



Program Guide

What is the Zero to Gaelic Program?

The Zero to Gaelic Program is a supported self-study program developed by the Gaelic Education Committee of Slighe nan Gaidheal. Its goal is to help individuals plan and pursue their study of Scottish Gaelic while taking maximum advantage of the educational opportunities offered by Slighe nan Gaidheal.

Will I be fluent when I'm done?

That's mostly up to you! Learning a language as an adult is a challenge, and we are dedicated to helping you out in any way that our all-volunteer organization can. Our syllabus covers all the basics of how Gaelic works, and if you master those skills, and work on your listening and speaking, then you can take that accomplishment as far as you wish.

How is the program structured?

We have developed a three-year syllabus of topics covering all the basics of the language. We present classes covering the syllabus at day-long Saturday classes.

We invite a mix of local and out-of-area presenters to teach the classes outlined in the syllabus. Our guest presenters are free to use any methods or materials they like to cover the scheduled subjects. If you wish to press ahead and finish in fewer than three years and possibly skip ahead to a higher level, we applaud and encourage your ambition!

How many Saturday intensives happen each year?

We produce five intensive days each year, in September, November, January, March, and May. The specific dates are usually available before the beginning of the program year in September.

Is there a textbook that I need to buy?

There is no particular book that you need to buy. Our dedicated committee members have created a document we call the Table of Correspondences, which tells you where to find the subjects covered in our syllabus in various common language textbooks.

Do I have to pre-register to participate?

No. You can drop in for individual intensive days if you wish, however you must contact the committee to be sure that the class level you are interested in is being offered. If we don't have enough participants at the beginning of the program year for a particular level, it may have to be cancelled.

What do you mean by supported self-study?

Unlike a traditional adult language course, which would have participants attending at least weekly classes with homework, tests, and other features, Zero to Gaelic was designed for busy people who can't always make scheduling commitments. The trade-off is that in order to truly master the material covered in the program, additional effort is necessary for most people.

What other kinds of things might I need to do?



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We recommend picking up one or more of the sets of language learning materials that we've indexed to the syllabus on our Table of Correspondences. These courses can really help you along between intensives, especially when they come with audio or video recordings.

We also set up a spam-free e-mail list for each group of participants moving through the program. We hope that you will use the lists to discuss your studies with the others in your group. Each list has an assigned moderator who is a fluent learner, and can help you find the answers to your questions. We would also encourage our participants to meet casually between intensives to practice their emerging conversation skills in person.

What happens if I miss one of the intensives?

One of the advantages of having a syllabus is that you'll know what was covered at any intensive that you can't attend. Use the Table of Correspondences to find the information, work it through on your own, or use the e-mail list to get help from other group members who were able to attend.

Do I have to be a member of Slighe nan Gaidheal to participate?

No. Members receive discounts when they attend Slighe nan Gaidheal events, however, so joining is encouraged!

Can I join the program at any time?

Up to a point, yes. We begin a new group of participants each year at our September Zero to Gaelic intensive. A very dedicated and self-motivated beginner could possibly join a group already in progress if they were able to catch up on their own, or with private help from one of our local teachers. Once the program year has been going for several intensives, however, it might be better to wait until the following September to join. If you have any questions about either possibility, please do contact a member of the Gaelic Education Committee to discuss it.

If you've already been studying Gaelic and want to join the second or third level groups, just contact us and we'll help you figure out which one is closest to your level.

Will I have the same presenter throughout my participation?

No. Although we sometimes are able to arrange with a particular presenter to help us out at more than one intensive in a row, we believe that a variety of teaching styles, accents, and areas of expertise will help people learn more broadly.

What happens if I register for a class and it is cancelled?

If we don't have enough registered participants to offer a class and we cancel it, then you will receive a full refund and we will work to place you with a private Gaelic teacher who can help you continue with your studies.

If I work with a private teacher, can I still get my completion pin?



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Yes! In that circumstance the Zero to Gaelic program will certainly recognize your efforts and award you a completion pin if your private teacher verifies that you have completed all units on the syllabus.

How do I get in touch with the Gaelic Education Committee?

One of four easy ways:

1. Come and see us at a Zero to Gaelic intensive day
2. Write us via our web site at <http://www.slighe.com/gaeliceducation>
3. Leave us a phone message at 206.903.9452
4. Write us a note at:

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