



ATTAINMENT: BROAD GENERAL EDUCATION AND SQA QUALIFICATIONS 2025

Report by Chief Officer, Education and Children's Services

PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to provide a summary to the Comhairle of attainment performance and outcomes in the Broad General Education (BGE, P1-S3) and Senior Phase (S4-6) in the 2024-25 session.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Tracking and reporting of progress in attainment and performance each summer consists of three key areas.
 - 1) The annual survey of teacher judgement in the BGE reporting on performance of learners in P1, P4, P7 and S3 within Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).
 - 2) The reporting of the results of Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations in the senior phase; the main focus of which tends to be on National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher awards but also includes a number of other course results.
 - 3) The Skills Development Scotland (SDS) Annual Participation Measure that reports on the participation of 16-19 year olds in education, training or employment.
- 2.2 This year we are able to report on some positive results in achieving curricular milestones based on identified areas for improvement in 2024 which included P4 writing (English) and numeracy. In 2025 as a result of interventions we have seen significant improvements across these curricular milestones. Similarly, S3 Gàidhlig was identified as an area for improvement, and the interventions have resulted in a 3.6% increase in all of the S3 Gàidhlig curricular milestones being achieved.
- 2.3 This year, 525 pupils across our four secondary schools were presented for 2,656 different awards and qualifications with an overall pass rate in the Western Isles of 80.2% across all levels and courses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 **It is recommended that the Comhairle note the report for their information.**

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Appendix:

Background Papers:



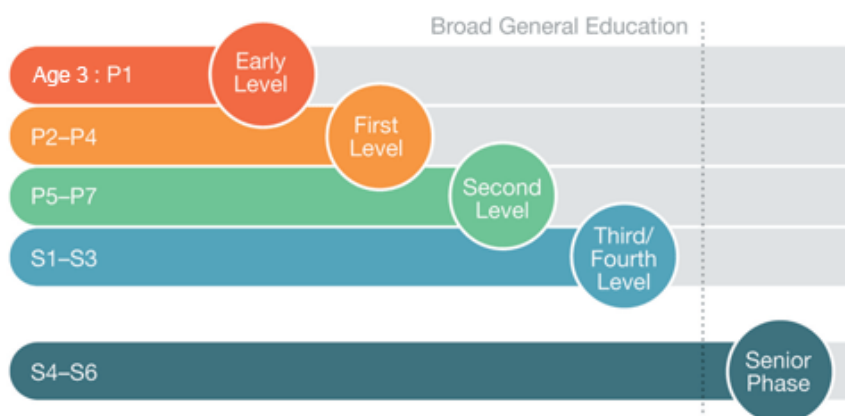
IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The following implications are applicable in terms of the Report.

| Resource Implications | Implications/None |
|-------------------------|---|
| Financial | None |
| Legal | None |
| Staffing | None |
| Assets and Property | None |
| Strategic Implications | Implications/None |
| Risk | None |
| Equalities/Child Rights | Applicable UNCRC Articles: 28 – A Right to Education 29 – Goals of Education Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education (2017) |
| Corporate Strategy | Support Children, Families and Young People: - Raise ambition and attainment, to address inequalities. |
| Environmental Impact | None |
| Consultation | None |

BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The teacher judgement survey of the BGE is an exercise that is undertaken annually and involves the reporting by all schools of the achievement of levels within CfE. Data is recorded for literacy and English, literacy and Gàidhlig and numeracy for P1, P4, P7 and S3. There has been significant work carried out to ensure that this year the process for teacher judgement is as robust and accurate as it has ever been. This has ensured that we have the most accurate data as a starting point for driving improvement across the Comhairle schools.
- 5.2 In the CfE teacher judgement survey, teachers use professional judgement to determine the level of attainment in literacy and English, literacy and Gàidhlig and numeracy in relation to the milestone years in the national progression pathway, as set out below:



DETAIL

Broad General Education (Nursery to S3)

- 6.1 The table below provides a summary of the percentage of learners at each stage that achieved the typical curricular milestone in June 2025, as set out in the diagram at paragraph 5.3. English literacy is the percentage of learners who have achieved all three English milestones (English Listening and Talking, English Reading and English Writing). Gaelic Literacy is the percentage of learners who have achieved all three Gaelic milestones (Gaelic Listening and Talking, Gaelic Reading and Gaelic Writing).

Percentage CFE Attainment in P1, P4, P7 and S3 for 2024-25

| Stage | English L&T | English Reading | English Writing | English Literacy | Numeracy | Gaelic L&T | Gaelic Reading | Gaelic Writing | Gaelic Literacy |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|----------|------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| P1 Early | 84.0% | 82.4% | 79.0% | 78.2% | 84.0% | 86.9% | 86.9% | 83.3% | 83.3% |
| P4 First | 90.8% | 83.8% | 82.4% | 81.0% | 82.0% | 93.5% | 84.3% | 84.3% | 82.4% |
| P7 Second | 92.3% | 87.5% | 81.3% | 80.5% | 78.7% | 92.0% | 88.4% | 83.0% | 79.5% |
| S3 Third or Better | 94.4% | 93.7% | 92.7% | 92.3% | 90.2% | 96.0% | 96.0% | 96.0% | 96.0% |

- 6.2 The table below sets out the percentage change in attainment this year compared to the last recording in 2024 (a positive percentage indicates higher attainment in 2025 than in 2024). There are significant improvements across almost all of the curricular milestones at P4 which is as a result of the intervention strategies implemented to counteract the identified gap at this stage last year. Similarly, there is a 3.6% increase in all of the S3 Gàidhlig curricular milestones being achieved. Numeracy at P1 and P4 have also seen increases of 2.3% and 6.4% respectively.

Percentage Change in Attainment from 2024 to 2025

| Stage | English L&T | English Reading | English Writing | English Literacy | Numeracy | Gaelic L&T | Gaelic Reading | Gaelic Writing | Gaelic Literacy |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|----------|------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| P1 Early | +0.3 | -0.3 | -0.8 | -0.6 | +2.3 | -5.6% | -4.8 | -6.7 | * |
| P4 First | +4.2 | +11.5 | +11 | +12.2 | +6.4 | +0.4 | -0.3 | +1.2 | * |
| P7 Second | +1.6 | -0.6 | -1.8 | -1.9 | -1.5 | -2.4 | +3.2 | -1.3 | * |
| S3 Third or Better | -0.1 | +0.4 | +1 | +0.6 | -1.9 | +3.6 | +3.6 | +3.6 | * |

* Data suppressed due to cohort size of five or less or no comparison data available



6.3 Attainment data for learners identified by schools to be in receipt of Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) is included in the table below. Cohort sizes for PEF within subjects in each year group are small and can vary from 40 pupils in the largest classification down to two in the smallest. This can result in significant variations in data when expressed as percentages.

| Stage | English Listening & Talking | English Reading | English Writing | English Literacy | Numeracy | Gaelic L&T | Gaelic Reading | Gaelic Writing | Gaelic Literacy |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|----------|------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| P1 Early | 69.6% | 69.6% | 65.2% | 60.9% | 78.3% | 81.3% | 81.3% | 81.3% | 81.3% |
| P4 First | 78.6% | 64.3% | 64.3% | 60.7% | 59.1% | 62.5% | 50.0% | 43.8% | 43.8% |
| P7 Second | 80.0% | 76.0% | 66.0% | 62.0% | 62.0% | 73.3% | 60.0% | 53.3% | 46.7% |
| S3 Third or Better | 78.4% | 75.7% | 75.7% | 75.7% | 78.4% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

6.4 Percentage Change in Attainment for Pupils in Receipt of PEF 2024 to 2025

| Stage | English Listening & Talking | English Reading | English Writing | English Literacy | Numeracy | Gaelic L&T | Gaelic Reading | Gaelic Writing | Gaelic Literacy |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|----------|------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| P1 Early | +19.6 | +25.8 | +15.2 | * | -3 | -7.6 | +3.5 | +3.5 | * |
| P4 First | +35.7 | +42.9 | +42.9 | * | +19.1 | +8 | +13.6 | -1.7 | * |
| P7 Second | +6.3 | +2.3 | +0.2 | * | -3.8 | -26.7 | -40 | -46.7 | * |
| S3 Third or Better | +13.2 | +10.5 | +10.5 | * | +0.1 | * | * | * | * |

* Data suppressed due to cohort size of five or less, or no comparison data available

6.5 The data submitted to the Scottish Government as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge is reported below using the percentage CfE data. Progress towards Scottish Attainment Challenge Core Stretch Aims and the indicative gap between Free School Meals (FSM) and Not FSM is as follows:

Curriculum for Excellence Achievement Levels for P1, P4 and P7. (literacy and English combined and numeracy combined)

| Literacy and English | Full Cohort | FSM | Not FSM | Indicative Gap Not FSM v FSM |
|----------------------|-------------|-------|---------|------------------------------|
| P1, P4, P7 | 80.1% | 66.7% | 82.0% | 15.3pp |
| P1, P4, P7, S3 | 84.4% | 70.7% | 86.0% | 15.3pp |



| Numeracy | Full Cohort | FSM | Not FSM | Indicative Gap Not FSM v FSM |
|----------------|-------------|-------|---------|------------------------------|
| P1, P4, P7 | 81.0% | 76.8% | 81.5% | 4.7pp |
| P1, P4, P7, S3 | 83.8.0% | 78.4% | 84.4% | 6pp |

Senior Phase (S4-S6)

- 6.5 This year, 525 pupils across our four secondary schools were presented for 2,656 different awards and qualifications with an overall pass rate in the Western Isles of 80.2% across all levels and courses. A smaller S4-6 cohort, with 14% less students than the previous year, resulted in presentations reducing by 6.8% compared to last year. The number of presentations per pupil did, however, increase significantly, evidencing that pupils are being presented for more awards in 2025. Strong performance at S4 in National 5 awards saw pass rates of 82.9%, with young people performing well at this level across all schools. Passes at Higher for S5 and S6 increased by 2.6% and presentations at this level increased by 12% across all schools, again indicating more pupils achieving more awards at this level. The percentage of pupils in S5-6 achieving five or more awards at SCQF6 (Higher equivalent) increased by 2.7%. In S5 alone, the increase in five or more awards at this level was 4.2%. Data also indicates a reduction in presentations for Advanced Higher and an equivalent reduction in passes at this level. Comhairle officers and school staff will undertake a thorough analysis of the results in detail to identify and address any issues highlighted.
- 6.6 A Members Senior Phase Attainment Seminar has been conducted for the first time this year. This has provided information to members directly from senior leaders in the four Comhairle secondary schools regarding attainment data from the 2024-2025 academic year.
- 6.6 At this stage, only headline attainment data for S4-6 has been published. In late September, the Insight SQA Benchmarking tool will be updated to include 2025 results and a deep and detailed analysis will be undertaken across schools and courses. Schools will then use this information to recognise success, identify priorities and plan for improvement.

Annual Participation Measure

- 6.15 Each year, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) works with Scottish Government to collate and report on participation of all young people aged 16 to 19. The measure is defined as the percentage of young adults aged 16-19 participating in education, training or employment. It is a key national measure of the success of participation and outcomes for young people.
- 6.16 The rate of young people in the Western Isles participating in education, employment or training is the fourth highest in Scotland at 96.2%, above the national average of 93.3%. This represents a small decrease of 0.6% from last year's figure of 96.8%. These measures are important indicators of the effectiveness of our education system.



6.17 The Comhairle has 35.1% learners entering into employment which is 14.4% more than the national figure of 20.7%. This is an indicator that more of our young people are utilising their skills locally, contributing to population retention and supporting the local economy.

6.17 The tables below provide a summary of current and historic data from the Annual Participation Measure, including a breakdown by each category.

| Year | CNES % Participation Total | National % Participation Total |
|------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2025 | 96.2 | 93.3 |
| 2024 | 96.8 | 92.7 |
| 2023 | 97.2 | 92.6 |
| 2022 | 96.2 | 92.4 |
| 2021 | 95.6 | 92.2 |
| 2020 | 95.5 | 92.1 |
| 2019 | 95.5 | 91.6 |

| Year | CNES % in Education | CNES % in Training | CNES % In Employment | National % in Education | National % in Training | National % in employment |
|------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2025 | 59.8 | 1.4 | 35.1 | 70.1 | 2.2 | 20.7 |
| 2024 | 65.4 | 1.5 | 30.0 | 71.2 | 1.9 | 19.6 |
| 2023 | 65.8 | 1.5 | 29.9 | 71.4 | 1.7 | 19.6 |
| 2022 | 63.8 | 1.8 | 30.6 | 73.1 | 1.7 | 17.5 |
| 2021 | 70.2 | 2.6 | 22.9 | 74.8 | 1.8 | 15.5 |
| 2020 | 69.9 | 2.0 | 23.7 | 72.0 | 1.8 | 18.3 |
| 2019 | 69.9 | 1.4 | 24.3 | 71.5 | 2.0 | 18.2 |



CONCLUSION

- 7.1 In 2024-25, across the stages of Curriculum for Excellence, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar saw important success and improvement in learners' attainment and achievement. Our learners' success goes far beyond the attainment data listed in this report. We continue to celebrate and value our learners' achievements in and out of school. Our learners continue to develop a range of skills and attributes as a result of participating in an increasing range of opportunities for achievement. They are successful in national and local opportunities in the fields of music, sport, culture, leadership and community activity. They are experiencing an increased range of opportunities to achieve and use Gàidhlig through partnerships such as Film G, Feisean nan Gàidheal, Mòds, An Deasbad Nàiseanta and e-Sgoil. We also recognise the high percentage rate of participation in the SDS Annual Participation Measure and sustained positive post-school destinations as other indicators of the success of the outcomes of our service.
- 7.2 Interventions identified last year targeting the areas for improvement have proven to be successful and will continue to be used to improve attainment this year.
- 7.3 Comhairle education officers continue to work in collaboration with our Education Scotland Attainment Advisor to raise attainment. Further analysis of the attainment data will be carried out after the release of insight data in September and both education officers and the Attainment Advisor will continue to provide both support and challenge to all Secondary schools.

