



STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-28



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OUR VISION

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture, provides world-class immersive learning, research and cultural opportunities, which empower our students, staff and partners to champion Gaelic.



57°N, -5.8°W

SABHAL MÒR OSTAIG

CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD



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2023 marks 50 years of world-class education, research and cultural activity at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture.

The first ever Gaelic short courses took place here in September 1973. Today, we have widened our reach far beyond Skye, attracting thousands of students from Scotland and over 25 other countries worldwide each year. Our 2023-2028 strategy looks at how we will further broaden that reach, and inspire a new generation of confident Gaelic graduates.

From beginners' courses to PhDs; full-time or

part-time study; short courses; on campus or distance learning; Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's courses offer something for everyone.

Immersion education is at the heart of everything we do, as the only centre of tertiary education in the world that provides its learning programmes entirely through the medium of Gaelic.

We are proud of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's positive contribution to Sleat in the Isle of Skye, where the population has almost doubled since our inception in 1973, and we take great pride in the National Centre for



Gaelic Language and Culture's impact on Scotland as a whole.

We are also deeply indebted to our dedicated staff: their capability and commitment is second to none, and they are the very heart of what makes Sabhal Mòr Ostaig a unique cultural and educational asset for all of Scotland.

We look forward to the next 50 years as a leader in Gaelic learning, research and cultural opportunities: working with our partners to achieve Scotland's wider ambitions for Gaelic as a living language and a thriving culture.




AONGHAS S. MACLEÒID
Chairperson



PRINCIPAL'S
FOREWORD





Welcome to Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's Strategy, 2023-28. Published in our 50th anniversary year, this new strategy builds on the huge achievements of the past and on the current shoots of growth in learning and interest in Gaelic across Scotland and beyond.

Our vision for the next five years is to be a centre of Gaelic excellence, offering world-class immersive learning, research and cultural opportunities, which empower our students, staff and partners to become expert in the Gaelic language and culture and ambassadors for Gaelic.

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's vision aligns with the vision and aim of the fourth National Gaelic Language Plan, 2023-28: to significantly increase the number of people speaking, learning and valuing Gaelic.

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig will contribute to the National Gaelic Language Plan by:

- delivering Gaelic education in an immersive Gaelic environment, both on campus and via distance learning,
- researching and contributing to scholarship and knowledge exchange in, and about, Gaelic,
- working in the Gaelic arts,
- being sustainable and self-governing, through the medium of Gaelic,
- and we will achieve this through collaboration with individuals, communities and partners, for the good of Gaelic.

Over the next five years, we will continue to support and help our staff to develop. Highly skilled and enthusiastic, our staff are at the heart of our success as a national centre of learning for our students, and creating our vibrant Gaelic immersive environment for national projects and our partners.

We will update our teaching syllabus and carry out research that benefits Gaelic and Celtic Studies; support national projects, including the Kist o Riches/Tobar an Dualchais, the Dictionary of the Scottish Gaelic Language/Faclair na Gàidhlig, and the Gaelic Place-Names of Scotland project/Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba. We will support schools and Gaelic Medium Education through our courses for teachers, early years educators and classroom assistants. We will deliver apprenticeships to secondary school students. And we will warmly welcome students throughout the year from all over the world to our extremely popular short courses and distance learning courses.

Our estate environment is extremely important to students and staff especially, but also to our community. We will continue to maintain and upgrade our buildings over the next five years, and we will develop community facilities through, for example, the new housing at Kilbeg. It is a real pleasure, at the beginning of this strategic plan, to see progress with the next phase of the Kilbeg housing development. Kilbeg will create opportunities for so many people who have an interest in Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's mission and who are eager to be a part of it.

With increasing numbers interested in the Gaelic language and culture the world over, the Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Board of Directors looks to the future with confidence that our offering will help the next generation of Gaelic speakers to reach their own potential and contribute positively to the future of the language.

Gillian Rothach

 **DR. GILLIAN ROTHACH**
Principal

CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS



It gives me great pleasure to contribute a foreword to the Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Strategy for 2023-28. This strategy, the values it promotes and the commitments it contains, is another step in the remarkable story that commenced fifty years ago in the Isle of Skye.

The last fifty years have been a story of vision, ambition and dedication but also of impressive growth and achievement. My hope for Sabhal Mòr Ostaig is that the ambition and achievement of the future will match that of previous years.

Promoting and supporting the growth of Gaelic and its culture is at the heart of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's mission, and this has been clearly demonstrated in its learning and research opportunities, but also in wider public life, in community life and in the lives of many individuals.

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig is widely recognised as a valuable institution, which makes a unique contribution to Gaelic, to Skye, to Scotland and beyond. I would like to wish good success to all at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig in the years to come and I hope that this strategy will shape the achievements of future years.

 **JENNY GILRUTH MSP**
Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills



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“There are two things that I take away from Sabhal Mòr Ostaig – my confidence and my connections. Staying on campus for four years really helped grow my confidence in the language and enabled me to make so many connections with other students and visitors that I now use to enrich my pupils’ learning experience in the classroom.”

RACHEL KELLOW

CertHE Gaelic and Communication
BA (Hons) Gaelic and Education



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“An amazing place with wonderful opportunities.”

MARTIN ROBERTSON

Second year student



**STUDENT
TESTIMONIALS**

OUR VALUES



AMBITIOUS:

We lead and we serve by setting our aspirations high and doing everything in our power to achieve our strategic priorities, for the benefit of Gaelic as a living language and a thriving culture.

ENCOURAGING:

Our immersive and supportive Gaelic community inspires confidence in our students, staff and stakeholders.

COLLABORATIVE:

We work together with all our communities and stakeholders to create the resources and infrastructure we need to achieve our mutual ambitions for Gaelic language and culture.

COMMITTED:

We are dedicated to building on our success as the National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture to strengthen our unique Gaelic learning environment, to serve Gaelic communities, and to celebrate the Gaelic language and culture.

OPEN:

We welcome everyone to Sabhal Mòr Ostaig; and we are honest and transparent in all our relationships and communications.

SUSTAINABLE:

We are helping to build sustainable Gaelic communities, including our own College community, and we are adapting our practices to become net zero.





STUDENT
TESTIMONIALS

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“I loved it. Sabhal Mòr Ostaig is always everybody’s right choice. Even if it’s only for a year. You won’t get an experience like it anywhere else, and you won’t get people who are genuinely invested in you and in helping you like you will at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig.”

JOY DUNLOP

CertHE An Cùrsa Comais
BA (Hons) Gaelic Language and Culture

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“Sabhal Mòr Ostaig has definitely given me the confidence to use my Gaelic. I’m now presenting on the radio, and doing lots on social media, and if it wasn’t for the immersion year, followed by the Diploma in Gaelic Media, I wouldn’t have had all these opportunities.”

SORLEY JOHNSTON

CertHE Gaelic and Communication
DipHE Gaelic Media



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“Today, I use many of the fundamental skills that I learned at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. My time there has opened many doors for me, I learned so much, and I made lots of friends. It’s a place where you can discover new opportunities and a new path for yourself.”

CALUM MACLEAN

DipHE Gaelic Media



OUR
STRATEGIC
PRIORITIES



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1

OUR UNIQUE AND IMMERSIVE GAELIC LEARNING EXPERIENCE

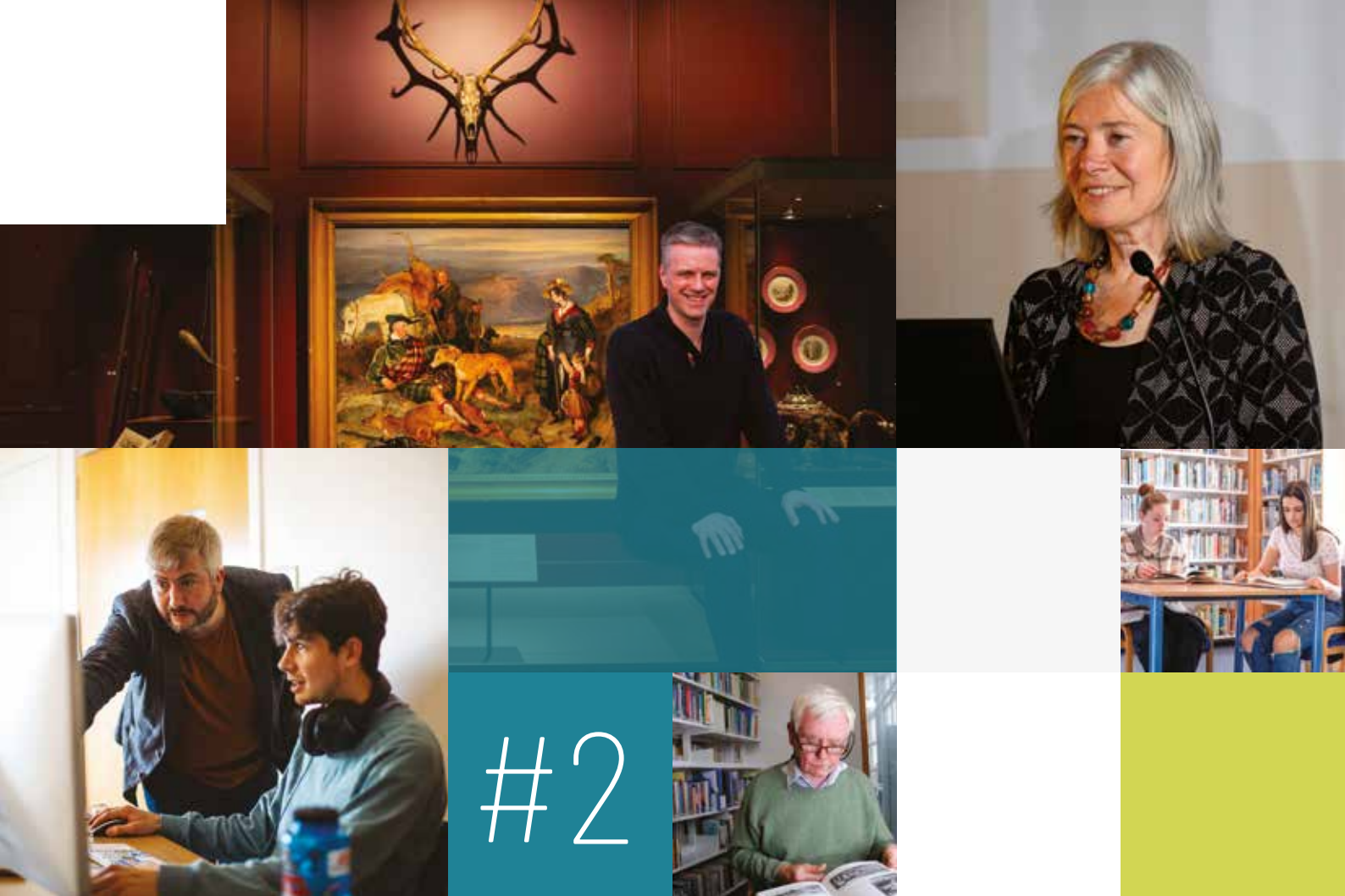
We will continue to grow a vibrant community of confident, skilled and ambitious Gaelic speakers who contribute effectively in Gaelic in their communities and workplaces, by:

- Providing a comprehensive, research-led and fully immersive Gaelic learning experience, drawing on the expertise of our staff and the richness of our cultural resources
- Providing accessible and relevant Gaelic learning opportunities to all our communities
- Being the leading provider of Gaelic Initial Teacher Education
- Being a centre of excellence for scholarship and research in Gaelic education pedagogies



#1





STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2

RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

We will continue to deliver excellence in research and make a significant contribution to Gaelic and Gaelic communities through a creative and collaborative approach to knowledge discovery and exchange by:

- Developing our capacity and capability in research, scholarship and knowledge exchange
- Developing our active research culture
- Improving development pathways for post-graduate students
- Ensuring that our research activities are world-leading
- Clearly and effectively demonstrating the value and impacts of our work as the National Centre of Excellence for Gaelic Language and Culture



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3

THE GAELIC ARTS AND CULTURE

We will continue to develop as a major hub for the Gaelic Arts and Culture, supporting the production of new work from staff and students and through collaboration with leading arts' practitioners and organisations by:

- Defining and re-energising Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's role as a key leader in the development of Gaelic arts and culture
- Providing opportunities to artists to create work in our immersive Gaelic-rich environment



#3



#4



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4

SUSTAINABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

We will continue to improve our sustainability and further develop our governing structures and processes as a thriving, independent Gaelic organisation by:

- Building strong financial management, modelling and processes to deliver sustained financial and organisational stability
- Developing our governance structures and processes to support the primacy of the Gaelic language and our institutional leadership and capacity
- Providing an environment where staff can flourish and focus on developing skills for now and the future

OUR ENVIRONMENT

Our Gaelic environment will continue to meet the needs of all our users by:

- Ensuring that we maximise digital developments to support our unique and immersive ways of working
- Delivering our confident and welcoming approach to hospitality
- Maximising our use of land, buildings and facilities
- Supporting development of commercial Gaelic activity through provision of business support and Gaelic-immersive workspaces
- Continuing capital/estates development in partnership to support Gaelic and our communities
- Reducing carbon emissions and developing energy generation to meet Net Zero requirements





#6



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #6

ENGAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS

We will continue to be an authoritative and influential Gaelic voice: living out our purpose, informing and being informed by our key stakeholders, and strengthening the Sabhal Mòr Ostaig community by:

- Developing our mutually beneficial relationships with stakeholders and wider communities to the benefit of the Gaelic language and culture
- Underpinning all our activities with research and evidence that helps us better understand and work with our communities
- Targeting our communications to increase engagement and deepen people's connection with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's brand and values
- Ensuring a strong and consistent brand identity and tone of voice
- Strengthening connections between staff, students and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig through excellent internal communications