is the starting point for learners who join Ùlpan?

8.3.1 The use of Gaelic in interactional settings is known to be affected by the competency-confidence nexus: an L2 speaker's use of Gaelic is positively associated with their self-assessment of their own Gaelic language skills. In our survey, we asked adults to tell us about their abilities with Gaelic in the four skills areas of speaking, understanding, reading and writing Gaelic at the point of starting as well as exiting Ùlpan and, if respondents had subsequently engaged in further Gaelic language tuition, currently. The results at the point of entry to Ùlpan are given in Figure 13. They tell us that 44 percent (124) of Ùlpan students could already speak some Gaelic before attending Ùlpan classes, and of those, the majority had been learning Gaelic for some time: 73 percent of students who could already speak some Gaelic before joining Ùlpan had been learning for more than 2 years, and of those, 34 percent had been learning for more than 10 years. Unsurprisingly, respondents' *a-priori* Gaelic skills were, on average, stronger in reading and comprehending spoken Gaelic, than in the productive skills of speaking and writing Gaelic.

Figure 13: Self-assessment of Gaelic skills when enrolled on Ùlpan (%)
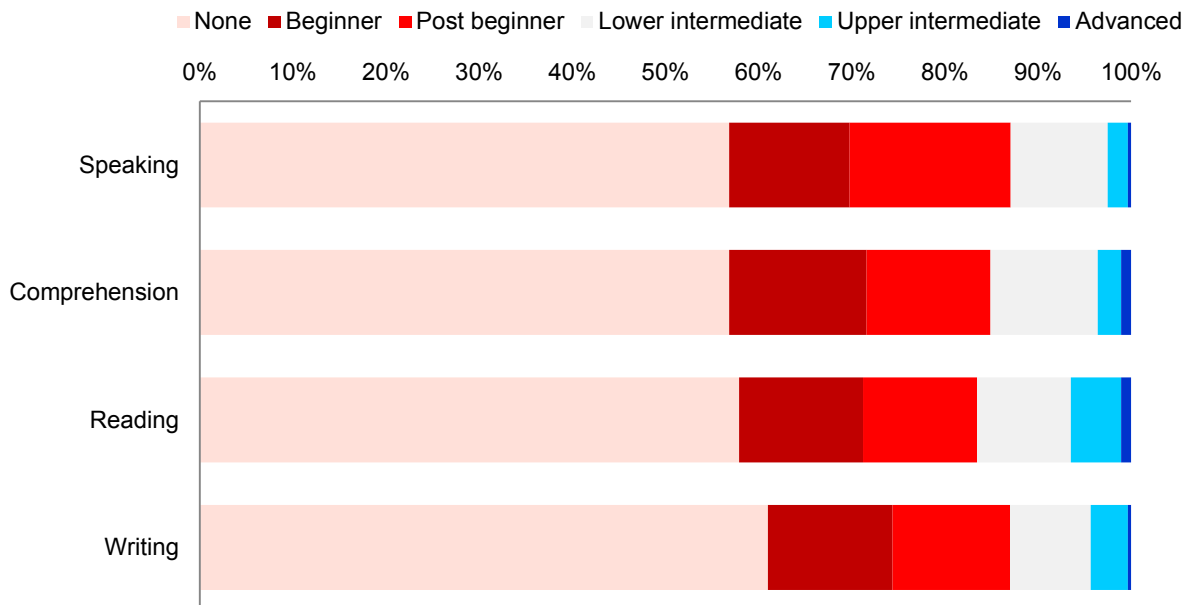

N=272, Missing=10

8.3.2 A breakdown of the combination of skills students' had on registering with Ùlpan found that the majority of students, who had some knowledge of Gaelic on registering, had a combination of Gaelic skills, although twelve (9 percent) had no writing skills in Gaelic, and one had only passive understanding of Gaelic. That the majority had a mix of Gaelic

skill is explained by the prior level of learning through Gaelic for adult courses, rather than informal learning: only 8 percent had learnt Gaelic primarily in the family or community.

8.4   What is the impact of Ùlpan on learners' language skills?

8.4.1   At the time of designing the survey, Deiseal recorded that 12 percent of 2856 students (310) were known to have registered for Level 4 (Unit 73 or Part 2, as it was formerly known) and 2 percent (53 students) were recorded as having finished all 144 units. The results of our survey of Ùlpan learners found 27.4 percent have reached Level 4 or above and, of those, 7.5 percent (21) respondents have completed all 144 units (Figure 14). This suggests that Ùlpan is having a larger impact that the administrative data reports.

**Figure 14: Last level of Ùlpan completed (%)**
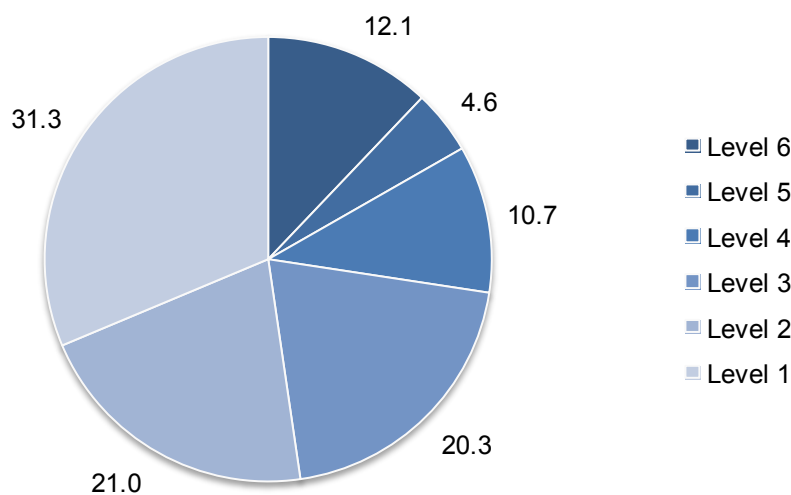
Note: learners currently part-way through an Ùlpan level have been allocated to the level closest to their last unit of study, if known.

8.4.2   The survey of Ùlpan learners used two scales to explore student evaluations of their Gaelic language proficiency. The first is a simple six-point fluency scale, which was used to explore learners' perceptions of their level in four key language skills, and to enable comparison with other studies of adult learners in Scotland. The second is the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for languages' self-assessment scale, which are based on can-do descriptors for spoken language (see Appendix 3). They are used to explore learners' proficiency in speaking Gaelic.

8.4.3 We collected data on all four language skills because, although Ùlpan aims to develop students' oracy, not literacy, the course materials do include reading texts and written exercises, which students can opt to do at home. A graphic representation of the range of the four Gaelic language skills for the sample is given in Figure 15. Students' self-assessment of their language level shows that, on average, students' reading skills are higher than other skills: this is explained by previous Gaelic learning.

Figure 15: Self-assessment of skills at the end of the last Ùlpan course/class (%)
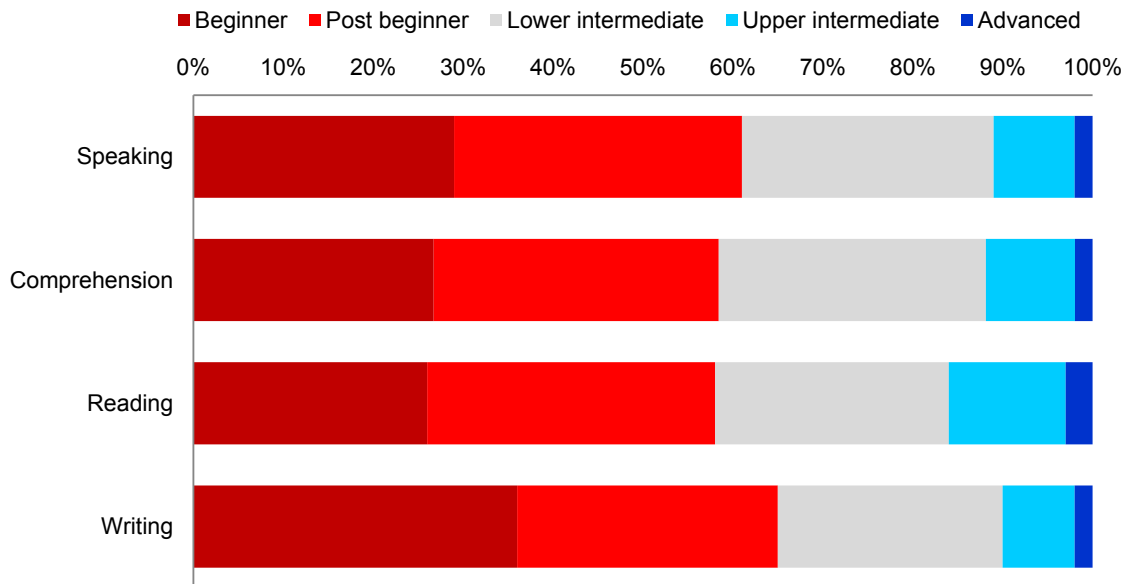
8.4.4 Respondents' level of spoken Gaelic skills according to their level of Ùlpan study is given in Table 15. At Levels 5 and 6, small cell counts mean the figures should be treated with caution: however, as you would expect, there is a statistically significant relationship between the level of study and the level of self-reported fluency in speaking Gaelic

Table 15: Self-assessment of spoken Gaelic skills by Ùlpan level (%)

	Current or Last Ùlpan Level						
	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L6	All
Beginner	51	25	27	7		9	29
Post beginner	32	34	44	33	17	15	32
Lower intermediate	11	41	22	40	33	45	28
Upper intermediate	5		7	17	42	21	9
Advanced	1			3	8	9	2
N	87	59	55	30	12	33	276

N=276, Missing = 6 (χ^2 =93.144 (df. 2)) p <0.000).

8.4.5   By Level 4, 60 percent of students consider themselves to have reached 'lower-intermediate' level or higher in spoken Gaelic and by Level 6, three quarters of students consider themselves to be 'lower intermediate' level or higher of spoken Gaelic. The table demonstrates the range of self-assessed proficiency than students have at each level. This illustrates that learners' perceptions of their skills is relative and is likely to change as their Gaelic language skills develop.

8.4.6   If we compare the mean scores for new Gaelic learners and continuing Gaelic learners we find that the mean scores of new learners, as you would expect, are lower than for continuing learners (Table 16). These findings suggest that other factors, including previous knowledge of Gaelic, are having an effect on the level of proficiency which can be expected for each level.

Table 16: Mean value for self-assessed level of spoken Gaelic by Ùlpan level

Last Ùlpan level	Continuing Learners	New Learners	All Learners
Level 1	2.41	1.34	1.74
Level 2	2.59	1.89	2.15
Level 3	2.60	1.69	2.09
Level 4	3.07	2.47	2.77
Level 5	3.57	3.20	3.42
Level 6	3.38	2.22	3.06
Total	2.83	1.76	2.24
N	120	153	273

Note: the mean is calculated from a 6-point scale, were 1 is' beginner' and 6 is 'advanced'.

8.4.7   More detail was elicited on respondents' spoken Gaelic skills. We asked students to rate their spoken production (Table 17) and spoken interaction skills (Table 18) using the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for languages self-assessment scales, which are based on 'can do' descriptors. The descriptors describe L2 language proficiency at six levels, where level A represents a 'basic user', level B an 'independent user' and level C, a 'proficient' user. We observe that Ùlpan students rate their spoken production skills relatively higher than their spoken interaction skills, which requires more active participation in conversation.

8.4.8   We then examined the average level of proficiency for each level of Ùlpan. These figures are given in Table 19 and in Table 20. The data illustrate the level of variation in language skills which learners have on completion of each Ùlpan level. Only 13 respondents had completed, or were studying at Level 5, of which five were new learners; the small number in this group mean the data for Level 5 should be treated with caution.

Table 17: CEFR self-assessment scale: spoken production skills

Level	Descriptor	No.	%
A1	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	70	25
A2	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.	112	40
B1	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations of opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	58	21
B2	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	11	4
C1	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	2	1
C2	I can present a clear, smoothly flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.	1	0
	None of the above.	26	9
	Total	274	100

Missing=8

Table 18: CEFR self-assessment scale: spoken interaction skills

Level	Descriptor	No.	%
A1	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or very familiar topics.	86	31
A2	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	119	43
B1	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst interacting with other Gaelic speakers. I can enter unprepared in into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest, or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	35	13
B2	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	5	2
C1	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	1	0
C2	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.	2	1
	None of the above.	26	9
	Total	274	100

Missing = 8

Table 19: Spoken production skills by Ùlpan level (%)

	Current or Last Ùlpan Level						
	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L6	All
Basic user: A1	36.8	33.9	19.6	13.3		8.8	25.1
Basic user: A2	32.2	44.1	44.6	40.0	53.8	38.2	39.8
Independent user: B1	11.5	15.3	28.6	30.0	23.1	32.4	20.8
Independent user: B2	1.1	1.7		6.7	23.1	11.8	3.9
Proficient user: C1						5.9	.7
Proficient user: C2	1.1						.4
None of the above	17.2	5.1	7.1	10.0		2.9	9.3
N	87	59	56	30	13	34	279

N=279, Missing=3

Table 20: Spoken interaction skills by Ùlpan level (%)

	Current or Last Ùlpan Level						
	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L6	All
Basic user: A1	35.7	40.7	30.4	27.6	8.3	18.2	31.5
Basic user: A2	38.1	45.8	48.2	34.5	58.3	45.5	43.2
Independent user: B1	7.1	6.8	14.3	24.1	16.7	24.2	12.8
Independent user: B2				6.9	16.7	3.0	1.8
Proficient user: C1		1.7					.4
Proficient user: C2						6.1	.7
None of the above	19.0	5.1	7.1	6.9		3.0	9.5
N	84	59	56	29	12	33	273

N=273, Missing = 9

8.4.9 The course proficiency aim is for 'functional fluency', which suggests that learners will have a level of independence in being able to speak, and learn Gaelic by the end of the course. If we examine learners at Level 6 (of which 21 have completed Ùlpan), we find that there is considerable variation in learners' self-assessment of both their spoken production and spoken interaction skills. For spoken production, just over half of Level 6 learners consider themselves to now be 'independent users', whereas the majority categorise themselves as 'basic users' for spoken interaction. The overall picture is, however, one of progression with the proportion of learners reaching B1 increasing with each level, for both spoken production and interaction skills, with one exception: the proportion of learners at Level 6 that place themselves at B1 for spoken interaction is less than for Levels 4 or 5. This reflects the fact that language development is not a linear process.

8.4.10 If we compare the mean level of proficiency for spoken skills for continuing and for new learners (Table 21 and Table 22), we find that the mean value for new learners is lower than continuing learners for each level of Ùlpan, with the exception of Level 5 in spoken interaction. Again, the small number of Level 5 learners means this figures should be treated with caution.

Table 21: Mean value for self-assessed level of spoken production

Last Ùlpan level	Continuing Learners	New Learners	All learners
Level 1	2.19	1.07	1.47
Level 2	1.86	1.68	1.75
Level 3	2.44	1.53	1.95
Level 4	2.33	1.87	2.10
Level 5	2.75	2.60	2.69
Level 6	2.88	1.78	2.59
Total	2.38	1.47	1.89
N	121	155	279

Notes: the mean is calculated from a 7-point scale, were 0 is 'none' and 6 is C1.

Table 22: Mean value for self-assessed level of spoken interaction

Last Ùlpan level	Continuing Learners	New Learners	All learners
Level 1	1.92	1.02	1.33
Level 2	1.68	1.57	1.61
Level 3	2.20	1.30	1.70
Level 4	2.40	1.50	1.97
Level 5	2.38	2.50	2.42
Level 6	2.46	1.89	2.30
Total	2.13	1.35	1.70
N	120	150	273

Note: the mean is calculated from a 7-point scale, were 0 is 'none' and 7 is C1.

8.4.11 The estimated cumulative hours of instruction required to reach each level is different for each language. Based on the mapping of Irish on to the CEFR for learners of Irish described above, we might expect Gaelic learners to reach A2 after 160 hours of Ùlpan tuition, which is equivalent to the end of Level 5 of Ùlpan. The number of hours of instruction expected to be necessary to reach B1 is 300 e.g. it exceeds the total hours of instruction available through Ùlpan (assuming 1.5 hours for each unit).

8.4.12 The absolute number of hours of instruction gained by our sample is unknown, however, making it impossible to estimate with any degree of accuracy to what extent gains in fluency are attributable to Ùlpan teaching and learning. With this caveat in mind, Table

23 summarises the results for students who have received c. 160 hours or more of Ùlpan tuition: 85.7 percent of Ùlpan students who have received c. 160 hours of Ùlpan instruction have reached or exceeded the level of spoken production that might be reasonably expected (e.g. A2). Correspondingly, 14.3 percent have not achieved this level. Turning to spoken interaction skills, we find that 75.7 percent have reached or exceeded the level of spoken interaction skills that could reasonably be expected (e.g. A2), and that correspondingly, 24.3 percent have not achieved this.

Table 23: % of learners to reach A2 on CEFR scale by levels 5 & 6

	A2 Reached	A2 Not Reached	N
Spoken production*			
New Gaelic Learners	69.0%	31.0%	29
Continuing Gaelic Learners	95.8%	4.2%	48
All Respondents	85.7%	14.3%	77
Spoken interaction**			
New Gaelic Learners	51.9%	48.1%	27
Continuing Gaelic Learners	89.4%	10.6%	47
All Respondents	75.7%	24.3%	74

*$(\chi^2 10.658 = (df. 1))\ p < 0.001$ ** $(\chi^2 = 13.108\ (df. 1))\ p < 0.000$)

Notes: Scots Gaelic has not been mapped onto the CEFR, thus these figures are based on the assignment of hours of instruction for Irish.

8.4.13 Given 44.9 percent of learners had prior experience of learning Gaelic before commencing Ùlpan, we also examine for differences in attainment between new Gaelic learners and continuing Gaelic learners. The results suggest that new Gaelic learners, who had no experience of learning Gaelic prior to registering to study with Ùlpan, are less likely to achieve A2 in oral skills than are continuing Gaelic learners: 31 percent of new learners who have completed level 5 or level 6 Ùlpan have not reached A2 in spoken production; this figure rises to 48 percent for spoken interaction.

8.5 Language assessment

8.5.1 Our case-study research with three cohorts, who had completed Level 1, Level 3 and Level 6, gave us an opportunity to witness the variation in language outcomes which learners can have at these levels. In collaboration with course providers and Ùlpan tutors, we identified two classes which had recently completed Level 1 (Glasgow) and Level 3 (Stornoway)of Ùlpan and convened a group of students, and interviewed two individually, who had recently completed Ùlpan, henceforth referred to as Level 6 (Inverness and the Isle of Lewis). We met with learners during August and September

2013. Level 1 was a group on a short course; Level 3 was a group of work-based learners, on a once-weekly schedule; Level 6 was derived from two cohorts who had attended once-weekly evening/day classes, and one cohort who had attended twice-weekly classes. Of the 21 students who participated in interview, only eight volunteered for language assessment.

8.5.2   For each of the three levels a test instrument was designed to allow the research team to place students' oral skills on the CEFR. Students were given a hand-out with guidelines and suggested topics for conversation (see Appendix 3 for further detail). We then invited them to engage in an open-ended conversation. A majority of Level 1 were willing to participate in a Gaelic test, whereas only three out of eight students who had finished Level 6 were willing to engage in any kind of Gaelic dialogue (although they were very willing to discuss their experiences). The Level 3 students did not have time to participate in language testing, although we were able to observe their class and talk to them about their experiences afterwards. All students were also asked to place themselves on the CEFR self-assessment scales. This enabled us to compare volunteers' self-assessment with our objective assessment, which placed learners on the CEFR general speaking scale (Appendix 1). Our volunteers' self-assessment of their own Gaelic skills was consistent with our assessment, with the exception of one individual ([name redacted – Level 6, Continuing Learner] in Figure 16), who under-rated his spoken interaction skills.

8.5.3   The highest level of oral proficiency reached was B2. This learner had previously studied Gaelic to Higher level, and she used Gaelic with members of her family on a regular basis, as well as socially with friends. She had completed all 144 units of Ùlpan. At the other end of the scale were three learners who had completed Level 6, but had no confidence in their ability to speak Gaelic and, as such, none of these learners' were comfortable participating in language assessment, or to speak informally in Gaelic with the researchers. None of them were active Gaelic users, although one was nervously completing attending a conversation class. All other learners who volunteered to do a language assessment were placed between A1 and B1 on the CEFR scale.

8.5.4   **Figure 16** provides short profiles of seven learners, to illustrate the variation in students' learning motivations, styles, strategies and prior experiences, which mean that the process of Gaelic language learning with Ùlpan can lead to very different outcomes.

Figure 16: Ùlpan learner profiles
Level 1 – New learner

[Name redacted] is retired. He is motivated to learn Gaelic to speak with his grandchildren. He aims to become advanced in speaking Gaelic, but writing isn't important to him. He understood the basic questions being asked of him, but struggled to respond in his chosen categories. He displayed a relatively good vocabulary for his level; but his pronunciation was poor, with little attention to pre-aspiration or vowel length. CEFR: A1

"I thought, am I progressing? And I am….I have got a number of phrases and vocabulary in my head."

Level 1 - Continuing learner

[Name redacted] had studied Gaelic for two years at University. She had joined the short-course to refresh her memory before returning to University, 'to get into it a bit'. Gaelic is important for her personal and future professional life. She wants to achieve advanced Gaelic in all four language skills. She performed very well in the language test. She was able to answer personal questions with reasonable accuracy and good pronunciation. CEFR: A2+

"I love grammar! I like to see things written."

Level 3 – Continuing learner

[Name redacted] had previously done Higher Gaelic at school, as well as two years of Gaelic at University. Her motivations were primarily integrative: to participate in the community and the workplace, and speak Gaelic to friends and family. Accessing the Gaelic arts, or TV, is of little interest to her. She speaks Gaelic daily, mainly at work to other learners, but also socially. From observation, she is a confident speaker with authentic pronunciation. She feels she is improving and intends to complete Ùlpan. She placed herself at B1 on the CEFR.

Level 3 - New learner

[Name redacted] had moved to [redacted] and is married to a Gaelic speaker. She was motivated to learn Gaelic to support her children in GME. She was the only person in her class who had no prior experience of speaking Gaelic, and this sometimes made her doubt her own progress. She was confident to read Gaelic with her children, and felt she was progressing. She didn't have the confidence to speak Gaelic as yet. She placed herself at B1 in spoken production and A2 in spoken interaction on the CEFR scale.

Level 6 – Continuing learner

[Name redacted] was a retired professional man, local to [redacted]. He started Ùlpan at unit 1, having been learning Gaelic for 50 years. His motivation is both integrative and for personal development: his love of Gaelic literature is a strong motivation as well as a learning strategy. He had completed Ùlpan in 2012, and told us that his interlocutors no longer switched to English when his Gaelic faltered.

"Bha Ùlpan uamhasach misneachail airson fear le Gàidhlig lapach mar mi-fhin."

He believed himself to be fluent in reading and writing Gaelic. He engaged freely and easily in conversation with good vocabulary, idiom and pronunciation. He placed himself at A2 for spoken interaction and B1 for spoken production. CEFR: B1+

Level 6 – New learner

[Name redacted] completed Ùlpan in 2012. He had no Gaelic prior to starting classes. He was a highly motivated learner who committed a lot of time to learning, using books and writing practice. He told us he struggles with listening but felt he had done well relative to others in his classes as he had put in so much effort. A lack of opportunity to receive natural oral input was a challenge he was trying to overcome. He was frustrated as a local conversation group was full of 'struggling learners'. He placed himself at B1 on the CEFR scales. In interview, he indicated what topics he preferred to speak about, but could veer off topic at near-standard pace. He demonstrated a very good grasp of vocabulary and structures, but at times was hard to follow because of his pronunciation. CEFR: B1

"There is nowhere in Inverness where I can speak Gaelic."

Level 6 – New learner

[Name redacted] joined Ùlpan classes to help to support her children in GME and completed Ùlpan in 2012. She has no confidence to speak Gaelic but feels she has made progress in reading and writing, and she can help her children with their homework. She placed her skills at A1 on the CEFR scale.

"It has helped me – not with speaking but it has with reading and writing."

Figure 17: Current use of Gaelic outside of Gaelic classroom (%)
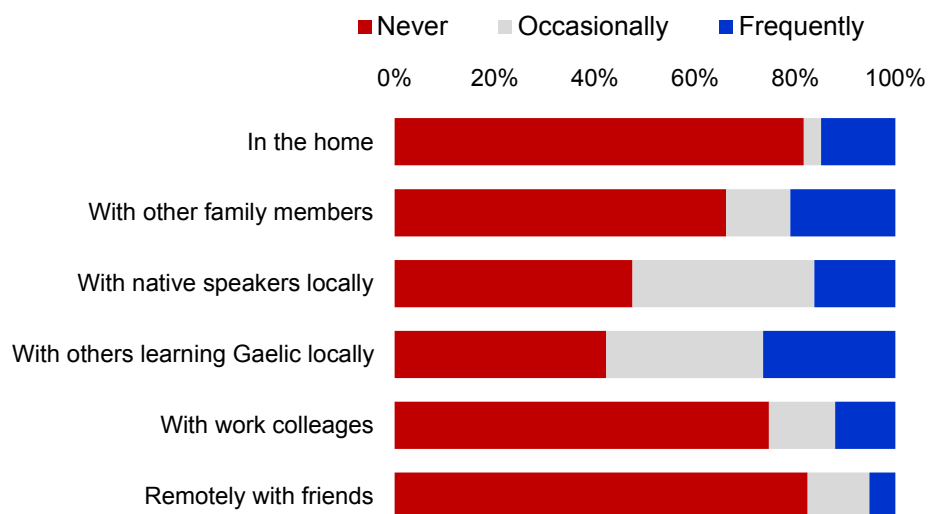
Note: 'in the home' was only offered as a category to those who live with other Gaelic speakers.

8.6   Are learners using Gaelic?

8.6.1   In section 7 we reported on learners' use of Gaelic outside the classroom whilst learning Gaelic with Ùlpan. Bearing in mind that only 69 percent of respondents have attended an Ùlpan class in 2013, and only 10.7 (or 30 students) were enrolled in an Ùlpan class at the time of the survey, we also asked respondents about their *current* use of Gaelic. To report these findings, we combine daily and weekly into 'frequent', monthly or less than monthly into 'occasional' and not at all into 'never'. The results given in Figure 17 are striking, for they highlight the challenges learners face in finding opportunities to use Gaelic on a frequent basis outside the Gaelic classroom. Overall, however, 45.4 percent of learners speak Gaelic on at least a weekly basis (outside of any class they may attend).

8.6.2   When we compare the proportion of learners who use Gaelic frequently for continuing and new learners, we find a statistically significant difference between the two groups. 56.5 percent of continuing Gaelic learners use Gaelic daily or weekly, whereas only 36.1 percent of new learners do. This suggests that new learners do not have the same level of Gaelic-speaking social networks, and therefore opportunities, to speak Gaelic.

8.6.3   The level of regular use of Gaelic with family members, native speakers, and most strikingly, other learners, appears to be significantly lower for the learners in this survey than McLeod *et al.*'s (2010) survey of Gaelic learners. However, McLeod *et al.* failed to distinguish between in and out of class use, therefore limiting comparability with the categories for 'other learners' and 'native speakers'.

8.6.4   Interestingly, McLeod *et al*. found that, on average, 14 percent spoke Gaelic in the work place frequently, as compared to 12 percent of respondents in this survey, and 35.6 percent of learners surveyed in 2010 spoke Gaelic with a family member, as compared to 17.9 percent of learners in this survey (combining data from household and other family).

8.6.5   Encouragingly, however, the percentage of learners surveyed who are currently using Gaelic frequently with other people learning locally and with native or fluent speakers is higher than reported in Table 13, when an Ùlpan student. This suggests that, on average, learners are developing their Gaelic skills using other learning and teaching methods, and that correspondingly, their confidence in speaking Gaelic is increasing since they last attended an Ùlpan course.

8.7   Summary

8.7.1   To summarise, we find that the method is developing students reading and writing skills, as well as their speaking and listening skills. We used the CEFR for languages 'can do' self-assessment scales to explore the range of proficiencies that can be expected for different levels of Ùlpan. With reference to what might be reasonable to expect for the amount of tuition at Levels 5 and 6, we found that 85.7 percent of learners are reaching A2 on the scale for spoken production, and 75.7 percent are reaching A2 on the scale for spoken interaction by this stage. The difference between the two figures suggests that the method is better at supporting students' use of their learnt phrases to sustain, for example, monologues but is less successful at preparing students for active participation in conversation.

8.7.2   To take into account the different starting point for learners, we compared the same figures between new learners of Gaelic, and continuing learners. There is a statistically significant difference these two groups: new learners are less likely to achieve this level of attainment. 69 percent of new learners reach A2 in spoken production by the end of Level 5, but only 48.1 percent reach A2 in spoken interaction. This suggests that Ùlpan is not as effective in teaching Gaelic to beginners, who have little experience of learning Gaelic, as to continuing learners.

8.7.3   Learners' use of Gaelic, and their access to Gaelic speaking networks, is fairly low. Currently, 45.4 percent of learners speak Gaelic on at least a weekly basis (outside of any class they may attend); and mainly with other people who are learning Gaelic. New learners speak Gaelic on a less frequent basis than continuing learners.

8.7.4   The case-studies generate insights into the range of experiences, motivations and aspirations which learners bring to Ùlpan and which affect language outcomes and impacts. A significant proportion of learners on Ùlpan do not fit the main social groups which it seeks to target; this may have implications for the suitability of the course and its delivery for learners whose choice to learn Gaelic with Ùlpan is guided mainly by availability. The following section draws on qualitative data to further explore the educational effectiveness of the course.

9. Teaching and Learning Gaelic through Ùlpan

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 Section 2 outlined the key pedagogical principles underpinning Ùlpan, as outlined to us in interview with the Ùlpan course owner. In this section we explore the pedagogical effectiveness of Ùlpan, by drawing on the experience and opinions of tutors and students of Ùlpan; our review of comparable courses in other language contexts; and, our review of the sample of course materials. In doing so, we address key issues pertaining to course pedagogy, and the general educational effectiveness of Ùlpan. The section is structured by way of the following topics:

- What happens in the Ùlpan lesson;
- Pronunciation, fluency and language authenticity;
- Language content;
- Drilling, memorisation and communication;
- The presentation of grammar; and,
- Attending to individual differences.

9.2 What happens in the Ùlpan classroom?

9.2.1 The structure of the Ùlpan class was given in Table 2. Tutors conduct drilling with their students using both choral and individual repetition, aiming to ensure all students are able to produce the desired language with accurate pronunciation and prosody without preparation or reliance on written input. Typically, each unit comprises three sets of drills which involve four substitutions in one language structure. Learning activities (or games), usually in pairs or small groups, are interspersed with each set of drills to reinforce and extend language learning.

9.2.2 There are typically three games for each unit to enable students to work in pairs or groups and to practise the three sets of new language patterns. Games use taught structures and learnt vocabulary as well as images and the written word to encourage students to work toward producing language. For example:

- students move counters across columns of vocabulary to help create new sentences from known vocabulary;
- one student mimes an emotion on the card picked up, and the other guesses what emotion is being mimed, using the set phrase learnt in the drill;

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- a student substitutes a noun in a phrase given by his/her partner, and makes any necessary changes to ensure the article and adjective agree in case, gender and number;
- a pair of students writes a short dialogue and act out the dialogue in front of the class.

9.2.3 Tutors are recommended to circulate within the classroom as these games are played to ensure the accuracy of production in terms of pronunciation and prosody, and typically provide recast with verbal emphasis through pitch, duration or volume to indicate to a learner if he/she is not achieving 'authentic' speech. Gestures and facial expressions are also encouraged in the Ùlpan approach as an additional means of communicating to learners both the meaning of words, and the correctness of student production; crucially, the technique, in theory, does not cause language switch within the Gaelic-medium classroom context of an Ùlpan unit.

9.2.4 Once the students have completed these drills and activities (or games), the students' progress to the *còmhradh*. The *còmhradh* is a short scripted dialogue based on the vocabulary from the previous unit, and uses structures learnt in the previous and current unit. *Còmhraidhean* can be conducted in pairs or small groups, depending on the number of students within a class, before the teacher then asks individual students to translate a phrase individually from English to Gaelic as the script is erased gradually, word by word from the board. They model, therefore, authentic oral dialogue based on the patterns learnt, and are designed to help students memorise these phrases for future retrieval in spontaneous speech. As well as reinforcing learning, they accustom learners to a diversity of voices using Gaelic.

9.2.5 Outside of the classroom, the short series of *eacarsaichean* on the student worksheet can be used as homework. These exercises follow standard 'fill in the gaps', 'follow the pattern', 'translate to Gaelic', 'translate to English' patterns. As well as reinforcing the vocabulary used for the current unit, it uses vocabulary from earlier units. The answers to these exercises are not addressed by tutors in subsequent units; however Deiseal is creating a resource for learners online, which would enable students to correct their work against the correct answers. In interview, many students confessed that they did not look at their materials from one class to the next, and relied on their time in-class to learn vocabulary. Others told us that they studiously revised using the sheets to learn vocabulary,

and to complete exercises, and were frustrated by fellow learners' lack of effort. These reflect the variety of learning strategies which L2 learners adopt.

9.2.6   This class structure follows very closely the original *Wlpan* model, which is organised around key language structures. It departs from the Hebrew *ulpan* method, which, as described above, had conversation at the heart of each lesson and was structured around everyday topics. One consequence of this is that in a typical Ùlpan unit there is little opportunity for 'free talk' in Gaelic. We are told that, over the course as a whole, the earliest opportunities for 'free talk' are in Level 6: by Unit 144, students will have engaged in their ninth and final activity designed to encourage 'free use' of language e.g. about washing your hair, opening a bottle of champagne, or making breakfast. These examples are based on using memory to create a dialogue for role play, and thus they don't relate to 'real' events which students can personalise in the exchange of genuine information.

9.2.7   Ùlpan tutors and key informants believe there is a greater role for genuine, original speech, as a key component of fluency practice, to support learners' attainment. A typical view was:

> *"I think in terms of language acquisition in the Ùlpan method, I'd like to see a lot more of the listening and speaking skills. Especially on the sentences, you know actually speaking, talking if you know what I mean?" (Ùlpan tutor)*

> *"I think really by the time you reach unit 72 you need to stop and consolidate work and make sure people are speaking – tha iad cho feumach air còmhradh. There's no còmhradh – there's nothing you can follow through and these people can't have a conversation with you. And I thought when I did [another course] they could say things back to me." (Ùlpan tutor)*

This point was strongly reinforced in feedback from learners, who identified that a lack of opportunity to communicate 'naturally' in Gaelic was limiting their language development. Learners told us that they wanted 'free talk' to be an integral part of the Ùlpan class structure:

> *"I feel the Ùlpan courses are very, very good and I am enjoying them a lot, but I've left after 2 Levels (6 months) of being unable to speak to ANY sort of fluency level. Some sort of conversational element needs to be introduced to make people feel they are advancing. It's no good introducing conversation elements later on (I don't know if they do this). It needs to be done as the student progresses." (New learner, Level 2)*

> *"Like most other students in my classes, I found that there was a lack of opportunity to speak the language." (New learner, Level 3)*

Learners stress that, whilst they enjoy learning through Ùlpan, they do not have sufficient opportunity to practise speaking Gaelic out-of-class and as such, they are not making progress towards becoming active speakers. The lack of fluency practise outside of lessons is substantiated by the survey findings reported

above. Thus, whilst all research participants widely acknowledged that, like any other language course, Gaelic language learning through Ùlpan needs to be reinforced outside the classroom, they highlight that the average adult learner in Scotland does not gain sufficient opportunity to use the "set sentences" and structures drilled in an Ùlpan class in conversation with other speakers as they progress through the course.

9.2.8   The uniformity in the structure of Ùlpan has both advantages and disadvantages. Some students told us that they enjoyed the maintenance of the structure as the course progresses, and the use of imitation and repetition drilling, because the method contributed towards their memorisation of phrases; improved their pronunciation; and, engaged them in an active process of language learning. The predictability of each class promoted a 'safe' learning environment and, therefore, reduced language learning anxiety and contributed to a sense of progression:

> *"Tha e a' còrdadh riutha gu bheil fios aca dè tha tighinn agus cia mheud turas a dh'fheumas rudeigin ath-aithris."* (Ùlpan tutor)

> *"Tha beagan reassurance leis an structar – tha na h-oileanaich a' fàs cofhurtail leis a' structar."* (Ùlpan tutor)

> *"Learning in a group as with Ulpan is great for self confidence and motivation. The method is very enjoyable – an important factor in keeping going, as it is easy to get discouraged."* (Continuing learner, Level 3)

This, we were told, by tutors and key informants played a role in the retention of students. The course content, structure and atmosphere can, therefore, have a very positive effect on an individual's classroom learning motivation. This, learners told us, had not been their experience of previous types of learning. Gardner (2007) identifies this kind of classroom motivation, together with individual motivation, as one of the most important prerequisites to successful language learning.

9.2.9   On the other hand, learners who had progressed further in the course commented that they grew bored of the homogeneity of each lesson. Their comments suggest that this format did not best serve their learning needs as they advanced into the upper levels; this reflected students' perceived need for opportunities to actively engage in extended speech and consolidate their learning through genuine oral communication. Students in the upper levels in particular, were also more likely to express frustration over the complexity and utility, of the games:

> *"Honestly, 70 percent of the time I got frustrated with the games and 30 percent of the time, I thought this was useful and helping me to reinforce when we were learning."* (New learner, Level 6)

> *"Sometimes with some games people were so confused with the pictures and instructions that no one knew what to do." (New learner, Level 6)*

> *"It seems that they have created games for the sake of creating a game as if they have been told 'this is your remit' – they needn't have bothered." (New learner, Level)*

9.2.10 This was reinforced by tutor feedback. A recurring theme among experienced tutors was that they felt that the games reduced in value during the second half of the course and that, in practice, tutors were selective about which games to use. Many tutors found some of the games hard to understand, and relied on students' interpreting the rules of the games themselves – something that certainly at earlier levels and even at the latter stages, required the extended use of English.

9.3 Pronunciation, fluency and language authenticity

9.3.1 One of the main aims of the Ùlpan course is to promote authentic speech patterns emphasising good pronunciation and prosody of the language:

> *"[I]ntonation patterns are key to learning quickly and for having blas; and if you have blas you are much more likely to be reinforced outside of the class with native speakers." (Stiùiriche, Deiseal)*

It was explained that the right pitch contours enable native speakers to identify meaning-carrying words and thereby reduce the work on native speakers; and making it more likely that they'll fill in the learner's mistakes.

9.3.2 Ùlpan places emphasis on the spoken word to teach oracy skills, through mimicry and repetition. The written form is, therefore, used in Ùlpan to exemplify and practise the oral form. Some students told us that they found the focus on pronunciation "liberating" and revelatory, having found pronunciation to be the "stumbling block" of learning through other methods. A continuing learner told us that, "pronunciation has really got to take centre stage and, in other courses, they don't". Learners explained:

> *"I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience of learning Gaelic with Ùlpan and I think it provides the essential early confidence to begin speaking." (New learner, Level 3)*

> *"Ùlpan was a great find for me as the method suited me very well. For the first time, I was able to speak Gaelic, and at a basic level, this began to feel almost intuitive." (Continuing learner, Level 6)*

Language learning through repeating sound patterns, without a focus on form or meaning was, therefore, motivating and disinhibiting for some learners. It enabled them to focus on sounds first and foremost, prior to establishing meaning.

9.3.3 Throughout the course tutor notes there are reminders for tutors to monitor certain speech patterns and this is introduced immediately. The first unit introduces the learners to pre-aspiration (the phonological feature where a breath of air precedes unvoiced stop consonants in medial or final position and which has different acceptable realisations) e.g. in the words *cat*, *mac* etc: in *Aonad 1*, students find *leat*. Students are also introduced to the very important distinction between long and short vowels. In observation of the Level 1 group, examples of good pre-aspiration were heard, but there were still many places where preaspiration did not take place at all (especially in newly introduced phrases). The tutor did not remind them of the feature, as to do so would have required him to explain the point in English; he was following the pedagogical principle of maintaining Gaelic as the language of instruction.

9.3.4 Tutors in the Isle of Lewis were very positive about the Ùlpan method in producing good pronunciation quickly:

> *"Tha Ùlpan nas fheàrr airson fuaimneachadh a thoirt air adhart – tha iad a' tighinn air adhart nas luaithe." (Ùlpan tutor)*

It is worth bearing in mind, however, that achievement of near-authentic pronunciation would be easier for learners from Lewis (as acknowledged by the tutors): other tutors noted that students struggled with achieving authentic '*l*'s, for example and, as noted in Section 8, many students struggled with pronunciation. The veracity of the *tutor's* pronunciation was a concern raised by students in their survey responses, and by key informants. Given the course places such weight on authenticity of speech sounds and patterns, a 'good accent' is a pre-requisite. However, not all learners feel that their tutors can achieve this:

> *"My biggest problem with the Ùlpan course was that the tutor was neither Scots nor a native speaker and she pronounced things in a different way to that I'd picked up on An Cùrsa Inntrigidh where the tutors were from the islands …(…)... I'm hoping a course will start locally this year with a native speaker." (Continuing learner, Level 3)*

Key informants told us that they found that some tutors found find it difficult to produce the authentic sounds and prosody, and recommended that tutor training and a skills test as part of the accreditation process address these issues.

9.4 Language content

9.4.1 Achieving authentic speech is also a question of language structure and vocabulary choice. Ùlpan aims to equip its learners to become functionally fluent, through teaching socially useful phrases. Whilst 61 percent of learners told us they were satisfied with the course content, our review of course

materials, and discussions with tutors, identified that the course includes structures and vocabulary which are not in keeping with this aim. One aspect is the conflation of low register vocabulary with high register structures. For example, in *Aonad 132*, the first person plural impersonal forms are drilled:

- *Dìreamaid a' chraobh* – let's climb the tree
- *Bruicheamaid a' ghlasrach* – let's boil the vegetables
- *Na gearramaid am pàipear* – let's not cut the paper
- *Na slìobamaid an cat* – let's not stroke the cat

Sometimes referred to as an 'archaic' form, this is rarely used outside of certain phrases e.g. *dèanamaid ùrnaigh* (let us pray). Other examples include the teaching of third person singular imperatives in *Aonad 142*, which is typically found in the written, not oral, register:

- *Dèanadh e mar a thogras e* – let him do as he wants
- *Faiceadh e na thogras e* – let him see what he wants
- *Thigeadh e nuair a thogras e* – let him come when he wants
- *Rachadh e far an togair e* – let him go where he wants

9.4.2   As well as these high register language patterns, tutors (and students) reported unusual use of vocabulary and idiom; from our review of the limited sample of materials available to us, we noted the following examples:

- *'s fheàrr iad as t-earrach* (*Aonad* 73) – they're better in Spring
- *(Bha am fear seo) na bu fhliche* (*Aonad* 97) – (this one was) wetter
- *a' tasgadh airgea*d (*Aonad* 120) – saving money
- *'s t-fhiach / cha t-fhiach* (*Aonad* 121) – it's worth/not worth

Whilst these examples are certainly not grammatically incorrect, they are not the most common forms in use.

9.4.3   The author acknowledged in interview the universal challenge facing all writers and teachers of Gaelic with regard to how to treat the genitive and dative cases: Lamb (2001: 25) and others have acknowledged there is a 'levelling of morphological contrasts' occurring in the language: without an accepted standard or revision of grammatical text books, each teacher and user of written Gaelic is required to interpret guidelines in grammar texts and align this with actual spoken usage. For the most part Ùlpan seems to be conservative in what it teaches and again this has the potential to conflict with the aims of creating functionally fluent Gaelic speakers: examples of this idiosyncrasy is with dative phrases, such as:

- *cho slaodach ri seilcheig* – as slow as a snail (*Aonad* 121)
- *mar chaileig mhaith* – like a good girl (*Aonad* 121)

This conservative use of the dative is more typical of the written, not spoken, register.

9.4.4   The inclusion of such non-colloquial language content challenged tutors' beliefs about what kind of language the course should teach. Some tutors who had taught up to Level 6 told us that they didn't believe all the course language to be representative of 'standard' Gaelic. Recurring themes were the choice of vocabulary and concerns were raised over the usefulness of the language structures at the upper level for example:

> *"An ire mu dheireadh agamsa a' dèanamh Ùlpan bha mi a' cur seachad tòrr den oidhche ag ràdh, 'na cleachdaibh sin, na cleachdaibh sin, chan eil sin ceart'. Chaidh sinne tromhpa agus an sgòraigeadh a-mach. Na rudan a bh' ann, cha robh iad dol gan cleachdadh co-dhiù." (Ùlpan tutor).*

> *"Somebody was obviously opening a dictionary and opening it and putting the wrong word down – bhiodh tu ag ràdh riut fhèin, 'cò às a thàinig seo?'. There was no point in telling them about it. They weren't going to do anything about it." (Ùlpan tutor).*

Students described how tutors told them that some structures were not in common usage, thus, as [name redacted] explained, "so I would say, 'I won't bother with that one then'". Students who had progressed into the upper levels of Ùlpan also questioned the appropriateness of some of the structures, and spoke of their frustration of discovering they had learnt phrases and vocabulary that are not used in everyday speech. One level 6 learner told us, "I have confused a lot of people by using 'ulpanisms'" and another; "when I tried to use my Gaelic I was told, 'oh that's not a Gaelic word'. It's very disappointing and doesn't help your confidence." Another commented:

> *"I feel that Ulpan, while pretending not to teach grammar, teaches us to repeat phrases and sentences which are not natural conversational phrases but have been devised purely to hammer home a grammatical point. I don't feel this works!" (New learner, Level 3)*

9.4.5   The course has been largely sole-authored and the decisions made over language choice, in the absence of a standard, are unlikely to gain the agreement of all speakers. Notwithstanding, our findings suggest that there is a disjuncture between the inclusion of high register content and the course's proficiency aims. Whilst the majority of the language in the sample of units reviewed suggests the course gives a reasonable representation of standard Gaelic, a re-orientation of the course, particularly towards the latter units, would be necessary in order to develop a syllabus which better reflects the learning proficiency targets and the needs of the Gaelic learner.

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9.5 Drilling, memorisation and communication

9.5.1 The inclusion of high register grammar features in the course reflects the way in which the course has been structured. The Ùlpan course's use of drilling is derived from the audiolingual method of the 1960s. It teaches language structures through drilling and the teaching of sound clusters, with each unit focussing on one or more major grammatical patterns. Topics are then mapped on the structures, insofar as possible, in the scripted dialogues, which are used to support an awareness of how the language might be used in communicative contexts. The course is not, therefore structured around language associated for particular contexts e.g. requesting, inviting, complaining, which was typical of, for example, the communicative approach to teaching in the 1980s.

9.5.2 In an interview with the research team the course author explained that "basically, the first 'half' of Ùlpan, 1 – 72 is like Levels 1 – 2 of Gaelic at University, and 73 – 144 is like Levels 3 – 4" (Stiùiriche, Deiseal). The course reflects, therefore, the structures contained in a syllabus designed to teach high levels of proficiency in all four language skills. The author acknowledges that the course goes into insignificant aspects of the grammar in the upper levels, which many tutors are not familiar with, e.g. the use of impersonal verbs, defective verbs, adverbs of motion and the subjunctive. He also explained that Ùlpan often makes use of vocabulary items that are abstract or not immediately useful to learners in order to support the learning of phonemes, or to support the learning of the structure. These are what the course author describes as 'empty content words'.

9.5.3 The careful scaffolding of structures builds up learners' language skills progressively. This approach relies on students being able to retrieve the appropriate grammatical form and vocabulary for a particular communicative context, using the structures learnt in class. The compromise, using this approach, is that the language learned is not necessarily the most useful for everyday communicative contexts. A recurring theme amongst new learners concerned the usefulness of the phrases being memorised for rehearsing 'real-world' language use, or for performing language functions that would be performed in 'authentic' situations:

> *"The first 24 units have taught me to say that Michael is in Cairo, but I would have difficulty communicating in everyday life." (New learner, Level 1)*

> *"I enjoy the classes but feel a bit frustrated when, halfway through Ùlpan, we have still to be taught the Gaelic for a phrase like "Excuse me"! We have had to learn it from other sources." (New Learner, Level 3)*

> *"After 72 units I have opted not to continue with the Ùlpan method. I realised that I was unable to work out how to ask for a cup of coffee but I could say I liked it, you like it, she likes it. Practical real life application of the language is not supported by the Ùlpan method." (New Learner, Level 3)*

9.5.4   When observing a class the phrase '*Tha an t-aodann seo gun*……' (this face is without…) was used with several nouns, and elicited the response:

Learner:	*Why would you say this person's without cheeks? I don't understand!*
Tutor:	*It's the aspiration….(then, sometime later). You might say 'without teeth…?'. (Class observation, Level 4)*

Learners could be frustrated by being asked to memorise phrases that were not immediately useful to everyday contexts, without substitution and transformation, and being taught how to say "obscure" or "useless" things.

9.6   The presentation of grammar

9.6.1   Ùlpan encourages students to infer grammar from observation of practised patterns. The materials used alongside the drilling, and the student hand out, do not provide a written explanation of the pattern. This does not mean, however, that Ùlpan doesn't cover significant grammatical ground. As we have already discussed, learners are introduced to grammar through grammatical sentences. The purpose of drilling is to give learners the means to automatically produce these grammatical forms when needed, and this facet of fluency is integral to second language learning. As Wray *et al*. (2011:13) warn, "a risk with drilling without explanation is that the practice of a pattern is undertaken without a clear appreciation of the meaning. In addition, building practice around logical patterns rather than authentic examples can risk them being unidiomatic". The ease by which students extrapolate patterns inductively and gain a sense of the grammar will vary among students.

9.6.2   The *còmhradh* section addresses this latter point to a degree, by presenting recently learnt structures in the context of an 'authentic' script. The patterns are further practised in the activities, and in the written home-work exercises. Questions are discouraged in class, however, as this would typically conflict with the pedagogical principle of speaking the target language only. Opting not to teach grammar explicitly is not necessarily a failing of a language programme. With many adults feeling uncertain about the grammar of their L1 in the UK, promoting language learning without addressing grammar can help provide adult learners with a comforting environment and, indeed, may have benefits to motivation. For some learners, therefore, the covert teaching of grammar can be desirable. Moreover, the implicit approach enables Ùlpan to attract and retain

tutors whose existing knowledge of, or confidence with, grammar and/or grammatical terminology is relatively low.

9.6.3   The current research literature does recognise, however, the value of explicitly teaching grammar to adults, rather than assuming that adults will assimilate this knowledge from language input in the classroom. This is often achieved through drawing attention to patterns in reading texts, and through encouraging students to be curious about patterns by asking questions in class. For example, the representative of the Basque for adults programme explains, "form, meaning and use are key dimension[s] of language. In our view a sound communicative approach to language teaching and learning we not only avoid to discard the attention to formal aspects but also foster the so called 'focus on form' approach in the literature of Psycholinguistics and Language Pedagogy" (Representative, HABE, pers. comm.). Second language learners of Welsh, Basque and Breton usually purchase a course book which accompanies their courses, which gives learners an opportunity to study language form and grammar points, should they want to. Thus, whilst *Wlpan* and *Oulpann* courses tend to avoid explicit discussion of grammar in class, the course text fills this gap.

9.6.4   GfA teaching has to carefully balance a common fear of grammatical knowledge with ensuring learners understood the patterns which they are being taught. In interview and in the student survey, a recurring theme was that learners felt they often did not have the grammatical understanding to transform patterns being taught through drilling and activities into novel contexts. Learners explained that, whilst the fluency practise embedded in drilling was useful, they found it difficult to retrieve the grammar required to say something novel. The word-strings rehearsed in drills, in theory, should help to achieve fluency by providing a reusable sentence framework for real communicative contexts. Yet without an adequate understanding of how to transform a paradigm, students found themselves struggling to construct sentences in conversation with other speakers:

> *"Whilst I learnt the set phrases easily enough, I didn't find it easy to apply the little grammar we learnt to building on this, so I couldn't have carried on a conversation....I like to understand the structure of a language, and Ùlpan doesn't teach this." (New learner, Level 3)*

> *"My tutors were great, but I just find that parroting set sentences doesn't give me the thorough understanding of the language. I end up knowing that I recognise certain word-clusters, but can't play with them and make them mine because I can't distinguish a verb from a noun; Ùlpan doesn't make me understand how to structure sentences." (New Learner, Level 2)*

9.6.5   In recognising why the course did not teach grammar overtly, learners who felt they would benefit from more explicit grammatical explanation called for some of the teaching materials to also be made available to students, and for grammar sheets with basic patterns explained. Examples cited included a copy of 'speed datives' and the paradigm of the augmented preposition based on *aig* (at) (e.g. *tha mi ga dhèanamh*). Deiseal does plan to produce a 'grammar geek' section online for learners, and this could go some way to benefiting learners who find such knowledge to be a valuable resource for learning.

9.6.6   In our case-studies, we observed students learning of grammatical patterns and had some opportunity to examine for their competence in using them during oral interviews. At the end of Level 1, (*Aonad* 24), students have covered past, present and future tenses of regular verbs and some irregulars. We observed that our group of 'Level 1' students were not able to use the verbs accurately and were unclear of past and future tenses. This would not be unusual amongst students who had received the same level of input as the Ùlpan students of this level – but non-Ùlpan students may not have been expected to try this after a comparable number of contact hours.

9.6.7   There was no dominant opinion amongst tutors on the effectiveness of this approach to teaching grammar. Indeed, several felt unable to give an opinion as they had no basis upon which to assess their students' progress towards 'functional fluency'. This reflects the scripted nature of the course, and the dearth of opportunities tutors have in class to converse with their learners in Gaelic. Tutors with greater experience, and who had taught from Level 3 onwards, were typically of the opinion that some grammatical explanation and discussion was useful. Tutors explained their concerns over the extent to which learners were inferring grammar. For example, one tutor told us that, at the end of Level 3 (*Aonad* 73) her students requested they continue learning using a conversational class instead of Ùlpan. When asked how she structured the lesson, she explained:

Tutor: *Uill ... ann an dha-rìribh, thòisich mi a' dol thairis air structar, beagan gràmar really, a' gabhail 'tha, bha is bidh'. Chaidh sinn thairis air sin.*

Interviewer: *An robh iad a' tuigsinn ciamar a bha sin ag obair?*

Tutor: *Cha robh. Cha do thuig iad idir! Agus às dèidh aon leasan bha iad dìreach tòrr nas fhasa dhaibh, an dèidh beagan, dìreach beagan mìneachadh – chan eil mise na mo eòlaiche air gràmar – ach dìreach glè bheag a rinn mi, bha iad uile a' ràdh, 'tha sin sgoinneil, tha mi air fada a bharrachd ionnsachadh na bha mi roimhe'. Ann an dòigh, bha e aca, dìreach, cha do thuig iad mar*

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a bha e ag obair. So niste, tha iad glè mhath air sin."

9.6.8   Indeed, many tutors identified that learner differences affected the student experience of learning Gaelic through Ùlpan. Many sought to accommodate these differences in the classroom. This next and final part of section 9 addresses these points.

9.7   Attending to individual differences in language learning

9.7.1   Despite the highly prescriptive nature of teaching Gaelic using Ùlpan, we found more experienced tutors tried to accommodate learner differences in the classroom, and adapted the course to reflect their preferred teaching style and their beliefs about how languages are best learned.

9.7.2   A common difference between adult learners is their need to write information down at the time it is being delivered to them (Wray *et al.,* 2011). The Ùlpan course not only dissuades, but disallows, students to write things down during the lesson. The first edition of the course asked tutors to "make sure that nobody has a pen in sight. Writing is only to be used under your direction. This is a golden rule". In a society in which writing things down is the 'norm' in most learning situations, disallowing adults to write as an aid to learning is likely to cause frustration to adults who find their literacy repertoire is an asset to the L2 learning process. These frustrations were observed in Ùlpan classes, and explained to us in interviews and in questionnaire responses:

> *"[Ùlpan] doesn't suit this kinaesthetic learner as I couldn't take notes and it went too fast to grasp without I felt repeating enough. The notes didn't help me as they didn't relate to what I had heard. Fine for those who learn by listening, I don't." (Continuing learner, Level 1)*

> *"I personally learn from seeing things written down rather than being spoken at me." (New learner, Level 1)*

> *"I found the course methodology did not suit my style of learning.[There is] too much rote repetition of words at the beginning of each class without the relevant written word or meaning to be able to attach it to. That is essential for the way my mind works, and the tutor was immovable in taking on board any constructive suggestions or indeed in understanding that many of the students were struggling in the same way." (New learner, Level 1)*

9.7.3   Some learners do not, therefore, find the exclusion of note-taking in class and the primacy of aural input beneficial to their learning. Tutors also told us that their students often wanted to write things down during class, and were frustrated when requested not to do so. During an observation of one Ùlpan class a student asked if the tutor could write the phrase on the board so that she might see it to help her understand what she was being asked to say: the request was denied (as per the course philosophy) and this student disengaged

with the task in hand until she was able to see the phrase in writing at which point she began to participate again in class.

9.7.4   Whilst note-taking is perceived to compromise the pedagogical principles upon which Ùlpan is founded, it does happen in practice. For example, during classroom observation in Stornoway, we noted that when students were given, orally, the translation of the *còmhradh* for the unit they quickly noted the English translation on their hand-outs which had been handed to them five-minutes earlier. They also noted down the English translation of the *seòllairtean*. This was the first opportunity they had had to write, and the pace at which the translation was delivered made this a difficult task. That they collectively did write down the English, suggests that these students did not feel they could depend on their memory for understanding these sentences at home and relied on translating them into English. Some tutors, whilst discouraging students from note taking, did not feel it was productive to enforce this, because they did not want to compromise learners' learning preferences or because they didn't feel they had the authority to do so. Thus, whilst there are pedagogical justifications for the Ùlpan approach to note-taking, some learners feel that their learning is being compromised and some tutors respond to this with a flexible approach. Interestingly, in recent years, Cardiff has adapted its method of teaching *Wlpan* to give students an opportunity to write down the drill (Wray *et al.,* 2011).

9.7.5   In addition to writing down the translation as an aid to memorisation, some students also demonstrated their preference for the written Gaelic form as a medium for learning the oral Gaelic form. For example, we observed one class of students reading the *facail* from the student sheet whilst the tutor drilled the new vocabulary at the end of the lesson. It was also noted that pronunciation of the phrases improved for most students once they also had the visual aid, as they self-corrected errors in their pronunciation. Being able to identify word boundaries from visual input is likely to have this effect because the students in this group used literacy-based methods of self-learning. In group interviews, learners explained that they found that they had inaccurately memorised sound patterns from repetition of aural input, and then found it difficult to self-correct this:

> [name redacted]: *Sometimes, people don't get the phrases. Then people carry on saying 'blah blah blah blah blah'. It doesn't help does it, to then correct after you've seen it? ...(...)... You've then got a sound formed in your head then so it's harder to ... like the saying 'saoil a bheil e ro' people were saying 'saoil le bheil air'. It's like, get that right first before the patterns are formed in your mind.*

[name redacted]:	*Yes. What tends to happen is that you tend to get a kind of series of sounds in your mind which only when it's written up (that) you realise that you're complete mince, because then you see what it really is! (Group interview, Level 1)*

9.7.6 We observed in a class in the Isle of Lewis that students reproduced the drilled phrases very accurately, which is likely to be explained by the sociolinguistic context in which these students live: the majority have received a relatively high level of Gaelic language input over an extended period of time, and for one it is her first language. It was typical, however, for the students to overlook lenition. In this lesson, students were being drilled phrases designed to teach the pattern of noun inflection following the preposition *gun* (without); students typically reproduced the nouns without lenition of the initial consonant when mimicking the tutor, but when the tutor wrote the phrases on the board, they self-corrected using the visual input. Another tutor described to us:

"Bha mise a' teagasg 'tha mi airson a ghabhail agus tha mi airson a gabhail' agus bha tè a bha seo, cha robh i a' tuigsinn agus cha robh i ga ràdh. Ach an uair sin nuair a sgrìobh mi air a' bhòrd chuir mi 'y' fo 'gh' agus thuig i bhon siud – bha i an uair sin ga fhaighinn / ga chluinntinn." (Ùlpan tutor)

The use of written word as a medium for learning the oral form, as well as a source of exemplification and practice (which the games and the *còmhradh* provide) is, therefore, important for some learners, and this is recognised and, to various degrees, accommodated by tutors.

9.7.7 Some of the tutors responded to learners' requests for explanation mid-class, and several volunteered explanations, and translations in English, as they believed it to be beneficial to their learners needs.

"Thòisich sinne a' briseadh nan riaghailtean sa bhad – air sgàth thuirt e rinn chan fhaod sibh a bhith freagairt cheistean – na truaghain bhochd nan suidhe an-sin agus nuair a tha thu deiseil, gheibh iad greiseag bheag 'son sgrìobhadh sa Bheurla cha robh sinn ach air leasan no dhà a dhèanamh nuair a thòisich sinn ag eadar-theangachadh agus ga thoirt dhaibh ann am Beurla. Ciamar a bha na truaghain dol a dh'ionnsachadh mur an robh e ann am Beurla aca?" (Ùlpan tutor)

"You tend to emphasise them when you're delivering the course, so if you're saying 'Bha cidsin againn', which was last night's unit, em, you're saying 'remember bha, it's a bh, it's a v sound, remember this, it's a bha, not a tha, what does 'bha' mean,? Is it present tense, is it future tense, is it past tense? They'll go, 'oh, it's the past tense'. That's not part of Ùlpan. I'll do that because I think it's a little thing that's missing ...(…)… All you're doing is emphasising points that you think are coming up time and time again, and they might not be getting, for example, really emphasise the 'm' in bh' agam." (Ùlpan tutor)

9.7.8 It becomes clear from interviews, and from our classroom observations, that tutors draw on their experience and beliefs to adapt what is taught, by:

- Being selective about which games to use;

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- Substituting vocabulary; and,

- Omitting grammatical structures.

As well as how it is being taught:

- Providing English translations of phrases, at times when it is not scripted to do so;

- Providing grammar handouts, which they have prepared themselves or which are part of the tutor learning materials, and;

- Answering questions in depth in English about the embedded structure of the unit.

This is because they felt these actions to be necessary for the effective management of student learning.

9.7.9   An alternative or additional way of providing for individual learner differences is through the use of revision sessions. In addition to the expectation that students engage in up to ten hours of self-study for every Ùlpan unit, Deiseal recommends as good practice to tutors, a dedicated revision class every four units. The Ùlpan tutor is recommended to use, for example, the previous three units' 'games' as a basis for a one and a half hour class. This would, in effect, extend the taught course to 288 hours. Only one course provider we consulted had adopted this structure as 'standard' and even then, only for one set of learners, whose course fees were, significantly, fully subsidised by their employer. In this instance, the tutors use the student homework sheets as a basis for revision and encourage students to ask questions about grammar. Clì Gàidhlig has offered such revision courses at the end of longer blocks, or levels, of tuition for example, in order to maintain motivation and promote continuity to the next level, when it becomes available. However, the relatively low provision of revision classes is reflected in the survey findings: only 14 percent of students had attended classes for revising the content of previous units.

9.7.10 Our research tells us that, as their experience of teaching Ùlpan progresses, course providers and tutors are beginning to introduce a variety of 'revision' or 'complementary' classes in response to their students' needs. These are not necessarily based on Ùlpan course materials. They include classes which focus on developing students conversational skills; classes which focus on language form and grammar; and classes which specifically address literacy development. Whereas some revision classes follow the lesson plans of earlier units, including classes which revisit the games of earlier units, other tutors we interviewed offer

revision classes which do not use the content of Ùlpan at all or which diverge from its core pedagogical principles. For example, one tutor has used dictation and transcription as a revision tool for students to develop their writing skills.

9.7.11 We are told that conversational classes are being offered in Inverness, Edinburgh and Perthshire to help address the lack of informal activities for learners, and the absence of conversation-based activities in the Ùlpan class structure. One provider identified the need for a structured conversation class mid-way through Level 2, and the relevant class alternates between a taught Ùlpan unit and a structured conversation class, to which any adult learner can attend. Another class has opted for a similar model, by alternating an Ùlpan taught unit with a conversation class and note the exceptionally high retention rate for this group. The advantage of an Ùlpan tutor (in these cases, the same tutor who takes the class) is that the tutor can structure the class based what has been taught in previous Ùlpan units. Using this structure means the Ùlpan course will take twice as long and, depending on the course scheduling, the delivery can be less intense.

9.7.12 When revision classes are designed by the Ùlpan tutor, s/he is responsible for innovation and creative teaching approaches. This means that revision classes are reliant on the teacher having good pedagogic practice and teaching skills. Tutors with less teaching experience are less likely to have the confidence to prepare their own material or to hold less structured revision classes which give students' an opportunity to ask, for example, grammatical questions which the tutor might not feel qualified to answer.

9.8 Accreditation

9.8.1 Deiseal has been working with SQA to progress accreditation of the course against new SQA single skills language units for Speaking. Until recently, language accreditation by the Scottish Qualifications Agency (SQA) was based on a combination of the four key language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. The launch of Single Skills Units for language by the SQA has enabled Ùlpan units 1 – 24 to be mapped onto the Gaelic Speaking National Units at Level 3 – 5, and separate Assessment Support Packs (ASPs) have been developed in collaboration between the SQA and Deiseal for this purpose. To date, the only provider offering accreditation of Ùlpan through these National Units is Lews Castle College.

9.8.2　Whilst it is not a flaw that Ùlpan has been designed to focus on oral/aural proficiency, rather than literacy skills, this decision does have some implications for accreditation. The existing single skills assessment units designed by SQA, and with catered options for Ùlpan students at National 3, 4, 5 means that those who have completed a Level of study in Ùlpan can seek accreditation of their learning by sitting a short assessment in either speaking, listening/understanding, reading, and/or writing. It is not required that these students participate in assessments in combinations of areas, which means that a learner who has gained proficiency in speaking Gaelic through Ùlpan, but who is unable to write the language is able to gain accreditation for their learning.

9.8.3　However, in interview with the Director of Deiseal, it was indicated to researchers that discussions are underway to extend accreditation of learning through the Ùlpan programme to SCQF level 7 at Glasgow University, via the Centre for Open Studies. There are logistic issues that need to be addressed as this is taken forward – there may be concerns centring upon the double-accreditation of the same course of learning at SCQF levels 3, 4, 5 via SQA and at level 7 through Glasgow University. Whilst it is acknowledged that languages learning at the HE level can be *ab initio* and, therefore, have overlap with the expected outcomes at lower levels of the SCQF, Ùlpan may be one of the first commercial programmes being accredited by both the SQA and a HEI across multiple levels of the SCQF for the same learning outcomes.

9.8.4　Related to this, accrediting Ùlpan at SCQF level 7 via a university will require that university to undertake careful investigation of course outcomes, addressing the role of literacy development overtly in these considerations. It may be the case, and Deiseal has indicated a willingness and desire to consider this possibility, that additional materials and units are required to be created to help support learners in their literacy development if the programme is to be accredited at SCQF levels 7 and above. If Ùlpan were to be brought to other HEIs, these same discussions would need to be held within the relevant structural bodies to ensure the programme designed by Deiseal meets internal quality standards, in addition to standards set by the SCQF.

9.9　Summary

9.9.1　Students generally enjoy the active role they have in Ùlpan classes, but they are frustrated by the lack of opportunity for conversation. Whilst a focus on developing 'fluency practice' of conversational or novel speech is not, in itself, a

shortcoming in the course (particularly at earlier stages of learning), the findings strongly suggest that the course structure, which is based predominantly on scripted patterns and carefully structured activities, is not in itself meeting the needs of the adult learning population it is seeking to target. That is, in context of limited opportunities to reinforce oral skills in daily life, language attainment from a Gaelic course for adults is likely to be strengthened by a lesson structure which gives an opportunity for the exchange of genuine information, spontaneous speech and greater opportunities for extended speech.

9.9.2   The focus on pronunciation and authentic sounds and prosody is highly valued by some learners, who find the focus on pronunciation "liberating" and revelatory. The course is not entirely successful in teaching authentic speech, however, because it includes some high register content and unusual use of vocabulary and idiom. The course requires some re-orientation, particularly at the upper levels, to be aligned with the learning proficiency targets and the needs of the Gaelic learner. The reason for this disjuncture relates to the use of (all) structures contained in a syllabus designed to teach high levels of proficiency in all four language skills.

9.9.3   One compromise made when structuring a course using language structures is that not all the language learned will be the most useful for everyday communicative contexts. This can cause some students to become disenfranchised. Moreover, despite the usefulness of fluency practice through drilling, a common theme is that learners feel they do not have the grammatical understanding to transform patterns being taught through drilling and activities into novel contexts.

9.9.4   Tutors work hard to accommodate these individual differences in learning styles in their class room teaching. They also adapt the course to reflect their preferred teaching style and their beliefs about how languages are best learned. Revision lessons and complementary classes are gradually being provided in order to attend to learner differences that would, if addressed in class, conflict with the pedagogical principles of Ùlpan. Ùlpan tutors do not necessarily have experience in designing and teaching revision classes. The next, and penultimate, section explores further the tutor experience and identifies avenues for improving systems of support for tutors.

10. Tutor Engagement and Support

10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 Previous reviews of the GfA sector (e.g. CNAG/Clì, 1992; MacCaluim, 2007; Pollock, 2008; McLeod *et al.*, 2010) have identified, in addition to a shortage of tutors, the following weaknesses:

- A partly amateur workforce, who have not had the opportunity to receive training in teaching Gaelic as an additional language;
- Variable standards of teaching, as a result of limited professionalisation of the tutor workforce;
- Inconsistent methods used by tutors, who have not had any training; and,
- An ageing workforce.

An inherent problem has been an absence of training, or a qualification, for teaching Gaelic as an additional language and an absence of consistent means of disseminating information and good practice among practitioners.

10.1.2 It is against this background that the public sector has invested in Ùlpan to train a body of tutors using a uniform and pedagogically coherent methodology. Policy stakeholders and Deiseal stress that Ùlpan has two products: a course for teaching Gaelic and course to train tutors, which can together, create capacity to generate new speakers.

10.1.3 As outlined in Section 6.3, in June 2013 there were 187 tutors trained and accredited as Ùlpan tutors, of which 72 percent are classified by Deiseal as having 'begun to teach'. There is some ambiguity over how many tutors are actively teaching Ùlpan classes; this partly arises because of the sporadic and part-time nature of tutoring and the fluctuating student numbers which results in non-continuity of provision. Clì Gàidhlig, who recruit tutors to deliver weekend classes and short courses, estimate there to be only 30 active tutors (pers. comm.). According to Deiseal, 51 percent of accredited tutors are L1 speakers and 63 percent are female. The gender balance is more equal than in, for example, the BAC where 70 percent of tutors are female (NPDE, 2010). In the BAC country 89 percent of tutors in the BAC have degree qualifications, which reflect the HABE commitment to increasingly professionalisation of the Basque for adults sector. In Wales, all Welsh language tutors are required to hold a teaching qualification or equivalent experience. The Ùlpan tutor accreditation is designed, in contrast, to be accessible, and is underpinned by the following ideology:

> *"We think that keeping it to the elite, who have a degree in Gaelic or whatever, is not the way for Gaelic right now. We need, you know, 500 teachers today, to be teaching 5000 and off we go. We can start to do something over 10 years with reversing the numbers. This is about mass production, it's about creating work, and in some ways the (training) course itself is an add-on to getting more Gaels motivated and politicised and involved in the regeneration of Gaelic." (Stiùiriche, Deiseal)*

10.1.4 The course requires no prior experience of teaching Gaelic as an additional language, and no language specialisation. The approach to training, as described in Section 5.5, means the body of Ùlpan tutors is highly diverse in terms of age, teaching skills, language skills and interpersonal skills. This means that, despite the uniformity of the course, tutor beliefs and practices are still likely to affect learner experiences and outcomes.

10.2 Research interviews

10.2.1 The researchers conducted a series of interviews with Ùlpan tutors, and analysed the data in order to identify common themes and experiences. Fifteen Ùlpan tutors were interviewed, including some tutors who are no longer active. The tutors were purposively sampled to ensure that: a) both first and second language users of Gaelic are represented; b) opinions and experiences were gained from those with minimal and extensive Gaelic tutoring experience; and c) insights were gained from tutors with teaching experience in a range of locations throughout Scotland. These interviews identified four main categories of active tutors:

- Category 1: Professional Gaelic language teachers: Gaelic teachers in the further and higher education sector, who are experienced in teaching Gaelic and who use Ùlpan and other methods to teach Gaelic skills;

- Category 2: Gaelic language workers: tutors who use Gaelic as a key productive skill in their main job, and who teach Ùlpan on a part-time basis either as part of their main job, or as employees of third-party organisations;

- Category 3: Young Gaelic-speaking graduates/students, who have studied Gaelic or are studying Gaelic as part of their degree, and teach Ùlpan independently and/or for third-party organisations;

- Category 4: Older native Gaelic speakers, who have varying degrees of experience of teaching, and teach Ùlpan for third-party organisations.

10.2.2 These are not exhaustive or exclusive categories: in addition to the above, are several independent tutors, who may contract with Clì Gàidhlig in order to secure ILAs for their students, and tutors who dip in and out of Ùlpan to supplement other income and work. With the exception of the first category, tutors might

have no or extensive prior experience of teaching Gaelic as an additional language to adults; some are native speakers whereas others have learnt the language to varying levels. Such variation in tutor experience will mean that a range of incentives and support needs are likely to exist.

10.3 Tutor training

10.3.1 Interviewees held the common view that the tutor training was very worthwhile and prepared them well for delivering Ùlpan. All tutors found the practise-based nature of the training to be demanding, at times highly stressful, but generally very useful. Whilst tutors typically found the feedback from the observer invaluable, some felt that the manner in which guidance was delivered when teaching students was undermining. In addition to developing knowledge and familiarity of how to deliver the lessons according to the schedule, tutors told us that found the training helpful for learning how to use intonation and body language to communicate. They were also introduced to the pedagogical principles of Ùlpan.

10.3.2 It was noted that the option for skills conference training offered greater flexibility, as it has enabled tutors who are working full-time to undertake training more easily, and to fit their practise-based training in to their already busy schedules.

10.4 Tutor motivation and retention

10.4.1 We found that the motivations for teaching Ùlpan varied amongst interviewees; several had funded their own training, but most had been sponsored. For young graduates/students the motivation for teaching Ùlpan included instrumental factors, and the payment from third-party organisations was felt to be fair and appropriate. Professional language teachers, and several Gaelic language workers, were teaching Ùlpan as part of their job, or as an adjunct, and financial remuneration was less important. Older native speakers were not instrumentally motivated, but they told us how they enjoyed the social contact and challenge of teaching Gaelic, and enjoyed using their skills to fulfil a valuable role in the community. They derived, therefore, considerable satisfaction from their tutoring work.

10.4.2 The tutors we spoke with all enjoyed teaching Ùlpan and the active format of classes. The social contact and the relationships they had with learners were important to them. When instrumental motivations were insignificant, we found

that continuity of teaching was explained by a personal commitment to students; and the knowledge that, for many classes, a replacement tutor would be difficult to find. Several tutors we spoke to perceived themselves as 'gap filling', as they were concerned that should they stop, the Ùlpan class could not continue, leaving learners without alternative learning options. This suggests that the good will of tutors is very important for ensuring continuity of provision in many parts of rural Scotland in particular.

10.4.3 The tutors we interviewed had tutored Ùlpan on a part-time basis, and typically had delivered no more than three classes a week (e.g. six hours). They highlighted that the active, intensive nature of the teaching meant that teaching more than three classes was not attractive; even should they have the time. They pointed out that they were engaged, for up to two hour's duration, in a performance, which was mentally and physically draining, albeit good fun. Four of the tutors we interviewed were not currently teaching, and cited the following reasons:

- Dwindling student numbers locally;
- Growing tired of the teaching load;
- A change in personal circumstances, such as a new job.

Several more told us that they would shortly 'retire' from teaching Ùlpan as they were unhappy with the terms and conditions of the new contracts, which they had recently received from Deiseal.

10.5 Tutor employment and conditions

10.5.1 The majority of tutors use Ùlpan teaching income to supplement their main income, which is derived from either full-time employment or from self-employment. As such, tutors typically fit in their classes in their evenings and weekends or around other commitments in the day – or even the year. The vision underpinning the original business model has not been fully realised; only seven tutors have worked independently as a sole-trader in Scotland, and only five are understood to currently do so. The majority are, therefore, employed by a course provider. This avoids administration of a class and bearing the financial risk. These are two key factors which we are told deter tutors from working independently: the others are the initial start-up costs (particularly the cost and time required to print, cut and laminate the course materials); lack of business guidance or pedagogical support; and the reliance on registered ILA providers, to facilitate learners' accessing ILA funding.

10.5.2 The relationship students have with their tutor/s is fundamental to the success, or otherwise of Ùlpan. This is recognised by key informants, who attributed the success of Ùlpan not only, or even, to the Ùlpan method, but to tutors' professionalism and dedication to their students. It is also reflected in the findings from our student survey, as reported in Section 7. We found that tutors often go above and beyond what the basic Ùlpan model expects of them, and in many cases, what they are being paid for. Examples include:

- Building a rapport with their students through informal introductions and exchange of news, prior to the class starting;
- Initiating and encouraging informal learning events and extra-curricular activities;
- Taking student worksheets home for marking, or dedicating time at the start or end of class to collectively go through the homework;
- Taking time at the end of a class to take and answer questions, which can significantly extend the class time beyond 1.5 hours;
- Preparing e-learning teaching or support materials, and answering questions via email from home.

10.5.3 Whereas there is an expectation that tutors will mark students' homework, and answer their questions after the formal class has finished, the basic Ùlpan class structure is for 1.5 hours. In recognition of the length of time it takes to deliver some of the units well, and to answer questions and give feedback on homework, some course providers run, and fund, 2-hour long classes. For those working independently, or who work for third-party organisation that pay tutors for 1.5 hours of class delivery as outlined in the Ùlpan structure, tutors give this support in-kind, if they choose to. Several such tutors feel this is unjust. This is resented when, for example, the primary benefit (and rationale) for delivering a course through a third-party organisation is to facilitate students' access to ILA funding. The new Ùlpan Tutor Employer Agreement was seen by one interviewee as affording some protection from exploitation by course providers e.g. when employed by service level agreements or sessional hour contracts.

10.5.4 Tutors who were employed on zero-hour contracts, on the other hand, have significantly better terms and conditions with their third-party organisation, and effectively, receive the same benefits as other employees. The different payment structures being used across providers is likely to lead to different approaches to student support; this assertion is supported by the findings of our students' survey (see Section 7): 40 percent of learners told us that they did not have an

opportunity at the end of the class to ask questions, and 47 percent of learners told us they did not have the opportunity to get feedback on their homework, for example.

10.5.5 A variation in tutor status also leads to variation in their access to teaching tools and access to materials. Tutors on zero-hour contracts, for example, can access virtual learning environments in the FE/HE sector, and we heard how tutors used these resources for their own benefit, and for their students. Some classroom environments are high tech, and give tutors access to, for example, interactive whiteboards, whereas others enforce the 'low tech' model which Deiseal specifies (e.g. which recommends white boards or flip charts and pens). Tutors who are employed full-time by third party providers have access to high quality, industrial printers and laminators, whereas others do not. These differences may not, in practice, lead to variation in the quality of the teaching, but, they have created some resentment amongst tutors who feel at a disadvantage by not having such tools. This also reflects some frustration at the 'low tech' model which Ùlpan uses to teach.

10.6 Tutor language skills

10.6.1 The guidance for tutors applying to train as Ùlpan tutors is that they are fluent in speaking Gaelic, but litera[cy is not essential. The scope of the course, and the use of reading and writing on the board in every class, means, however, that in practice tutors need to have a relatively good standard of speaking, listening, reading *and* writing skills. One tutor explained to us:

> *"We were told you didn't need to be able to read or write Gaelic but what are you into straight away - reading and writing! You can't do it otherwise unless you can read. There was no point saying you don't have to be able to ... however. I am still not good at spelling." (Ùlpan tutor)*

> *"We were told 'don't teach them grammar' – the pupils ask for explanations and you can't ignore it when somebody is asking. I used to go through books at home so that I could know what to say when they started asking." (Ùlpan tutor)*

10.6.2 Not all tutors we interviewed had experience of teaching Ùlpan at the upper levels. Those who did told us they found some of the material very challenging, as it was based on language patterns and structures which they did not understand and did not use in their everyday speech. The tutor notes, which go into some level of detail to explain the features contained within the target phrases in the upper units, are very complex and we found that tutors who are not language specialists struggled to understand some of the guidance:

> *"It was way beyond me. It was the linguistic explanations – absolutely way over the top!" (Ùlpan tutor)*

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As a result, several tutors told us that they used their own judgement on what to include, exclude or amend. More recently accredited tutors we interviewed had not had the opportunity to teach above Level 3, but generally they had no reservations about doing so:

"Well, sin rud a tha math ma dheidhinn. Tha an structar cha mhòr an aon rud gach clas. So, cho fad 's a tha thu a' tuigsinn na Gàidhlig a tha thu a' teagasg, cha bhi trioblaid ann." (Ùlpan tutor)

Well, that's the thing that's good about it. The structure is almost the same for each class. So, as long as you understand the Gaelic you are teaching, there won't be a problem" (Ùlpan tutor).

10.6.3 Others told us, however, that they felt their own fluency was a barrier to them teaching Ùlpan at the upper levels, and that they didn't have the confidence to do so. Other identified parts of the course as very challenging to teach, as they had to draw on *ex-ante* knowledge of phonology, for example, which not all tutors would necessarily have. One explained, "*feumaidh tuigse a bhith agad son a bhith ag innse dhaibh*" (you must have understanding in order to be able to relay to them). Tutors who had experience of learning Gaelic at University felt that the metalinguistic knowledge gained in these contexts was important in supporting their effective teaching of the course.

10.6.4 This understanding is being developed by many tutors as they teach. Through delivering the Ùlpan course, they too improve their knowledge of Gaelic grammar, develop their own fluency and confidence in speaking Gaelic, and generally increase their language proficiency:

"My grammar's not amazing, which is one of the biggest problems with tutors. They don't have a clue about grammar. With Ùlpan you don't need to worry about it. It's actually, I find I'm learning by delivering the class, reading the notes – I know what lenition is now!" (Ùlpan tutor)

The increase in tutors' language proficiency, and capacity to teach, is a positive outcome from the Ùlpan programme. Variability in tutor quality was identified as a weakness by some informants, who cited a lack of teaching experience, a lack of fluency in spoken Gaelic and a lack of maturity to take ownership of a class as reasons for extending Ùlpan tutor training. Suggestions included the active promotion of continuous professional development through refresher and top-up courses and the introduction of language proficiency assessments for entry onto an Ùlpan training course. Several suggested that the opportunity to practice delivering later levels of Ùlpan under the guidance of a tutor trainer would increase the availability of tutors willing to teach Ùlpan at upper levels.

10.7 Tutors use of materials

10.7.1 The prescriptive nature of the Ùlpan course has the advantage of reducing the level of training required by tutors, as they can follow the lesson plans using the course materials provided. This means that in training, they have to master the generic teaching skills related to class management, drilling and performing but do not need to explain how the language works or invest time in course planning and preparation. Consequently, "it doesn't frighten people who are coming to us from a lot of educational backgrounds, who happen to be Gaelic speakers, but who might not actually be able to cope with, you know, explaining grammar" (Stiùiriche, Deiseal).

10.7.2 This structure means Ùlpan training is accessible to individuals who might otherwise not have had the confidence, or the skills, to plan and teach their own course. We found that Ùlpan has succeeded in attracting a cohort of tutors, both younger and older, to teach Gaelic who would not otherwise have had the confidence to do so. The "scripted" nature of the course is highly valued because these tutors wouldn't otherwise feel they have the knowledge, time or experience to create progressive lessons themselves:

> *"The lesson plan is there, and after three or four lessons you know what you're doing. So you don't need the cards anymore. So you're not like a primary school teacher, kind of having to make it up as you go along and think too much on your feet. That's the benefit in a way. You've actually got what you need to do next written down. So you're not panicking, going 'what will I do next? The imperative, the vocative case and all that'. So I like that." (Ùlpan tutor)*

They commented how classroom control was easy with Ùlpan, as they declined to answer questions until the end, as trained to do, and then, conveniently, there is typically no time to answer questions:

> *"With Ùlpan because of the pace, you can control it so much more. And you say, actually 'good question. I'll answer that at the end. And then you forget about it. And that's [the Ùlpan trainer] that tells you to do that. But by going through the pace of Ùlpan you avoid that conflict so that people can't say to you '... this ... oh I was here and I was going this ... and what's the vocative case of this – I don't know!" (Ùlpan tutor)*

As such, tutors are afforded some protection from exposing any gaps in their own knowledge to their students, or having to invest in grammatical learning themselves.

10.7.3 There is no parity between tutors in terms of the time and financial investment required to prepare the course materials, however. As already noted, the majority have been sponsored by an organisation to undertake training and some tutors have had the fortune to be employed or affiliated to an organisation which has received public funding to create a bank of Ùlpan course materials. In

such cases, the distribution of materials is facilitated and funded by the organisation, and not the individual. If this is not the case, however, tutors need to prepare the materials themselves. The general consensus is that preparing course materials is highly onerous and time-consuming, and a deterrent to commencing, and continuing, with Ùlpan:

> *"You've got an hour and a half of delivery, plus you've only got half an hour or thereabouts to print all the stuff off, on your own printer, cut it all out and make sure that it works for your class." (Ùlpan tutor)*

> *"What an amount of work in cutting out the games! And you need a car!" (Ùlpan tutor)*

Regardless of whether tutors have access to a bank of materials, or are responsible for creating the materials themselves, the system for distributing updated materials appears to be somewhat ineffective. As we go on to explain, this is because the system is dependent upon tutors having the knowledge and the will to update the materials which they, or their organisation, have already invested significant resources in developing.

10.8 Tutor support systems

10.8.1 We note that tutors typically feel that information isn't communicated to them about changes to Lesson Plans, for example, as the units are revised and improved. Tutors that have prepared their own materials some time ago, or who are using materials purchased by their course-provider, have no need to visit the online tutor resources to download tutor notes. Several told us that they would unwilling to make the investment in preparing revised materials, given it is such an onerous and demanding task. One tutor explained:

> *"But tha na h-aonadan agam uile deiseal nis shuas gu (aonad) 72, so tha iad uile ann am bogsa, so tha mi dìreach a' cleachdadh sin, ach ag innse na fìrinn, tha mi a' smaoineachadh gu bheil cuid de na h-aonadan air atharrachadh is chan eil mise ag atharrachadh dad air sgàth 's gu bheil an stuth agamsa deiseal co-dhiù". (Ùlpan tutor)*

> *"My units are all prepared up to (unit) 72, so they are all in a box. So I'm just using that, but to tell the truth, I think that some of the units have changed and I'm not changing anything because all my material is already prepared." (Ùlpan tutor)*

Other tutors have gone online to download, for example, student resources for their next class only to discover that the next edition of the unit has been made available: and that have little time in advance of the class to print, cut and laminate the new materials.

10.8.2 The level of contact between tutors and the licensor is highly variable, and it appears dependent on how well the tutor knows staff of Deiseal prior to becoming a tutor. Several tutors described how they had no relationship with

Deiseal. They depended instead on other Ùlpan tutors, who either worked for the same provider or who they know from their Gaelic networks. These tutors told us they felt they couldn't approach Deiseal for clarification, support or guidance. This, they told us, is because they felt uncomfortable in revealing what they perceived to be gaps or weaknesses in their knowledge; or had negative experiences of seeking support from Deiseal in the past.

10.8.3 Such tutors saw this distance in both in positive and negative terms. They felt, on the one hand, glad that the company hadn't used their right to conduct checks on the delivery of their classes and, on the other hand, neglected and unappreciated. They told us how hard they worked to deliver the course in an enthusiastic, lively and active manner and to ensure it was a success, but that they felt this effort was not being acknowledged or appreciated by the licensor. They also identified that an absence of checks had implications for quality control:

"Do you know that in the 6 years no-body has ever, ever come to see what I am doing? I find that most odd! I'm not wanting them to – don't get me wrong – but nobody has come to see what we are doing. We could be doing anything!" (Ùlpan tutor)

This was also a key concern for course providers, who suggested that the lack of active quality assurance had the potential to undermine the benefits of the Ùlpan delivery model. One key informant told us:

"They were going to have this quality assurance; they were promised that they would be visited every six months. And they've never been visited at all. So basically they were trained, set in motion, and Deiseal have nothing to do with them after that. They've never been to their class, never, nothing. There's no quality assurance." (Course provider)

10.8.4 This, we are told, has contributed to a high level of tutor attrition. Without sufficient support to create a class, manage a class, and interpret materials, inactive tutors are unlikely to begin teaching. Whilst Clì Gàidhlig and now Deiseal have sought to provide such support, it has not always been possible to co-ordinate, as highlighted above in Section 6.3.6.

10.8.5 Typically, although there are known exceptions, the tutors who do start to teach Ùlpan are employed by a third-party organisation on a sessional or fractional contract soon after completing their training (or are already employed by the organisation). There is little incentive for tutors to work as sole-traders and, should there be, there is no business development guidance tailored to their needs.

10.9 Feedback into Ùlpan development

10.9.1 Key informants identified the need for a formal mechanism for *tutors* to give feedback to the course owner, Deiseal, based on opinions and suggestions gained from students or from tutor experience. Several scenarios emerged from interviews with tutors. Some tutors have a close relationship with the director or employees of Deiseal and give feedback informally and make suggestions for change when asked, which they feel are generally well received. Tutors at Lews Castle College are explicitly requested to provide feedback, and find that this feedback is well received and has led to amendments in the course. On the other hand, some tutors' have given unsolicited feedback and describe how they feel disappointed when their feedback is not acknowledged, discussed or acted upon.

10.9.2 Moreover, there is no clear division of responsibility for eliciting feedback directly from *students* and acting upon this feedback. Several course providers seek formal feedback as part of wider monitoring mechanisms (including the need to elicit feedback for reporting on GLAIF funding), and use this to inform their own course planning and classroom practices. Other course providers rely on tutors to feedback informally or by using anecdotal evidence, and use this feedback to inform their planning. Some providers mention the fact that their existing evaluation forms aren't appropriate to the Ùlpan course or that they have other reasons not to seek feedback:

> *"Tha feagal oirnn cha mhòr, tha sinn gu math misneachail gum bi na beachdan gu math positive, ach tha feagal oirnn gun tig beachdan air ais nach eil cho taiceil. Agus an uair sin tha sinn a' dol gu ceist a thaobh maoineachadh." (Course provider)*

> *"We are concerned, almost, we are very optimistic that the opinions [of students] will be very positive, but we are worried that we receive opinions that aren't so supportive. And then, we are going to a question about funding support." (Course provider)*

10.9.3 And some expect Deiseal to take responsibility for eliciting student feedback as part of their quality control procedures. The absence of clear lines of responsibility for eliciting feedback directly from students can lead to nobody eliciting feedback at all. One learner commented in their survey return:

> *"Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback. I'm used to being asked for feedback at the end of a course or session, and have been disappointed that no feedback has been elicited until now."*

These findings suggest that a standard Ùlpan student feedback process would be beneficial.

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10.10 Summary

10.10.1   Tutors are enthusiastic about teaching Ùlpan and enjoy the social and active format of its delivery. Having access to prepared materials, and clear lesson plans, are highly valued and enable many tutors, who would not otherwise have the knowledge of confidence to teach, to tutor learners in Gaelic.

10.10.2   Tutors have highly variable levels of support, and are often dependent upon informal support mechanisms. Tutors who need the most support are those who are less literate; have little experience of teaching; and, who have the need for support in teaching pronunciation and grammatically complex structures. Continued professional development is needed in order to support these tutors.

10.10.3   Currently, support to tutors is not sufficiently accessible or systematic. The new online support system offers the means by which to create new mechanisms for communicating changes to active tutors, and for active tutors to give feedback to the course authors. This should be utilised to its full potential.

10.10.4   Some tutors do feel isolated and would gain greater confidence in their work if they had more direct support, feedback and assurance from Deiseal, over their delivery of the course. Key informants also called for a greater level of quality assurance.

11. Conclusions

11.1 Course management and delivery

11.1.1 The Ùlpan programme is addressing a real need in the GfA sector by offering a comprehensive pathway for adults to learn Gaelic in the community. Generally, stakeholders have a confidence in the Ùlpan product, and they believe that the uniform curriculum, progression through structured learning and the potential intensity of learning is highly beneficial and appropriate to the needs of the Gaelic community. Stakeholders hold, however, expectations of proficiency outcomes which are way above what would normally be expected of a course of 216 teacher contact hours. The absence of published learning outcomes for Ùlpan, for the overall course or at each Ùlpan 'level', contribute to such unrealistic expectations.

11.1.2 There has been an historical absence of clear functional boundaries between Deiseal and third-party organisations that provide Ùlpan, which means that basic administrative data on registration, progression and learner outcomes has not been collected.

11.1.3 There is uncertainty over the effectiveness of the structure of delivery. The original delivery model, based on self-employed tutors supplying Ùlpan on a commercial basis, has not been fully realised. Rather, tutors are typically employed or contracted to third-party organisations, primarily Local Authorities and FE/HE bodies, that have experience of delivering Gaelic courses to adults and which can often absorb the administrative overheads. Each provider has adopted different scheduling patterns, to reflect variations in available funding, local demand and existing organisations structures.

11.1.4 Consequently, the provision of Ùlpan has been highly variable and often not continuous, as providers struggle to generate sufficient student numbers as the course progresses. When a class roll hits 'tipping point' the provider will typically have to wait until at least one other cohort reaches that unit. Unsurprisingly, therefore, only half of Ùlpan students are satisfied with the availability of Ùlpan for their level; and we know of many students who have repeated levels in order to avoid losing their skills or motivation, whilst they await the next level to be provided.

11.1.5 Achieving the economies of scale has been possible in Stornoway, where the local Council and Lews Castle College work in partnership to offer free places to

Council staff, who account for 58 percent of all enrolments. Highland Council, Clì Gàidhlig (in Edinburgh and Coatbridge), and several smaller organisations have also succeeded in providing all 144 units of Ùlpan. Glasgow University's Centre for Open Studies is likely to achieve these economies of scale in the near future, by working in partnership with organisations able to subsidise their employees' learning, through work-based learning models.

11.1.6 The new minimum model of delivery places terms and conditions on how third-party sector organisations deliver Ùlpan, and in doing so, seeks to address the uneven nature of its delivery to date. The pedagogical reasons for encouraging more intensive learning are sound, but the realities on the ground mean that this ideal is difficult to implement, particularly in parts of rural Scotland and in areas where demand for learning Gaelic is currently relatively low. The stringent conditions attached to its delivery is off-putting to some course providers, which would prefer to be able to retain some flexibility in delivery. This is felt to be necessary due to the funding model being used to underpin its delivery.

11.1.7 The funding issues identified by McLeod *et al.* (2010) in their review of GfA provision still remain. There is a lack of transparency over how GfA is funded in Scotland, and as such, the complex funding structures which providers use to support Ùlpan's delivery across the country make it impossible to compare the cost-effectiveness of the current model to any alternative.

11.1.8 Whilst public investment in Ùlpan has created a nationally accessible curriculum for Gaelic adult learning in Scotland, it is controlled by the sole share-holder of the company which owns it. Its delivery, however, requires a strong collaborative approach between independent tutors, third-party organisations and funders, which is based on a shared understanding of the needs of the Gaelic learner community and shared ownership of the programme. This is currently lacking.

11.1.9 The following recommendations are offered:

- Overall intended learning outcomes be published for the course, and the term 'functional fluency' explained, for the benefit of course providers as well as students;
- The number of hours of self-directed learning be reviewed, to take into account of (a) the intensity of scheduling, and; (b) the ratio of self-directed learning to taught class time in other comparable language contexts; and for this to be published along with the above intended learning outcomes;

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- Bòrd na Gàidhlig explore the value of an audit of the public funding being used to support GfA courses, including Ùlpan;

- Information gained from such an audit of GfA funding be used to inform the development of a funding structure for GfA which can be accessed by any course provider to subsidise the provision of GfA classes, and which can support an intensive (e.g. 3 hours a week) delivery schedule as well as less intensive course schedules;

- Deiseal maintain comprehensive administrative data and work in partnership with course providers to achieve data on learner outcomes and experiences;

- The effectiveness of the new Ùlpan minimum model of delivery in delivering Gaelic learning to adults be subject to internal and external review in due course.

11.2 Course impacts

11.2.1 The Ùlpan programme has had the positive effect of increasing the availability of Gaelic tuition in many parts of Scotland, by training tutors who might not otherwise have had the confidence to teach Gaelic. Locally, local authorities and other third-party organisations have worked hard to administer courses and support tutors to create, manage, and maintain classes. Most providers have succeeded in attracting a level of external public funding to do so.

11.2.2 As such, Ùlpan has been successful in reaching new learners in Scotland as well as attracting lapsed learners. Interestingly, only 33 percent of learners surveyed were attracted to learn Gaelic through Ùlpan because of nature of the course; 46.8 percent of learners' choice to learn Gaelic with Ùlpan was guided mainly by availability.

11.2.3 The lack of continuity of provision is reflected in patterns by which learners access Ùlpan. The majority of Gaelic learners are part-way through Ùlpan and, although 57 percent intend to finish Ùlpan at some point, 31 percent of these learners had not attended a class in 2013. Ùlpan is not even the main method for 34 percent of learners, reflecting the fact that many learners use multiple Gaelic learning options, to fit around the competing demands of work and family life.

11.2.4 We found that Ùlpan is successful in developing learners' reading skills, as well as their speaking skills, despite it not aiming to do so. The level of previous learning and simultaneous learning through other methods makes it impossible to accurately attribute learning outcomes to Ùlpan alone.

11.2.5 Notwithstanding, the self-assessment scales used to measure attainment found that 85.7 percent of learners who receive approximately 160 hours of Ùlpan class time reach a level of proficiency in spoken production that we would expect; and 75.7 percent reach a level of spoken interaction that we would expect. This highlights that learners' conversational skills are not as strong as their ability to construct monolingual speech, based on learnt patterns. Learners who commence learning Gaelic with Ùlpan are much less likely to reach this level. Overall, therefore, the data suggest that the average Ùlpan 'graduate' with no previous knowledge of Gaelic will reach A2 on the CEFR scale, which is described as a 'basic user' who can make 'short exchanges' and 'simple transactions'. We identify that this is not only because of their starting point, but because their social networks are weaker, and they have less opportunity to use Gaelic outside the classroom. This highlights the need for GfA provision to include informal learning activities which connect all types of learners.

11.2.6 This takes us to our final point on language outcomes, which is on learners' use of Gaelic outside of class. We found that 54.6 percent of learners do not use Gaelic on a daily or weekly basis. The existing support systems for students, whether learning Gaelic with Ùlpan and/or through other forms of structured learning, are insufficient to support students' out of class use.

11.2.7 We offer the following recommendations:
- The Ùlpan course supports and encourages students to organise extra-curricular and informal learning activities;
- Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Deiseal and partners work together to identify ways to support Ùlpan learners to build networks with other Ùlpan learners using e-learning platforms and different modes of communication, and with other Gaelic learners locally.

11.3 Course design

11.3.1 The Ùlpan course has a clear pedagogic approach to teaching and learning, which has clear benefits to some learners. Learners who value learning through aural input first and foremost; are turned off by grammar and literary forms of learning; and, who are motivated by the progress that they make through

memorisation of new language structures and phrases benefit from the Ùlpan approach. 28 percent of learners in our survey had opted to discontinue learning with Ùlpan, and for 50.1 percent of these, the method of learning was cited as a reason.

11.3.2 The course content, structure and class atmosphere has a very positive effect on learners' class room motivation, which is a very important factor for adult language acquisition. Most learners really enjoy their Ùlpan classes, intend to complete the course, and are enthusiastic about learning Gaelic through Ùlpan – this is also a reflection of their energetic and enthusiastic teachers.

11.3.3 The course itself is organised around language structures and patterns, and the activities are based around tasks which enable learners to practise these structures and patterns. The structure is very rigid, which has benefits to some learners and to tutors, but its rigidity and uniformity across the course mean that there is very little class activity which gives opportunity for 'free speech' and for the exchange of personalised information and conversation. Conversation was a key component of earlier *ulpan* programmes, and conversation is supported in other equivalent courses for beginners in minority language contexts. Many learners feel that this is needed to support their ability to produce spontaneous speech. The lack of opportunities to speak Gaelic outside of class time further supports this finding.

11.3.4 Ùlpan does not aim to accommodate a diverse range of learner differences, but it is attracting a diverse range of students. Whilst the course aims to be accessible, and targets people who want to learn to speak Gaelic at home or at work, the majority of learners' do not fall into this category. The learner body is generally older, more educated and less likely to have an opportunity to speak Gaelic whilst learning than Gaelic learners in earlier studies. Learners who are higher educated are less satisfied with how well Ùlpan teaches Gaelic. Such learners are most likely to benefit from writing as a way to support their learning, and are more likely to want explanation of language structures as a means to generate understanding. As a result of these diverse preferences, some students can feel that their learning is being compromised by the exclusion of note-taking, and it can be common for tutors to introduce English into class-room teaching to support such students (as well as to facilitate the management of the games).

11.3.5 To accommodate learner differences, and in response to learners' calls for more conversation and other forms of support, tutors and course providers are gradually establishing a range of revision, or complementary classes, which are not necessarily based on Ùlpan materials or which follow the Ùlpan pedagogical approach. Tutors become, therefore, responsible for innovative teaching. The quality of revision classes is reliant on teachers having good pedagogic practice and teaching skills.

11.3.6 We offer the following recommendations in the area of course delivery for consideration:

- The lesson structure is revised to give earlier opportunity for non-scripted speech, based on the exchange of genuine, personal information. This is recommended from the earliest units onwards, but the opportunity for extended speech in class activities should increase as students' language skills develop;

- Learner milestones be introduced, to help to motivate learners to complete the course, particularly in the absence of assessment;

- Measures are undertaken to better support tutors to design and deliver revision class, which are coherent with the content and approaches of the units taught. Online resources for revision classes, and guidance on revision activities and class design would support quality control;

- Simple explanations of key grammar points and patterns are provided in paper format, as well as online format, to all students, as part of the course materials. A paper format means that all learners, who might not consider themselves to benefit from, or understand grammar, have sight of this potentially useful resource;

- The course materials for teaching Ùlpan be centrally produced, and distributed by Deiseal, to ensure parity of materials for all learners, and to support tutors to start teaching following accreditation.

11.4 Course quality

11.4.1 The Ùlpan tutor training course is for any fluent speaker, but literacy is not a requisite. Our research has found that delivery of the course requires good reading and good writing skills, as well as knowledge of high register language structures. Whilst tutors are mainly enthusiastic about teaching Ùlpan, and many derive satisfaction from teaching Gaelic, they do not always feel comfortable

teaching what they do not necessarily understand or use themselves in their everyday speech.

11.4.2 Connectedly, because the tutor accreditation and delivery system encourages any speaker to teach, the body of Ùlpan tutors is highly diverse in terms of experience, beliefs about how to teach language and skills. The current lesson plans for tutors include guidance which uses very specialised grammatical terms and linguistic concepts, including phonological concepts. This format is not accessible to many tutors, who either choose to ignore the guidance or lose confidence in their own ability. These factors affect how tutors deliver the course and they also mean that tutors have different support needs. These support needs are not being addressed currently. This could affect tutor retention.

11.4.3 Notwithstanding, the quality of Ùlpan tutors is identified as one of the strengths of Ùlpan by learners and by course providers. Yet, whilst 85 percent of learners believe their last Ùlpan course was taught well or very well, only 53 percent believe Ùlpan teaches Gaelic well or very well. The discrepancy suggests that the learning preferences, desires and needs of many learners are not being fully met by Ùlpan.

11.4.4 The course gives a reasonable representation of 'standard' Gaelic. However our research found that, in addition to learning authentic natural speech, students in the upper levels are being taught high register language patterns, more common for the written form. This disjuncture between the language skills which the course aims to teach, and the content, is an area which needs improvement.

11.4.5 The course would benefit from measures to increase quality assurance in many areas, and we make the following recommendations:
- The course is externally reviewed by several native speakers, to identify errors and any inappropriate use of vocabulary, idiom or structure;
- A standardised and systematic feedback process is implemented, to gain feedback from students and from tutors, which is then communicated effectively to course providers. A combination of online and traditional paper feedback should be considered;
- Measures are introduced to review tutor practice and to support the sharing of good practice; and that this is combined with an opportunity for students to nominate their tutor for an annual award for Ùlpan tutors;
- The tutor training course specifies that a good level of literacy in Gaelic is a pre-requisite skill for teaching Ùlpan;

- A pre-assessment of all tutors oral fluency be conducted as part of a broader suite of quality assurance measures, to identify what support might be needed to help tutors achieve authentic pronunciation and to teach Ùlpan at all levels;
- The Bòrd consider developing a suite of continued professional development for Gaelic language tutors for the long term benefit of the GfA sector, which Ùlpan tutors can access as part of their training and development;
- Deiseal simplifies the grammatical terminology in the lesson plans to make them more accessible to their tutor population, and introduce training on grammar to increase tutors confidence in talking about grammar; this would be most valuable for those tutors who teach, or aim to teach, Ùlpan at the upper levels.

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13. Appendices

Appendix 1: Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages

Level			Salient Characteristics: Interaction & Production (CEFR 3.6, simplified)
Proficient User	**User**		It cannot be overemphasised that Level C2 is not intended to imply native speaker competence or even near native speaker competence. Both the original research and a project using CEFR descriptors to rate mother-tongue as well as foreign language competence (North 2002: CEFR Case Studies volume) showed the existence of ambilingual speakers well above the highest defined level (C2). Wilkins had identified a seventh level of "Ambilingual Proficiency" in his 1978 proposal for a European scale for unit-credit schemes.
		C2	**Level C2** is intended to characterise the degree of **precision, appropriateness and ease with the language** which typifies the speech of those who have been highly successful learners. Descriptors calibrated here include: _convey finer shades of meaning precisely_ by using, with reasonable accuracy, a wide range of modification devices; has a good command of _idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms_ with awareness of _connotative level of meaning_; backtrack and restructure around a difficulty so smoothly the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.
		C1	**Level C1** is characterised by **a broad range of language, which allows fluent, spontaneous communication**, as illustrated by the following examples: _Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Has a good command of a broad lexical repertoire allowing gaps to be readily overcome with circumlocutions. There is little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies; only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language_. The discourse skills appearing at B2+ are more evident at C1, with an emphasis on more fluency, for example: _select a suitable phrase from a fluent repertoire of discourse functions to preface his remarks in order to get the floor, or to gain time and keep it whilst thinking; produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices_.
Independent User		**B2+**	B2+ represents a strong B2 performance. The focus on argument, effective social discourse and on language awareness which appears at B2 continues. However, the focus on argument and social discourse can also be interpreted as a new focus on discourse skills. This new degree of discourse competence shows itself in conversational management (co-operating strategies): _give feedback on and follow up statements and inferences by other speakers and so help the development of the discussion; relate own contribution skilfully to those of other speakers_. It is also apparent in relation to coherence/cohesion: _use a variety of linking words efficiently to mark clearly the relationships between ideas; develop an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail_.

	B2	**Level B2** represents a break with the content so far. Firstly there is a focus on **effective argument**: *account for and sustain his opinions in discussion by providing relevant explanations, arguments and comments; explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options; develop an argument giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view; take an active part in informal discussion in familiar contexts, commenting, putting point of view clearly, evaluating alternative proposals and making and responding to hypotheses*. Secondly, at this level one can hold your own in **social discourse**: e.g. *understand in detail what is said to him/her in the standard spoken language even in a noisy environment; initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, though he/she may not always do this elegantly; interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party*. Finally, there is a **new degree of language awareness**: *correct mistakes if they have led to misunderstandings; make a note of "favourite mistakes" and consciously monitor speech for it/them; generally correct slips and errors if he/she becomes conscious of them.*
	B1+	B1+ is a strong B1 performance. The same two main features at B1 continue to be present, with the addition of a number of descriptors which focus on the exchange of quantities of information, for example: *provide concrete information required in an interview/consultation (e.g. describe symptoms to a doctor) but does so with limited precision; explain why something is a problem; summarise and give his or her opinion about a short story, article, talk, discussion interview, or documentary and answer further questions of detail; carry out a prepared interview, checking and confirming information, though he/she may occasionally have to ask for repetition if the other person's response is rapid or extended; describe how to do something, giving detailed instructions; exchange accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his field with some confidence.*
	B1	**Level B1** reflects the **Threshold Level** specification and is perhaps most categorised by two features. The first feature is the ability to **maintain interaction and get across what you want to**, for example: *generally follow the main points of extended discussion around him/her, provided speech is clearly articulated in standard dialect; express the main point he/she wants to make comprehensibly; keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production.* The second feature is the ability to **cope flexibly with problems in everyday life**, for example *cope with less routine situations on public transport; deal with most situations likely to arise when making travel arrangements through an agent or when actually travelling; enter unprepared into conversations on familiar topics.*
Basic User	**A2+**	A2+ represents a strong A2 performance with **more active participation in conversation** given some assistance and certain limitations, for example: *understand enough to manage simple, routine exchanges without undue effort; make him/herself understood and exchange ideas and information on familiar topics in predictable everyday situations, provided the other person helps if necessary; deal with everyday situations with predictable content, though he/she will generally have to compromise the message and search for words;* plus significantly **more ability to sustain monologues**, for example: *express how he feels in simple terms; give an extended description of everyday aspects of his environment e.g. people, places, a job or study experience; describe past activities and personal experiences; describe habits and routines; describe plans and arrangements; explain what he/she likes or dislikes about something.*

	A2	**Level A2** has the **majority of descriptors stating social functions** like *use simple everyday polite forms of greeting and address; greet people, ask how they are and react to news; handle very short social exchanges*; *ask and answer questions about what they do at work and in free time; make and respond to invitations; discuss what to do, where to go and make arrangements to meet*; *make and accept offers.* Here too are to be found descriptors on **getting out and about**: *make simple transactions in shops, post offices or banks; get simple information about travel; use public transport: buses, trains, and taxis, ask for basic information, ask and give directions, and buy tickets; ask for and provide everyday goods and services.*
	A1	**Level A1** is the lowest level of generative language use – the point at which the learner can *interact in a simple way, ask and answer simple questions about themselves, where they live, people they know, and things they have, initiate and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics*, rather than relying purely on a very finite rehearsed, lexically organised repertoire of situation-specific phrases.

Appendix 2: Paper version of online survey of Ùlpan students

BÒRD NA GÀIDHLIG

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST of SCOTLAND
UWS

y ganolfan cynllunio iaith
welsh centre for language planning

2013 Ùlpan Survey for Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Welcome to this survey about learning Gaelic through Ùlpan. The survey aims to find out *who* has been learning Gaelic through Ùlpan, *why* students choose Ùlpan, *what* type/s of Ùlpan course students access and *how well* Ùlpan teaches Gaelic. The results of this survey will be used to improve adult education for Gaelic learners in Scotland. The survey is straightforward to complete and will take no more than 20 minutes.

The University of Aberdeen takes the confidentiality and privacy of personal information very seriously. Your answers will be confidential to the research team (the course writers, tutors and class organisers will not have access to the data) and will only be reported anonymously and/or in aggregate form. If you have any questions about the research or the survey itself, or would prefer to complete a paper version, please contact the person in charge: Dr Marsaili MacLeod. Email: marsaili.macleod@abdn.ac.uk, Tel: 01224 27 2148.

Completion of this online survey is voluntary and implies that you have given your consent to participate in this study and for anonymised data from the survey to be used by the researchers to prepare reports and other research publications.

Do you want to continue with this survey?
◎ Yes   ◎ No

Survey Instructions
Thank you for taking the time to respond to this survey. Most questions ask you to select one or more answers. To move on to the next question, click on 'next' at the bottom of the page. If you do not want to answer a specific question(s) simply leave this question unanswered and move onto the next one. You may move 'back' to a previous page and 'reset' your responses at any time. You can also 'save' your response, and return to it at a later time. When you reach the end, simply click "submit". **Thank you for your participation! Tapadh leibh airson pàirt a ghabhail!**

About joining Ùlpan

In what year did you first join an Ùlpan class?
◎ 2013   ◎ 2012   ◎ 2011   ◎ 2010
◎ 2009   ◎ 2008   ◎ 2007

Which of the following categories best described you when you first joined an Ùlpan class?
◎ New Gaelic learner
◎ Lapsed Gaelic learner
◎ Active Gaelic learner
◎ Lapsed native Gaelic speaker

For how long had you been learning Gaelic before joining an Ùlpan class?
◎ Less than a year   ◎ 3 - 5 years
◎ 1 - 2 years   ◎ 5 - 10 years
◎ 2 - 3 years   ◎ More than 10 years

Prior to joining an Ùlpan class, what had been your <u>main</u> method of learning Gaelic?
◎ In the home/family   ◎ Day or weekend classes
◎ Informal conversation with other Gaelic speakers ◎ Residential or other immersion course/s
◎ In school   ◎ Distance learning
◎ Self-taught (from books, CDs, internet, TV etc.) ◎ University/degree course
◎ Conversation group   ◎ College course
◎ Evening classes   ◎ None of the above

When you first joined an Ùlpan class what was your level of:

	None	Beginner	Post beginner	Lower intermediate	Upper intermediate	Advanced	Fully fluent
speaking Gaelic	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎
understanding spoken Gaelic	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎
reading Gaelic	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎
writing Gaelic	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎

Did you start Ùlpan at Unit 1? (e.g. the first unit)
◎ Yes   ◎ No

What was your <u>main</u> reason for choosing to learn Gaelic through Ùlpan?
◎ Timing / convenience   ◎ Quality of course materials
◎ My employer sponsored my place   ◎ The teaching method
◎ Quality of the tutor/s   ◎ It was the only Gaelic course available for my level of Gaelic
◎ Intensity of learning   ◎ Other

Your current Ùlpan student status

What is your Ùlpan student status?
◎ I have completed all 144 units of the Ùlpan course
◎ I am currently attending an Ùlpan course
◎ I am committed to attending an Ùlpan course
◎ I am considering attending another Ùlpan course
◎ I don't plan to attend another Ùlpan course

About the last Ùlpan course you attended

Many learners have attended more than one Ùlpan course or class. This section asks about the last Ùlpan course or classes that you attended e.g. the last series of units you were taught in a block.

In which year did you attend your your last Ùlpan class?
- 2013
- 2012
- 2011
- 2010
- 2009
- 2008
- 2007

In which local authority area was your last Ùlpan course held?

--Click Here-- ▼

What schedule did your last Ùlpan course follow?
- Once-weekly class
- Twice-weekly class
- Short course: one day
- Short course: two day
- Short course: 3 - 5 days
- Short course: 6 or more days
- Other

Who was the class/course organiser of your last course? (*if the course was jointly organised, tick all that apply*)
- ☐ Your employer
- ☐ Local Authority
- ☐ College or University
- ☐ Clì Gàidhlig
- ☐ Community organisation
- ☐ Independent Ùlpan tutor
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Don't know

If your last Ùlpan course had offered accreditation, would you have chosen to be assessed for a qualification in Gaelic?
- Yes, I would have chosen accreditation
- Yes, I did choose accreditation
- No
- Don't know

When you finished your last Ùlpan course, what would you consider was your level of:

	Beginner	Post beginner	Lower intermediate	Upper intermediate	Advanced	Fully fluent
spoken Gaelic	○	○	○	○	○	○
understanding spoken Gaelic	○	○	○	○	○	○
reading Gaelic	○	○	○	○	○	○
writing Gaelic	○	○	○	○	○	○

Did you receive any of the following forms of financial support or discount to attend your last course? (*select all that apply*)
- ☐ ILA (Individual Learning Account)
- ☐ Employer sponsorship
- ☐ Parental discount for children in GME
- ○ None of the above

Were any of the following offered as part of your last course? (*select all that apply*)
- ☐ Feedback on homework
- ☐ Time at the end of the class to ask questions
- ☐ Extra revision classes
- ☐ Opportunity to practise Gaelic conversation
- ☐ Separate conversation classes with an Ùlpan tutor
- ○ None of the above

Approximately what percentage of classes did you attend on your last course?
- 0 - 25%
- 26 - 50%
- 51 - 75%
- 76 - 100%

Which units / level of Ùlpan did your last course teach? (*select the Ùlpan level/s which the course units belong to*)
- ☐ 0 - 24 (Level 1)
- ☐ 25 - 48 (Level 2)
- ☐ 49 - 72 (Level 3)
- ☐ 73 - 96 (Level 4)
- ☐ 97 - 120 (Level 5)
- ☐ 121 - 144 (Level 6)

What is the highest unit of Ùlpan you have completed?

[   ]

About learning Gaelic as an Ùlpan student

As an Ùlpan student, how often would you use the following methods for learning Gaelic, in addition to attending Ùlpan classes and revision using Ùlpan materials?

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Less than monthly	Not at all
Watching BBC Alba	○	○	○	○	○
Other forms of Gaelic tuition	○	○	○	○	○
Conversation circles / groups	○	○	○	○	○
Self-learning e.g. self-instructional books or CDs	○	○	○	○	○
Reading Gaelic e.g. news articles, books, poetry	○	○	○	○	○
Conversation with native/fluent Gaelic speakers	○	○	○	○	○
Conversation with other learners of Gaelic	○	○	○	○	○
Listening to Gaelic radio	○	○	○	○	○

Your opinion of your current or last Ùlpan course

We want you to rate how you feel about aspects of your current or last Ùlpan classes or course. Each item has a label on the left and another on the right. For each item, please select the button which best describes your feelings towards this Ùlpan course. Would you say this Ùlpan course was:

relaxing	○	○	○	○	○	stressful
useful	○	○	○	○	○	useless
exciting	○	○	○	○	○	dull
enjoyable	○	○	○	○	○	unenjoyable
clear	○	○	○	○	○	confusing
simple	○	○	○	○	○	complicated
well taught	○	○	○	○	○	poorly taught
good value for money	○	○	○	○	○	poor value for money
effortless	○	○	○	○	○	hard
fast	○	○	○	○	○	slow
satisfying	○	○	○	○	○	dissatisfying

Your overall opinion of Ùlpan

This section asks for your general opinions of Ùlpan (rather than specifically about your current or last Ùlpan course).

Overall, how well does Ùlpan teach Gaelic?

○ Very well   ○ Well   ○ Adequately   ○ Poorly   ○ Very poorly

Overall, compared with what you expected, how would you rate the Ùlpan course in teaching you to speak Gaelic?

○ Much better than expected   ○ Better than expected   ○ About as expected   ○ Not as good as expected   ○ Not nearly as good as expected

Overall, how satisfied are you with the following aspects of the Ùlpan?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Quality of the tutor/s	○	○	○	○	○
Pace of Ùlpan classes	○	○	○	○	○
Content of Ùlpan lessons	○	○	○	○	○
Quality of course games/activities	○	○	○	○	○
Quality of student worksheet	○	○	○	○	○
Your entry level to Ùlpan	○	○	○	○	○
Tutor feedback and support	○	○	○	○	○
Availability of Ùlpan for your level	○	○	○	○	○
How quickly you are progressing through Ùlpan	○	○	○	○	○

About your Gaelic learning goals

Since your last Ùlpan class/course, have you used other types of courses or tuition to learn Gaelic?

◉ Yes   ○ No

Which other courses have you used to learn Gaelic since your last Ùlpan class? (*select all that apply*)

☐ Conversation circle / group   ☐ University/degree course
☐ Evening classes   ☐ Intensive/immersion course/s
☐ Short course/s   ☐ Private tuition
☐ An Cùrsa Inntrigidh   ☐ Other
☐ An Cùrsa Adhartais   ☐ None of the above

At this stage, do you intend to progress to the end of the Ùlpan course, unit 144?

○ Yes   ○ No

What do you consider to be your current level of:

	Beginner	Post beginner	Lower intermediate	Upper intermediate	Advanced	Fully fluent
spoken Gaelic	○	○	○	○	○	○
understanding spoken Gaelic	○	○	○	○	○	○
reading Gaelic	○	○	○	○	○	○
written Gaelic	○	○	○	○	○	○

What level do you ultimately aim to achieve in:

	Beginner	Post beginner	Lower intermediate	Upper intermediate	Advanced	Fully fluent
spoken Gaelic	○	○	○	○	○	○
understanding spoken Gaelic	○	○	○	○	○	○
reading Gaelic	○	○	○	○	○	○
written Gaelic	○	○	○	○	○	○

What can you say in Gaelic?

We want to find out more about what current and former Ùlpan students can say in Gaelic. The descriptions below are based on the Common European Framework for languages.

Which one of the following descriptions best describes your level of spoken production in Gaelic?

I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.   ○

I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.   ○

I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.   ○

I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.   ○

I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.   ○

I can present a clear, smoothly flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.   ○

None of the above.   ○

Which one of the following descriptions best describes your level of spoken interaction in Gaelic?

I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.   ○

I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.   ○

I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst interacting with other Gaelic speakers. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).   ○

I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.   ○

I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.   ◉

I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.   ○

None of the above.   ○

About who you speak Gaelic with

Does anybody else in your household speak Gaelic?
○ Yes   ○ No

Outwith any Gaelic classes, how often do you currently speak Gaelic?

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Less than monthly	Never
In the home	○	○	○	○	○
With other family members	○	○	○	○	○
With native speakers in the local community	○	○	○	○	○
With other learners in the local community	○	○	○	○	○
With work colleagues	○	○	○	○	○
Remotely with friends e.g. by phone	○	○	○	○	○

About your reasons for learning Gaelic

How important to you are the following reasons for learning Gaelic?

	Very important	Important	Of little importance	Not at all important	N/A
To help my children with homework	○	○	○	○	○
To speak Gaelic with my children	○	○	○	○	○
To speak Gaelic with my spouse/partner	○	○	○	○	○
To speak Gaelic with my grandchildren	○	○	○	○	○
To speak Gaelic with other family members	○	○	○	○	○
To speak Gaelic with friends	○	○	○	○	○
To speak Gaelic in the workplace	○	○	○	○	○
To participate in my local community	○	○	○	○	○
To understand Gaelic literature	○	○	○	○	○
To understand Gaelic radio and TV	○	○	○	○	○
To understand Gaelic music and other arts	○	○	○	○	○
To advance my professional life	○	○	○	○	○
For personal growth and development	○	○	○	○	○

About you

What is your gender?
○ Male   ○ Female

In which local authority area do you currently live?
[--Click Here-- ▼]

Which one of these categories best describes your current economic status?
○ Employed or self-employed   ○ Unemployed
○ Looking after family   ○ Retired
○ Long-term sick or disabled   ○ Student

What is the highest educational qualification you have achieved?
○ 'O' or Standard Grade, GCSE   ○ University/college first degree
○ Highers, 'A' level or equivalent   ○ Postgraduate qualification/professional qualification
○ Vocational/trade qualification   ○ None of the above
○ HNC, HND or equivalent

What is your age group?
○ 15-19   ○ 30-34   ○ 45-49   ○ 60-64
○ 20-24   ○ 35-39   ○ 50-54   ○ 65-74
○ 25-29   ○ 40-44   ○ 55-59   ○ 75+

Prize draw and further involvement

You have reached the end of the 2013 Ùlpan Survey for Bòrd na Gàidhlig! This final section gives the the opportunity to volunteer to be interviewed and to enter a prize draw. There is also a space for you to add any further comments.

We are interested in interviewing current and former Ùlpan students to talk about their experiences of Ùlpan and of learning Gaelic as an adult. Might you be willing to be interviewed?
○ Yes   ○ No

If you would like to be entered into the draw for one of two £50 vouchers to spend in the Gaelic Books Council (Comhairle nan Leabhraichean) please enter your name and postal address. Your contact information will not be passed on and will not be linked to your other data.

Name: [ ]

Postal address: [ ]

Do you have any comments you would like to add?

[ ]

End of survey. Please click 'submit'.

Your current Ùlpan student status

What is your Ùlpan student status?

- ○ I have completed all 144 units of the Ùlpan course
- ○ I am currently attending an Ùlpan course
- ○ I am committed to attending an Ùlpan course
- ○ I am considering attending another Ùlpan course
- ◉ I don't plan to attend another Ùlpan course

Why don't you plan to attend another Ùlpan course? (*select all that apply*)

- ☐ Lack of availability in my local area
- ☐ What I learnt wasn't useful
- ☐ I disliked my last Ùlpan tutor
- ☐ I met my learning goals
- ☐ I can't afford it
- ☐ I can't keep up with the course

- ☐ I don't like the teaching method
- ☐ I have insufficient opportunity to practise outside class
- ☐ Personal reasons
- ☐ Other
- ☐ None of the above

Appendix 3: Common reference levels self-assessment grid

	Spoken Interaction	**Spoken Production**
C2	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
C1	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion
B2	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
B1	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes & ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.
A2	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job
A1	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.

Source: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching and assessment. Structured overview of all CEFR scales. © Council of Europe.

Appendix 4: Overview of oral test instruments

A test instrument was designed for students who had recently completed Level 1, Level 3 and Level 6 of Ùlpan. The instrument was designed to allow the research team to place students' oral skills on the CEFR (Appendix 3). Students were given a handout with guidelines and suggested topics for conversation (separate handouts were prepared for students at each level) and were structured as follows:

Level 1

Level 1 students were asked to chose from a list of topics from the SCQF 'Personal Language' speaking targets at Level 3 as follows: provide simple personal details (name, age, nationality, d.o.b., family situation/history); talk about interests and leisure activates; likes and dislikes; holidays; health issues and job situation and then engage in a short conversation with a representative from the Research Team. They were further asked to identify images from a handout and give the Gaelic for these items (these were items which occurred frequently in the Ùlpan units we had access to).

Level 3

Level 3 students were asked to chose from a list of topics from the SCQF 'Personal Language' speaking targets at Level 4: as follows: provide simple personal details (name, age, nationality, d.o.b., family situation/history); talk about interests and leisure activates; likes and dislikes; holidays; health issues, job situation and about home town area and then engage in a short conversation with a representative from the Research Team. Additionally students at this level were shown handouts with pictures on them and were asked to say what they saw or to link the picture with a person or activity (these tests were linked more closely to the Ùlpan course and the select number of units made available to us).

Level 6

Level 6 students were asked to chose from a list of topics from the SCQF 'Personal Language' speaking targets at Level 5: as follows: provide personal details; talk about interests and leisure activates; likes and dislikes; holidays; health issues, job situation and about home town area, environmental issues, past experiences or future intentions and express opinions or points of view and then engage in a short conversation with a representative from the Research Team. Additionally students at this level were students at Level 6 were also asked to speak about what they did at certain points in the calendar year: they were given vocabulary prompts which they could choose to use or ignore.