

**Gaelic-speaking secondary teachers not currently
teaching in a Gaelic-medium setting: Gaelic abilities
and attitudes toward transfer to Gaelic-medium
education**

Survey for Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Draft Report: 8th December 2008

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Contents

1.	Background	1
2.	The investigation in detail	1
	2.i Method	1
	2.ii Questionnaire distribution and return	2
	2.iii Response to the questionnaire: overview	2
3.	Analysis of the completed questionnaires	3
	3.i Interest in transferring to Gaelic –medium education	4
	3.ii Motivating factors for Gaelic speaking teachers interested in transferring to GME	5
	3.iii Factors inhibiting Gaelic speaking teachers transferring to GME	5
	3.iv Gaelic speaking teachers' linguistic competence and experiences	6
	(a) Linguistic competence	6
	(b) Linguistic experience: frequency and extent of speaking, reading, writing	9
	(c) Summary: linguistic competence and experiences	10
	3.v Specific training needs of Gaelic speaking teachers wishing to transfer to GME	11
	3.vi Potential incentives necessary to motivate Gaelic speaking teachers to transfer to GME	11
	3.vii Percentage of Gaelic speaking committed/prepared to sign up to GME	12
	3.viii Barriers and opportunities on a Gaelic education career pathway as identified by the Gaelic speaking teachers	13
4.	Concluding observations	14
5.	Key points emerging from the analysis	15

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Executive summary

- 1. The survey response.** The response was poor. The survey was targeted using recent data from the Scottish Government's Pupil, Teacher and School statistics, provided by Gaelic-speaking teachers; either this data was incorrect, or a high percentage of potential respondents did not wish to take part.
- 2. Interest in transferring to GME.** Of the 18 respondents, four were interested, eight were uncertain, five were not interested, and one declined to respond on that issue. Three of the four interested taught in CnG schools; none of the respondents in CnES schools was interested.
- 3. Motivation for transferring to GME.** Six diverse motivating factors were suggested, but by less than a third of respondents. Interest and support for Gaelic, and the seeking of a new challenge, were mentioned by two respondents each.
- 4. Factors inhibiting transfer to GME.** Most respondents offered at least one reason for not pursuing a career in GME, including three of the four who were interested. The most frequently mentioned were: lack of confidence in Gaelic abilities (by half of all respondents), limited job opportunities, and financial concerns. Three respondents felt they were too old to take on the new challenge.
- 5. Gaelic speaking teachers' linguistic competence and experiences.** Within the limited overall response, there appeared to be a positive correlation among confidence across the range of Gaelic abilities, frequency and extent of use of Gaelic, greater attainment in Gaelic education, and inclination towards a transfer to GME.
- 6. Specific training needs.** The dominant theme was improvement of Gaelic abilities, irrespective of respondents' immediate interest in GME.
- 7. Potential incentives necessary to motivate transfer to GME.** The principal potential incentives were financial support for training, maintenance of the same level of salary, and job security.

- 8. Percentage of Gaelic speaking teachers committed/prepared to sign up to GME.** Only one of the respondents expressed an unreserved readiness to transfer to GME. The exact percentage of Gaelic speaking teachers committed/prepared to sign up was not found, but the evidence of this survey indicates that it is low.
- 9. Perceived barriers and opportunities on a Gaelic education career pathway.** More barriers were perceived than opportunities. Five respondents saw opportunities, the principal specified (by two) being chances of promotion. Most prominent among the foreseen barriers were professional concerns associated with employment and promotion, opportunities to teach senior classes, and local authority support; other reservations cited access to training, and anti-Gaelic attitudes.
- 10. Attitudes towards Gaelic and GME.** Despite the predominant disinclination and uncertainty with regard to moving to GME, half of the respondents expressed support for the language and/or the principle of Gaelic medium education. Nevertheless, the survey appears to suggest that in present circumstances the appeal of such a transfer might be to a small number of individuals at an auspicious time in their careers, but for most very attractive inducements would be necessary.

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1. Background

This study was the second of two commissioned by Bòrd na Gàidhlig in April 2008, and work commenced in August.

The overarching aim of the study is to provide the Bòrd with a clear overview of the number of Gaelic speaking teachers who are interested in transferring from their existing posts to a new career in Gaelic medium education (GME).

The particular objectives were to:

- Identify the motivating factors for Gaelic speaking teachers interested in transferring to GME;
- Identify the inhibitors to Gaelic speaking teachers transferring to GME;
- Review Gaelic speaking teachers' linguistic competence and experiences;
- Establish specific training needs of all Gaelic speaking teachers wishing to transfer to GME;
- Identify potential incentives necessary to motivate Gaelic speaking teachers to transfer to GME;
- Identify the percentage of Gaelic speaking teachers committed/prepared to sign up to GME;
- Establish the barriers and opportunities to a Gaelic education career pathway as identified by the Gaelic speaking teachers.

2. The investigation in detail

2 i. Method

The survey was conducted by the distribution of a questionnaire covering the objectives to the appropriate Gaelic speaking secondary teachers. The Pupil, Teacher and School Statistics unit of the Scottish Government provided a list of secondary schools where, according to their records, such teachers were in post, and local authorities were contacted to request permission to approach the headteachers for their assistance in distributing the questionnaire.

2 ii. Questionnaire distribution and return

In the cases of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES) and Comhairle na Gaidhealtachd/Highland Council (CnG), Catriona Dunn (Head of Secondary Education and Human Resources) and Donald MacNeill (Gaelic Development Manager) of these respective Councils offered the facility of the internal e-mail systems for distribution to schools and direct return to the researcher. This circumvented the process of approaching individual schools, and also allowed the inclusion of appropriate recipients who, Ms Dunn and Mr MacNeill suspected, might be found in schools other than those on the list. CnES schools received the questionnaire in September and CnG schools in October).

In other local authority areas, distribution was carried out by contacting the schools individually, ascertaining how many questionnaires would be required, and sending the required number together with covering letters of explanation and stamped addressed envelopes for return. This process proved slower than anticipated. Two schools did not reply, despite several approaches, and information provided by a number of others did not accord with their inclusion on the list. Of the nineteen contacted schools outside the CnG and CnES authorities, eight reported that they had no Gaelic-speaking teachers not involved in Gaelic education. The remaining eleven confirmed that they had such a teacher or teachers: the potential respondents numbered thirteen, less one who was omitted from the survey because of illness.

The extent of the discrepancies between the list and the information provided by the schools outside the CnG and CnES areas is unexplained: the Pupil, Teacher and School Statistics unit of the Scottish Government receives information about teachers annually, from their records which are held in their schools, and which the teachers themselves are asked to update and correct before their schools submit them. It is possible that, as most headteachers were unaware of Gaelic speakers on their staff, they might have remained undiscovered by cursory enquiry, while perusal of the teacher records would have been a time-consuming task which one admitted she was reluctant to undertake or delegate. Discrepancies may also be explained by teachers failing to correct a mistake on their records, recently retiring or taking up a new post elsewhere or, on enquiry, being self-effacing as to their Gaelic-speaking status (most of the eventual respondents confessed to lack of confidence in their Gaelic abilities).

2 iii. Response to the questionnaire: overview

The level of response was disappointing: only eighteen completed questionnaires were returned, despite pleas and reminders. Five were received from CnES teachers, seven from those in CnG schools, and of the twelve potential respondents outside the CnG and CnES authority areas, only six returned their questionnaires, despite the schools' confirmation of their receipt (Table 1).

Insofar as Gaelic speaking teachers enumerated by schools outside the CnG and CnES areas did not return the questionnaire, it seems fair to suppose that the extent of this disinclination can only attributed to lack of interest in transferring to Gaelic-medium education. It may also be surmised that the found discrepancies in enumeration for whatever reason - and the degree of disinclination amongst those enumerated, may also obtain with the contribution of CnG and CnES schools and teachers to the survey.

Local Authority area	No. of secondary schools listed as having G-S staff	Minimum no. of Gaelic-speaking staff, as per list*	No. of secondary schools found with G-S staff	No. of Gaelic speaking staff found	No. of questionnaires returned
Aberdeen City	1	2	1	1	1
Aberdeenshire	2	1	1	1	1
Angus	3	3	1	1	1
Argyll & Bute	3	3	2	3	0
Borders	2	3	1	2	1
CnES	9	36	-	-	5
CnG/Highland	6	6	-	-	7
East Dunbarton	1	1	0	-	-
Edinburgh City	2	2	2	1**	1**
Glasgow City	1	1	0	-	-
Inverclyde	1	1	0	-	-
Moray	1	1	1	1	0
North Ayrshire	2	2	0	-	-
South Lanark	2	2	2	2	1
Totals	21 (ex CnG & CnES)	64*	11 (ex CnG & CnES)	12** (ex CnG & CnES)	18

Table 1: Schools, Gaelic-speaking staff, and questionnaires returned.

* Information provided by Pupil, Teacher and School Statistics listed by name alone the schools where there were four or fewer Gaelic speakers not involved in Gaelic education, and by name and the number of Gaelic speakers where there was five or more. Three CnES schools were the only ones in this latter category; all other schools are included here as having a minimum of one Gaelic speaker.

** One of the two teachers found was omitted from the survey because of illness.

3. Analysis of the completed questionnaires

It will be apparent that, in following analyses, the small number of responses favours general conclusions rather than inference from detail.

The professional characteristics of the respondents are as follows. Of the eighteen, four volunteered the information that they were in promoted posts. Three did not specify their teaching certification; thirteen had taken a PGCE, or its later form, a PDGE, which in one case was augmented by an ATQ; one had taken a B.Ed, and another Diploma 3 for teaching Home Economics. The subject qualifications were disparate: four apiece were qualified to teach Geography, and Mathematics; three apiece to teach English, and Gaelic; two had a French qualification; and there was one

teacher each of Science with Biology, Physics and Science, Modern Studies, support for Learning, PE and Human Movement, Religious education, Computing, and Home Economics. In six cases there was a double qualification – for example, the four Gaelic qualifications were accompanied by qualifications in Geography, Modern Studies, French, and Mathematics.

The initial item of analysis concerns the degree of respondents' interest in transferring to Gaelic-medium education, an interest represented by their responses – 'Yes', 'Maybe', 'No' – to the direct question on that pivotal issue. Much of the analysis thereafter focuses on the answers given by respondents in the 'Yes', 'Maybe' and 'No' groups to questions on subsidiary and related questions.

3. i Interest in transferring to Gaelic –medium education

Responses to the question: *Are you interested in transferring to Gaelic-medium education (GME), now or in the future?* are analysed with respect to respondents' local authority in Table 2 below.

Local authority area	Respondents' interest in transferring to GME				Total
	'Yes'	'Maybe'	'No'	No answer	
Aberdeen City	-	-	1	-	1
Aberdeenshire	-	1	-	-	1
Angus	-	-	1	-	1
Borders	-	1	-	-	1
CnES	-	3	2	-	5
CnG	3	2	1	1	7
Edinburgh City	1	-	-	-	1
South Lanarkshire	-	1	-	-	1
Total	4	8	5	1	18

Table 2: Numbers of respondents interested in transferring to GME

Two noteworthy points are that more respondents were uncertain than affirmed or denied interest, and none of the CnES respondents was interested.

The number of respondents being small, there could be no correlation drawn between qualification to teach the disparate subjects and a particular choice of response. However, it was noted that none who had taken a Gaelic course at university, or GME as part of teacher training, was uninterested.

None of the five promoted respondents recorded lack of interest (two 'Yes'; two 'Maybe'; one no answer).

3. ii Motivating factors for Gaelic speaking teachers interested in transferring to GME

There were six responses to this question. Two factors were mentioned twice: interest and support for Gaelic, and the seeking of a ‘new challenge’. Other factors were: smaller classes with motivated pupils; job opportunities; ‘location’; belief in the value of bilingual education, and a desire to ‘raise the profile of Gaelic scientists’.

3. iii Factors inhibiting Gaelic speaking teachers transferring to GME

Most respondents offered at least one reason for not pursuing a career in Gaelic-medium education. This was not restricted to those uncertain or uninterested in such a prospect: three of the four respondents who were interested had reservations. Table 3 shows the inhibiting factors cited by respondents interested/uncertain/uninterested in a transfer to GME (‘Yes’/‘No’/‘Maybe’ groups as presented in 3 i.)

Factor inhibiting to transfer to GME	‘Yes’ respondents mentioning	‘Maybe’ respondents mentioning	‘No’ respondents mentioning	Total no. of respondents mentioning
Gaelic - lack of: ability/confidence/vocabulary/practice/training/competence/grammar/fluency	2	4	3	9
Lack of opportunities/jobs	2	1	1	4
Financial concerns	1	-	3	4
Age/too old for change	-	2	1	3
Professional issues	-	2	-	2
Domestic concern		1		1

Table 3: Factors most often mentioned as inhibiting transfer to GME and relative degree of interest in transfer to GME (Yes/Maybe/No).

Deficiency in at least one aspect of the use of Gaelic was easily the most common inhibition, and it was a theme which arose in responses to other questions as well.

The ‘lack of opportunities/jobs’ category contains, beyond a citation of a ‘lack of advertised jobs’, observations that GME is restricted to certain classes and certain levels; that there is a lack of GM opportunities in the respondent’s subject; and that only a promoted post could be considered.

Three respondents were concerned about the financial effect of necessarily relinquishing their current posts (two promoted, one Continuous Professional Development [CPD] provider), while a fourth, unpromoted, felt the prospect was “(T)oo much hassle; a lot of CPD for no financial reward.”

Age and the requirement for change were a consideration for three: two were approaching retirement, while a third had been teaching through English for 28 years, and as the sole teacher of her subject in her school, felt that a combined English medium and Gaelic medium role would be difficult to manage.

The professional issues which concerned two respondents in the ‘Maybe’ group were: uncertainty about the provision of subject resources, with speculation that a GM teacher might have to design and produce them him/herself; and a feeling that a GM post is a position of isolation without the authority which usually accompanies responsibility.

The domestic circumstances cited by one respondent referred to the possible inability of his/her partner – also a teacher – to find work in a new location.

3. iv Gaelic speaking teachers’ linguistic competence and experiences

(a) Linguistic competence

Linguistic competence - all respondents

Respondents were asked to assess their own competence in speaking, understanding, reading and writing Gaelic. All responses are aggregated in Table 4.

Ability	Number of responses				Total, all respondents
	Full confident fluency	Competent	Fairly competent	Lapsed/ very unpractised	
Speaking	6	8	3	1	18
Understanding	7	8	2	1	18
Reading	4	6	6	2	18
Writing	2	4	3	9	18

Table 4: All respondents; self-assessment of Gaelic abilities

Overall, in respect of speaking and understanding, most respondents described themselves either as either having full confident fluency, or being competent. They tended to have a lower assessment of their reading: two-thirds opting for ‘competent’ or ‘fairly competent’. Writing appeared to be the weakest of their abilities: half of the

respondents thought that ‘lapsed/very unpractised’ was the appropriate choice for them, while only two reckoned they were fully confident in this aspect.

Linguistic competence and inclination to pursue a career in Gaelic-medium education

The pattern found for all respondents is also apparent when the overall response is divided amongst those who answered ‘Yes’, ‘Maybe’ or ‘No’ in respect of their inclination to pursue a career in Gaelic-medium education. Within these three groups, the self-assessments of the various abilities were scored (4 for ‘full, confident fluency’; 3 for ‘competent’, 2 for ‘fairly competent’, and 1 for ‘lapsed/very unpractised’), and averages taken of the totals.

The results are shown in Figure 1:

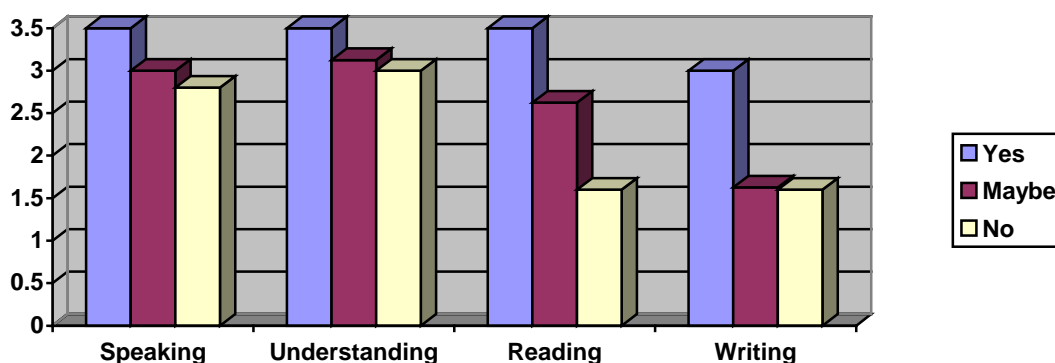


Figure 1: Relative degree of interest in transfer to GME (Yes/Maybe/No) and self-assessment of Gaelic abilities.

As can be seen, those interested in transferring to GME were, as a group, the most confident; those who were ‘maybe’ interested in a transfer demonstrated their lesser confidence by tending to assess their understanding (a passive ability) as better than their speaking, while respondents uninterested in GME had, on average, the least faith in their abilities. Only the ‘interested’ group gave a collective assessment of their reading ability as equal to their speaking and understanding, while writing was commonly acknowledged as the weakest of the skills.

Linguistic competence and educational attainment in Gaelic

A similar scoring system was adopted to examine the relationship between the educational attainment in Gaelic and self-assessed Gaelic abilities. The declared attainments were summarised in five groups: no Gaelic education; Standard Grade or lower; Higher Grade (Learners); Higher Grade (Native Speakers), first year university, or equivalent; degree level (Figure 2).

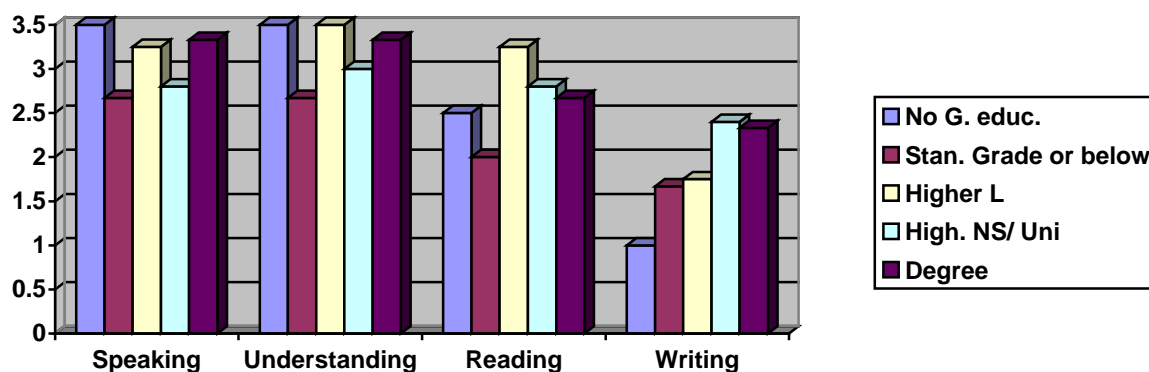


Figure 2: Educational attainment in Gaelic and (vertical axis) relative self-assessment of Gaelic abilities.

Those with no Gaelic education (presumably native speakers), those who had achieved Higher Gaelic (Learners) and those who had pursued Gaelic to degree level, tended to be more confident of their speaking and understanding abilities. Achievement of Higher Gaelic (Learners) appeared to give confidence in reading ability, while only those who had Higher Gaelic (Native Speakers) or had taken Gaelic to at least first year university level found much merit in their current writing ability – although even in these latter groups there were two respondents who gave themselves the lowest assessment.

Linguistic competence and location of respondents

The scoring system was applied to the respondents grouped in respect of the location of their schools. For this, respondents in schools outside the CnES and CnG areas are taken as a combined group: this is appropriate as CnG and CnES are distinguishable as being the two main providers of GME and Gaelic education in general (Figure 3).

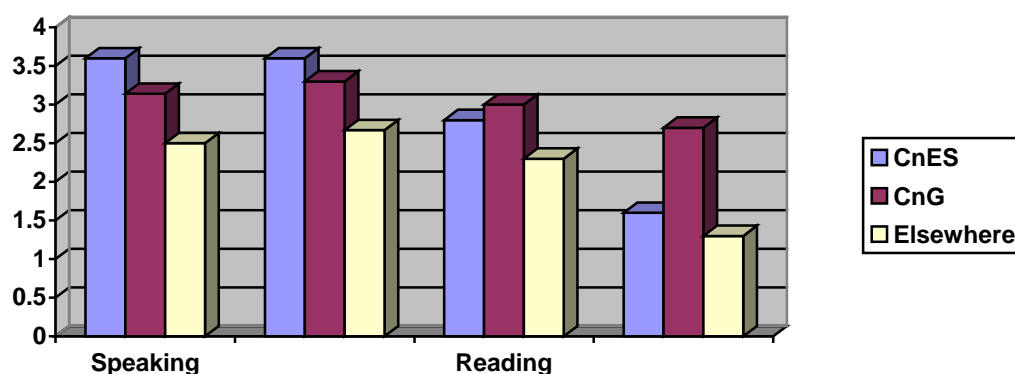


Figure 3. Linguistic competence and location of respondents.

Here, it is noticeable that while CnES respondents were most confident of their speaking and understanding abilities, CnG respondents showed a greater general confidence across the range of abilities.

(b) Linguistic experience: frequency and extent of speaking, reading, writing.

All respondents

In the overall response, use of spoken Gaelic was typically declared to be more frequent than reading, and reading as more frequent than writing. This pattern was quite regular: thus, while spoken greetings and brief comments were used by two-thirds of respondents daily, only one-third wrote anything at all – even a few words – more frequently than once a month.

Linguistic experience and location of respondents

In respect of the location of respondents, a pattern of frequency and extent of use of Gaelic emerged which was analogous to that of the self-assessed abilities of speaking, reading and writing: CnES respondents were, on average, the most frequent and most extensive speakers, but CnG respondents were, overall, the most frequent practitioners across the full range of usage. Respondents from other locations had, on average, lower scores, the best being for speaking, with reading and writing being commensurately infrequent and unextensive.

Linguistic experience and inclination to pursue a career in Gaelic-medium education

There was a differentiation in the use of Gaelic among the groups distinguished in 3. i ('Yes', 'Maybe' and 'No' with reference to interest in transferring to GME). Thus, across speaking, reading and writing, on average those in the 'Yes' group in all but one instance asserted greater use in all forms, registers and frequencies than those opting for 'Maybe', and the latter group evinced greater use in every instance than 'No' respondents. This is illustrated in the following charts: Figures 4 (speaking), 5 (reading) and 6 (writing).

In answering the question '*In your normal daily life, how much Gaelic do you speak and how often?*', respondents were asked to categorise their frequency of using three general forms of spoken Gaelic: 'Greetings, brief comments, etc'; 'Informal social conversation and discussion'; and 'Formal conversation and discussion'. The frequencies from which respondents could select were: 'every day'; 'once or twice every few days'; 'once or twice every two or three weeks'; and 'once a month or less often'. The responses for frequencies of use were converted to a numerical score, viz., 'every day – 4, once or twice every few days – 3, and so on, and for each of the 'Yes', 'Maybe' and 'No' groups, the average scores were calculated and are shown in Fig. 4:

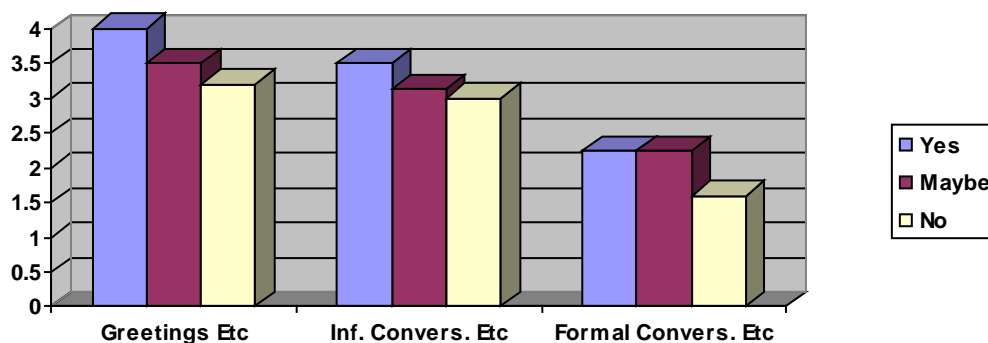


Figure 4: Speaking Gaelic: relative average frequency (vertical axis) of use of forms of spoken Gaelic by respondents in the 'Yes', 'Maybe' and 'No' categories of interest in respect of transferring to GME.

For reading Gaelic - ‘*In your normal daily life, how much Gaelic do you read and how often?*’ - the choice of usage for respondents was: ‘a few words, phrases and sentences’; ‘several paragraphs or a page’; and ‘more than one page’. With a scoring system for frequencies similar to that used for spoken Gaelic, the average scores for the groups are shown in Figure 5:

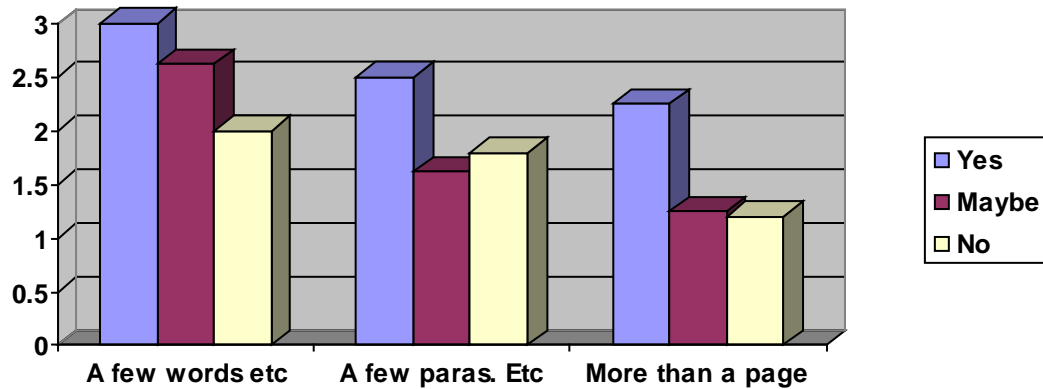


Figure 5: Reading Gaelic: relative average frequency of use (vertical axis) of forms of Gaelic read by respondents in the ‘Yes’, ‘Maybe’ and ‘No’ categories of interest in respect of transferring to GME.

For writing Gaelic - ‘*In your normal daily life, how much Gaelic do you write and how often?*’, the choices of usage and frequency of use were the same as for reading, and the aggregated results are represented in Figure 6:

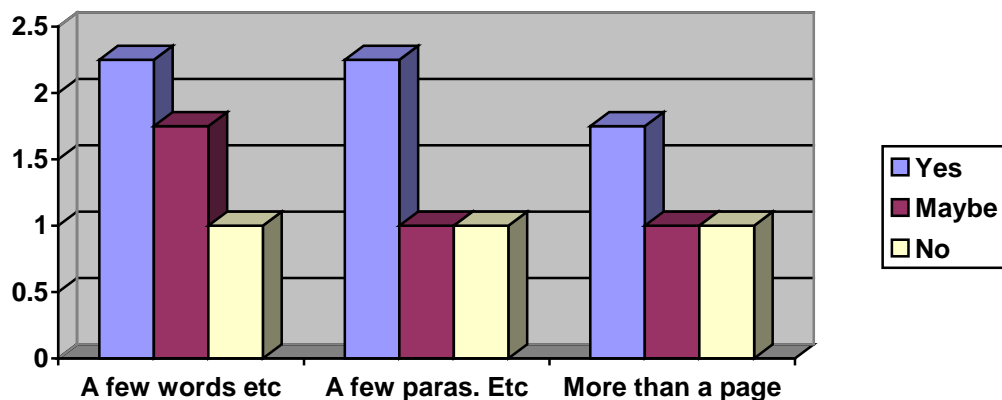


Figure 6: Writing Gaelic: relative average frequency of use (vertical axis) of forms of Gaelic written by respondents in the ‘Yes’, ‘Maybe’ and ‘No’ categories of interest in respect of transferring to GME.

(c) **Summary: linguistic competence and experiences**

Although the number of respondents is too small to draw any significant conclusion, there does appear to be the suggestion of a positive correlation between confidence in Gaelic abilities, frequency and extent of use of Gaelic, level of Gaelic education, and

inclination towards a transfer to GME. Apart from the confidence of respondents without any Gaelic education (who were presumably native speakers) in their speaking and understanding, and their frequent use of these abilities, confidence and usage across the range of Gaelic abilities appears to be associated with Gaelic education at Higher (Learners) level and above. This has a direct bearing on the pattern of confidence and usage found for respondents in the CnES and CnG areas and elsewhere: CnG respondents had, on average, the higher attainment in Gaelic education, were quite confident across a broader range of usage, and were apparently more likely to consider a move to GME.

3. v Specific training needs of Gaelic speaking teachers wishing to transfer to GME

Of the four respondents who affirmed their interest in transferring to GME, two commented on necessary training. One acknowledged a need for language training to become more fluent; he/she was already taking a distance learning course at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. The other referred to a need for training to assure the use of a common subject vocabulary: this appeared to be a general observation but it seems likely that it was a personal acknowledgement of a need to learn unfamiliar terminology.

Three respondents who were ‘maybe’ interested in switching to GME noted the training they would require. One referred to a need for greater fluency, along with knowledge of subject-specific terminology. The other two reckoned they would want training perhaps more orientated to job performance: unspecified ‘in-service training, according to one, along with visits to a GM subject class; and ‘familiarization with available resources’.

Another respondent who declared no interest in Gaelic-medium teaching nevertheless pointed out that he/she would need “training to become fully fluent.” Deficiency in Gaelic was the dominant theme of the questionnaire response overall: two-thirds of respondents referred to it at least once, and while a further five did not, and cited no necessary training, only one of the eighteen – who was interested in GME – declared full confidence: “No training necessary – native speaker.”

3.vi Potential incentives necessary to motivate Gaelic speaking teachers to transfer to GME

Eleven respondents indicated the incentives they would need to transfer to Gaelic medium education; in respect of their degrees of interest in such a move, there was one interested, seven uncertain, and three uninterested. The incentives mentioned are shown in Table 5:

Incentive	No. of citations in respect of interest in transferring to Gaelic medium education			Total no. of citations
	'Yes' respondent (Number: 1)	'Maybe' respondents (Number: 7)	'No' respondents (Number: 3)	
Financed training	-	3	1	4
Financed relocation	1	1	-	2
'Financial incentives'	-	-	1	1
'Similar salary'	-	-	1	1
Time for training	-	1	-	1
Job security	1	2	-	3
Professional satisfaction	-	1	-	1

Table 5: Incentives cited as necessary to motivate Gaelic speaking teachers to transfer to GME, with analysis by relative degree of interest (Yes/Maybe/No).

Finance was the most prominent consideration: whether for training, for relocation, or retention of the same level of income, these respondents wanted to be sure that undertaking a move to GME would not disadvantage them. The question of job security was related to this: the 'Yes' respondent cited the need for a permanent, full-time contract, while one of the 'Maybe' respondents wanted – along with secondment to university - the option of re-instatement in his/her current job afterwards; the other cited "Job Security" without detail. 'Professional satisfaction' in Table e refers to a respondent who wanted to be sure that he/she would be able to teach his/her subject through GM at Higher Grade level: an incentive which is dependent on wider developments in GME.

3. vii Percentage of Gaelic speaking teachers committed/prepared to sign up to GME

Only one of the respondents expressed an unreserved readiness to transfer to GME.

Even with the favour of the other three 'Yes' respondents, the level of interest found was undeniably low. These four give, among completed questionnaires, the figure of

22% ‘interested’, but it must be assumed that all other potential respondents who declined the opportunity were not interested in a move to GME.

In the schools outside the CnG and CnES authorities, the return from potential respondents located and targeted directly, was only fifty percent. On that basis, the interest found amongst possible respondents in these schools is one in twelve, or 8.3%, and this disregards the possibility that other Gaelic-speakers may have been, as considered in 2.ii, reluctant to acknowledge themselves as Gaelic speakers for this survey. This speculation is based on the grounds that the apparent overnumeration given by the Scottish government’s Pupil, Teacher and School Statistics unit drew on the most recent information given by the teachers themselves, while almost half of all eventual respondents expressed doubts about their current Gaelic abilities.

As teachers in CnG and CnES schools were surveyed by e-mail, the baseline number of potential respondents is unknown. However, whether or not the number of potential respondents in CnES schools was 36 (according to the PTSS list), none of the five who returned questionnaires was interested in a switch to GME. Three of the seven respondents teaching in CnG schools were interested: 43% of the CnG return. If the PTSS information for the schools in the authority was correct, the maximum number of potential respondents might have been twenty-four (six schools: PTSS did not give specific numbers per school where under four), giving a much lower 12.5%.

To summarise: the number of questionnaires returned, and the reported discrepancies in the official PTSS information make it difficult to calculate a reasonably accurate percentage of the Gaelic-speaking teachers interested in transferring to GME. However it seems certain that interest is very low; such interest as there is appears to be higher amongst CnG teachers – albeit that the survey only found one with an apparent commitment.

3. viii Barriers and opportunities on a Gaelic education career pathway as identified by the Gaelic speaking teachers

Ten respondents gave their opinions, with slightly more barriers observed than opportunities, as shown in Tables 6 and 7.

Type of opportunity cited	Interest in transferring to GME			Total
	‘Yes’ respondents	‘Maybe’ respondents	‘No’ respondents	
Promotion	1	1	-	2
CPD opportunities	-	1	-	1
Unspecified	-	1	1	2
Total	1	3	1	5

Table 6: Perceived opportunities on a Gaelic education career pathway.

In respect of promotion, the ‘Yes’ respondent reckoned that there had been “less competition, so far”, while the ‘Maybe’ respondent thought that chances of promotion

were possibly better. CPD was perceived as offering many opportunities in course development, while ‘Unspecified’ comprised the observations that there was a lot for young teachers, and that GME opportunities were simply “greater”.

Type of barrier cited	Interest in transferring to GME			Total
	‘Yes’ respondents	‘Maybe’ respondents	‘No’ respondents	
Professional concerns	1	1	2	4
Training problems	-	1	1	2
Anti-Gaelic attitudes	-	1	1	2
Total	1	3	4	8

Table 7: Perceived barriers on a Gaelic education career pathway.

Among the perceived barriers, the professional concerns were diverse. The one ‘Yes’ respondent felt there would be few Gaelic-medium posts for his/her subject; the ‘Maybe’ respondent reckoned that Gaelic-medium would offer limited practice teaching senior classes, and that non-GM class-contact time would be allocated to teaching Religious Education, Professional and Social Development, and carrying out course development work; while the two ‘No’ respondents thought, respectively, that there was “a limited choice of schools and promotion therein”, and that GME was “not promoted or supported in secondary schools”.

Two opinions were given on training: one respondent reported an inability to access local training, while the other thought that without secondment the necessary full-time study would be difficult. No detail was given of the barrier posed by anti-Gaelic attitudes.

4. Concluding observations

Although only one of the respondents appeared ready for Gaelic-medium education, half of them evinced goodwill towards the principle and/or support for the language itself. It was plain that considerations of financial security, present circumstances, future prospects, together with recognition of the need for improvement of Gaelic abilities to the professional standard required, were a discouragement to involvement. It seems a fair supposition that the reason for the overall survey response being so much lower than expected may be found among the respondents’ inhibitions to transfer to GME and the barriers perceived on a Gaelic education career pathway: it could well be that many targeted potential respondents were so certain of their lack of interest that it appeared unnecessary to spend time in explanation.

5. Key points emerging from the analysis

1. **The survey response.** The response was poor. The survey was targeted using recent data from the Scottish Government's Pupil, Teacher and School statistics, provided by Gaelic-speaking teachers; either this data was incorrect, or a high percentage of potential respondents did not wish to take part.
2. **Interest in transferring to GME.** Of the 18 respondents, four were interested, eight were uncertain, five were not interested, and one declined to respond on that issue. Three of the four interested taught in CnG schools; none of the respondents in CnES schools was interested.
3. **Motivation for transferring to GME.** Six diverse motivating factors were suggested, but by less than a third of respondents. Interest and support for Gaelic, and the seeking of a new challenge, were mentioned by two respondents each.
4. **Factors inhibiting transfer to GME.** Most respondents offered at least one reason for not pursuing a career in GME, including three of the four who were interested. The most frequently mentioned were: lack of confidence in Gaelic abilities (by half of all respondents), limited job opportunities, and financial concerns. Three respondents felt they were too old to take on the new challenge.
5. **Gaelic speaking teachers' linguistic competence and experiences.** Within the limited overall response, there appeared to be a positive correlation among confidence across the range of Gaelic abilities, frequency and extent of use of Gaelic, greater attainment in Gaelic education, and inclination towards a transfer to GME.
6. **Specific training needs.** The dominant theme was improvement of Gaelic abilities, irrespective of respondents' immediate interest in GME.
7. **Potential incentives necessary to motivate transfer to GME.** The principal potential incentives were financial support for training, maintenance of the same level of salary, and job security.
8. **Percentage of Gaelic speaking teachers committed/prepared to sign up to GME.** Only one of the respondents expressed an unreserved readiness to transfer to GME. The exact percentage of Gaelic speaking teachers committed/prepared to sign up was not found, but the evidence of this survey indicates that it is low.
9. **Perceived barriers and opportunities on a Gaelic education career pathway.** More barriers were perceived than opportunities. Five respondents saw opportunities, the principal specified (by two) being chances of promotion. Most prominent among the foreseen barriers were professional concerns associated with employment and promotion, opportunities to teach senior classes, and local authority support; other reservations cited access to training, and anti-Gaelic attitudes.

10. Attitudes towards Gaelic and GME. Despite the predominant disinclination and uncertainty with regard to moving to GME, half of the respondents expressed support for the language and/or the principle of Gaelic medium education. Nevertheless, the survey appears to suggest that in present circumstances the appeal of such a transfer might be to a small number of individuals at an auspicious time in their careers, but for most very attractive inducements would be necessary.

John Galloway December/08