

# Handbook



## **SCOTTISH LANGUAGES EMPLOYABILITY AWARD**

DUAIS FASTADH  
CÀNAINÉAN NA H-ALBA

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*Bha Duais Fastadh Cànaichean na h-Alba air a leasachadh agus ga toirt gu buil le taic-airgid o Bhòrd na Gàidhlig agus GLAIF (Gaelic Language Act Implementation Funding).*

*The Scottish Languages Employability Award was developed and implemented with support from Bòrd na Gàidhlig and the Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund.*

## 1. Background and Aims

### Background

“Employers and schools need to develop strong two way partnerships – partnerships that deliver improvements to teaching and learning and bring real-life context into the classroom.”

[Developing the Young Workforce](#) (Scottish Government, 2014)

The Scottish Languages Employability Award was developed and implemented in 2019 out of the highly successful Business Language Champions (BLC) scheme, with support from Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Gaelic Language Act Implementation Funding.

The Scottish Languages Employability Award is recognition which businesses and schools in Scotland achieve as partners. Qualifying projects build partnerships between schools, businesses and other organisations and enable schools to deliver on [Developing the Young Workforce](#) and the [National Improvement Framework](#), build crucial partnerships as outlined in [How Good is Our School 4](#) and [Building the Curriculum 4](#), and effectively implement the [Career Education Standard \(3-18\)](#).

### Aims of the Scottish Languages Employability Award

The Scottish Languages Employability Award is designed to help schools and businesses to build partnerships through languages in order to develop young people’s learning about the world of work and the value of language skills and intercultural competencies in the workplace. It is suitable for learners of all ages in both primary and secondary schools.

The aim of this award is that schools and partners will be empowered to:

- prepare learners for the world of work and help them to move successfully into the workforce
- develop learners’ language skills and intercultural competencies
- raise awareness of the importance of languages for our economy and society
- promote a positive awareness of businesses and organisations in local communities
- develop corporate social responsibility activities in an innovative way
- harness and develop employees’ and volunteers’ language skills

## 2. Details of the Scottish Languages Employability Award

There are two deadline dates for submission each year: the third Friday in November and the third Friday in May. Submissions can be accepted at any time but will be held until the next verification round unless in exceptional circumstances.

A verification team will meet after each deadline to look at submissions, check that the criteria are met and grant the award at the appropriate level. Success criteria and full details of the verification process are in **Appendix E**.

The Scottish Languages Employability Award can be achieved at three levels: Bronze, Silver and Gold. The level achieved depends on the number of distinct year groups involved; see table below.

A fourth level of recognition is available for partnerships which achieve continued high-level partnership and innovation.

Scottish Languages Employability Award level	Criteria for award level
Bronze	A project (or range of projects) involving learners from 1 year group and at least 1 partner organisation
Silver	A range of projects involving learners from 2 year groups and ideally more than 1 partner organisation
Gold	A range of projects involving learners from 3 or more year groups, multiple partner organisations and incorporates more than one language
Platinum	Achieve a second successive Gold Award

Achievement in the Scottish Languages Employability Award is rewarded by a certificate sent to the school and by showcasing the successful project on the SCILT website and social media channels. The school and its partners will be presented with this certificate, which they can keep and display permanently. However, all levels of the Award are time-limited in terms of their validation.

A Bronze, Silver or Gold Award remains valid for two full academic years after the academic year in which it is awarded. During the time period described above, the school and its partners will be entitled to display the relevant Scottish Employability Languages Award and its logo in their correspondence and other relevant places (e.g. in e-mail footers, school handbooks or social media bios).

At the end of this period, a further submission showing evidence of continued school-business partnership in promoting languages is required in order to continue to hold the award.

### Platinum Award Level

Two successive Gold Awards will enable the holding school to become a Scottish Languages Employability Award Platinum Partner. Please note that a second Gold Award cannot be submitted within the period of validity of the first; the earliest submission point for this would be after two full academic years following the end of the award year. Upon successful award of a second Gold level, a school automatically becomes a Platinum Partner and receives certification at both levels. To maintain this status, an update form is required every 3 years; an example of this is in **Appendix C**.

### 3. Steps to achieving the Scottish Languages Employability Award

A more detailed checklist based on these steps can be found in **Appendix B**; it may be useful to complete this during the project and in preparing for completion of the submission form.

1. Identify school/business partner(s). See **section 4.a** for suggestions of approaches to establishing business links.
2. Plan an approach to integrating languages and employability involving a project, or a range of projects, aimed at showing learners the importance, and the use, of languages in the world of work. See **section 4.b** for ideas of some of the types of projects which have been successful in previous submissions and **section 4.c** for suggestions of how to incorporate meaningful language content. This may help to give ideas of potential projects.
3. Carry out the project(s), collecting evidence as you do so.  
**Please note that all projects in a submission should have taken place within the same academic year.**
4. Complete the Scottish Languages Employability Award submission form which can be found [on the SCILT website](#) and in **Appendix A** of this handbook. See **section 5** below for additional guidance regarding submission.
5. Send the completed form to [scilt@strath.ac.uk](mailto:scilt@strath.ac.uk) ahead of one of the biannual submission deadlines.
6. The contact teacher will be notified of the outcome of verification within the timescales outlined in **Appendix D**. All decisions will be accompanied by feedback.



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**BRONZE - UMHA**



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**SILVER - AIRGEAD**



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**GOLD - ÒR**



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**PLATINUM - PLATANAM**

#### **4. Guidance on developing an effective approach to incorporating Employability**

##### **a. Establishing business links**

Some schools will already have established links with local organisations, either at departmental or at whole-school levels. Many do not, though, and a common question that is asked is how to go about making connections that can form the basis of an employability partnership. This can involve some work initially, but once partnerships are formed these will usually grow and develop year after year, so the initial input is well worth it!

To begin with, it is useful to look at key local employers and identify those where languages can or might be most valuable. Common categories here would include hotels, tourist attractions, companies which export goods, retail outlets and other public-facing businesses. Some larger companies or national tourism bodies have staff responsible for community outreach work and it is good to identify them. The case studies on the page below of the SCILT website give details of all projects which have been awarded the Scottish Languages Employability Award so far, and some of the partnerships there may give further inspiration or ideas of potential contacts. <https://scilt.org.uk/Employment/Skillsforlifeandwork/tabid/1597/Default.aspx>

In addition, some schools have been more successful in forming partnerships where there is a personal connection, either through friends or family of staff or of pupils, or through former pupils of the school. The latter can be particularly motivational for learners as they can identify directly with them. It is also worth looking at connections that other departments in school may already have with businesses and exploring the possibility of tapping into these. Your school or local authority DYW lead may also be able to support with links to potential business partners.

The Education Scotland guidance documents on establishing education-employer partnerships may give further useful information and ideas. These can be accessed here: <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/education-employer-partnerships/#>

Once you have a list of possible organisations, the next step is to contact them by email with a brief introduction and a request to work in partnership. Although there is no requirement to do so, you may wish at this point to say that you plan to work towards the Scottish Languages Employability Award in partnership with the company, as this may prove to be an incentive for them!

Some schools have found greater success in gaining a response from companies if pupils are involved from this stage of the process, and if they can write letters or emails to companies on behalf of the class. In most cases it is the coordinating teacher who completes this task though.

It can be discouraging when a negative response, or no response, is received. Bear in mind that it only needs one partner to agree in order to proceed!

## **b. Ideas of activities**

This Award seeks to encourage the development of an approach which integrates Employability throughout the languages curriculum. It is less about an individual project or set of activities as it is about a process or mindset whereby languages and intercultural competencies are fostered to prepare learners for their role as part of a global workforce.

In seeking to give ideas of where to start with this, however, the following are suggestions of activities that partners could organise in order to inspire language learners. Many of these have been used successfully in previous projects; again, see the case studies on [the SCILT website](#) for more details of all projects which have been awarded the Scottish Languages Employability Award so far.

- Online or in-person talks by business representatives to schools about how languages are important to their organization. This could involve one key business partner, or a larger number in a careers fair-type of event.
- Follow-on activities exploring language use in specific work situations.
- Class and teacher visits to the business or organisation to see languages in action.
- Development of employability projects for students in target languages. This could include activities such as preparing materials for use by the organisation; previous projects have produced such varied resources as games, menus, information leaflets and web materials.
- Provision of language mentors to support students in a local school or schools.
- Access to company/organisation resources and documents in target languages.
- Any other activities which the school and their partner businesses and organisations feel will benefit both parties within the context of the Award.

A business-school partnership can involve more than one school and/or more than one business or organisation. It is a recommendation at Silver level, and a requirement at Gold level, that more than one external partner organisation is involved.



### **c. Incorporating language use**

The aims of this award centre around developing learners' awareness of the value of languages and intercultural competencies in the workplace, and of developing these skills within them. As such, as well as giving important information about job opportunities through languages, a strong language component is an integral part of the Scottish Languages Employability Award.

The verification team will be looking for clear evidence of target language use throughout the project, while also recognising that it will be necessary, and sometimes even preferable, for elements also to be completed in English. The balance of these will vary depending on the age, stage and language experience of the learners involved, and on the type of project being undertaken.

Ways in which the target language can be incorporated in a project could include:

- learning vocabulary related to the partner company
- completing activities in class using this vocabulary
- preparing resources for use by the partner company
- undertaking employability-focused activities in the target language, possibly with the partner company, such as completing simple CVs, application letters or job interviews
- preparing and presenting job or company profiles

The Scottish Languages Employability Award is an ideal opportunity for working across a number of languages within a school, including Gaelic, Scots and heritage languages as well as those of the Languages Department. The most successful submissions are those which feature a range of languages and for Gold level this is a requirement.



## **5. Additional guidance on completing the submission form**

The submission form has two short sections which should each be completed as fully as possible:

1. Information
2. Project report

The Project report section will be key in the verification of the submission. Please ensure that you include the following:

- Evidence of planning
- Evidence of learning
- Evidence of impact

The suggested word count for this section is around 300 words. This is not prescriptive, and there will be no penalty for exceeding it, but equally there is no need for overly lengthy responses.

### **Submitting additional evidence**

The submission form itself should enable you to give as much information about your project as is necessary to evidence the meeting of the Scottish Languages Employability Award success criteria. The form is designed to be detailed without being unduly onerous to complete. As such, there is no need to submit any additional evidence.

Within the form you are free to include additional information such as links to websites, collated feedback from participants or links to social media posts.

Please do not include pictures on the submission form. Section 2b of the form includes a link to an online form where you can, if you wish, submit a maximum of 6 pictures as additional evidence. These could be photos of the project activities, screenshots, photos of any resources used or made, or collages. It is important to stress that this is entirely optional and submissions which do not include photos will not be penalised.

## 6. FAQs

### ? **Is the award a lot of extra work?**

The SCILT Scottish Languages Employability Award (SLEA) is designed to help recognise the great work that is already being done in schools in Scotland towards promoting languages through employability. While we have already seen new, innovative projects and activities arise from this Award, other submissions have also reflected great work that was already happening which was able to contribute towards the award. For example, activities that you are already doing related to European Day of Languages, Languages Week Scotland, DYW events or school trips could all be included as activities that contribute towards this award.

### ? **Do I need to send in lots of evidence?**

No! The submission form should allow you enough scope to describe the stages of your project in sufficient detail for our verification team to see if the criteria have been met, and at which level. There is an option for you to submit, on a separate online form, a maximum of 6 pictures if you wish to do so, but there is no obligation or expectation of this.

### ? **Can SCILT help me find a business partner?**

SCILT created the Scottish Languages Employability Award on the basis that you know your local area and context for learning best, and we recommend that you first and foremost use this local knowledge and community to help you identify a suitable partner. Further support is available through examples of previous successful submissions, Business Language Champions case studies, and other examples of innovation [on our website](#) which can help you develop your own ideas. The suggestions in **section 4.a** above may also help.

### ? **Is my school/class too small?**

Definitely not! The Award has been designed in order that large schools and small schools can use it alike, across all sectors. The award is progressive and looks to encourage as wide a range of different ages to be involved in the activities that count towards the Award, regardless of the school context. There is also no requirement for a whole school or year group to be involved in every activity that is included.

### ? **What if I have a composite class?**

For the purposes of the award, a composite class which completes a single-activity project will count as one level and would be eligible for a Bronze award. In order to qualify for Silver or Gold, there should be some distinction in the activities that different year groups within a composite class undertake, although these are likely to be closely linked.

### ? **We are already involved with a business partner – do we need to find a new one?**

Not at all. The Award aims to capture and award existing innovation. Look at the submission form with your colleagues and partners and see if what you are doing already, or have recently completed, meets the criteria for the Scottish Languages Employability Award. We will look forward to seeing your project evidence!

### ? **We are a business – where do we start?**

If you do not yet have links with a school, then we recommend that you use your local knowledge and community. Your staff may have children in local schools for example, and each school will have a key contact person with responsibility for DYW (Developing the Young Workforce). In addition, the DYW [School/Employer Partnerships](#) documentation previously mentioned highlights a number of ways in which a business can contribute to working with a school partner, enriching the links between languages and employability.

Appendices

A. Submission Form

# Submission form



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1. Information			
Name of school			
School address and postcode			
Local authority			
Contact name and position in school			
Contact e-mail and telephone number			
School roll			
Year group(s) involved in project		Are any of the classes involved composite? (see FAQs of handbook)	Yes      No
Project title			
Languages incorporated			
Date started		Date completed (if appropriate)	
<i>Please note that all projects within a submission should take place within the same academic year (see section 3 of handbook)</i>			
Has the school previously participated in the SCILT Scottish Languages Employability Award?	Yes      No	If yes, please give dates, name of project and level of Award.	
Partner organisation(s)			
Contact(s) at partner organisation(s)			

2. Project report	
<p>a) Briefly give an overview of your project and activities. (approx. 300 words)</p> <p>Please include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• description of partner(s) involved</li> <li>• planning processes</li> <li>• activities undertaken</li> <li>• feedback</li> <li>• impact</li> <li>• future plans</li> </ul> <p>The <u>Checklist for Award</u> (see Appendix B), although not mandatory, will be useful for recording this information throughout the project and in completing this report.</p>	
b) Evidence	<p>Please submit evidence via <a href="#">the online form</a>.</p> <p>This should be a maximum of 6 pictures (photos/screenshots etc) – see section 5 of the handbook.</p>

<b>Permissions</b>	Please indicate if you are happy for your activities to be used as exemplification by SCILT and if all relevant permissions have been obtained according to your school policies. <b>Yes    No</b>	
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<b>Signed by School</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Signed by Partner Organisation</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Signed off by SCILT</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>

<b>For SCILT use only</b>					
<b>Comments and Feedback:</b>					
<b>Level of Scottish Languages Employability Award awarded and date of award:</b>					
<b>Bronze</b>		<b>Silver</b>		<b>Gold</b>	

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## B. Submission checklist

### Scottish Languages Employability Award

#### Checklist for Award

Completion of the checklist is not mandatory, and it does not need to be submitted to SCILT. It may however be useful to complete this during the project and in preparing for completion of the submission form.

1. Planning	Evidence
1.1 The school has identified and sourced partners, e.g. a local business, to develop a project in the target language(s) which brings skills for life and work into context.	e.g. name of partners
1.2 The school and partners have held an initial meeting to establish contact.	e.g. date of meeting, agenda



1. Planning	Evidence
1.3 The school and the partners have both identified and chosen a named individual or individuals within their organisation to act as a point of contacts, as well as a back-up contact.	e.g. name of contacts, agenda
1.4 The partners have agreed to develop a project (or projects) for students in the target language(s) to be taken forward by the students. It is appropriate to the level of the students involved, has an element of student choice in regard to the nature of the project and is relevant to the work of the partners' operations.	e.g. a plan of the project with approximate timings, E&O links, agenda
1.5 The project has clearly defined and agreed expectations related to the relevant <a href="#">Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes</a> and the <a href="#">Career Education Standard Entitlements</a> , and is signed off by representatives of all partners.	e.g. a signed plan of the project

2. Learning	Evidence
2.1. The partners have facilitated a visit by learners and teachers to the organisation's premises (where workplace is appropriate) to learn about their work and also to see and hear languages in action. <b>And/Or</b> The partners have sent in a representative or representatives to the school to discuss their organisation in general and the importance of languages to them for the learners.	e.g. photo, leaflets, presentation slides
2.2 Learners in the school are inspired by the visit to take forward the project within their school and to complete it through activities linking employability and languages.	e.g. feedback forms, examples of materials, pictures, numbers of participants

2. Learning	Evidence
<p><b>2.3 Activities</b> A short description of the activity, the outcomes, the year groups and number of learners involved. Schools have flexibility in the number of activities that they may wish to do in order to achieve the award. The range and number of participants in these activities and the quality of the experience is what is important.</p>	
Activity One	e.g. pictures, a pupil report, feedback forms, posters.
Activity Two (if applicable)	
Activity Three (if applicable)	
Activity Four (if applicable)	
Activity Five (if applicable)	
2.4 The school and partners have collected feedback from the participants for reflection and to inform next steps.	e.g. feedback forms

3. Impact	Evidence
3.1 The school(s) have developed a culture where learning languages is more valued.	e.g. learner feedback forms, staff feedback forms
3.2 The partners have agreed to use any materials or resources produced in the project, where appropriate.	e.g. examples of the materials, resources
3.3 The partners engage with and demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the languages used by its customers, stakeholders, associates and communities.	e.g. feedback forms from the partner organisation(s)
3.4 The partners have discussed and planned future steps, and planning is in place for future activities.	e.g. agendas, minutes of meetings, planned activities
3.5 The overall project is publicised via a public forum on a whole school basis.	e.g. press clippings, screenshots, url links

C. Platinum Award holders' update form

# Platinum Partner Update form



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<b>1. Information</b>	
Name of school	
School address and postcode	
Local authority	
Contact name and position in school	
Contact e-mail and telephone number	
Year of Platinum Award	
<b>2. Update</b>	
<p>Briefly give an overview of your ongoing partnership work to develop Employability and languages. (approx. 300 words)</p> <p>Please include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• description of partner(s) involved</li> <li>• activities undertaken</li> <li>• impact</li> <li>• future plans</li> </ul>	

c) Evidence	Please submit any evidence via <a href="#">the online form</a> . This should be a maximum of 6 pictures (photos/screenshots etc) – see section 5 of the handbook.
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Permissions	Please indicate if you are happy for your activities to be used as exemplification by SCILT and if all relevant permissions have been obtained according to your school policies.	Yes No
Signed by School	Name	Date
Signed by Partner Organisation(s)	Name	Date
Signed off by SCILT/CISS	Name	Date

For SCILT/CISS use only
Comments and Feedback:
Confirmation of Platinum Partner status:



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## **D. Verification procedures and Success criteria**

### **Before verification**

Professional Services staff will collate submissions and contact centres by email.

An acknowledgement email will be sent within one week to the submitting school with the date of the next verification round, stating that a decision will be informed forthwith.

All submissions and connected evidence will be stored in a shared folder accessible to SCILT/CISS staff only.

The verification panel will consist of the SCILT Professional Development Officers and any other staff or guests deemed appropriate.

### **During verification**

The verification panel will have access to submissions and any accompanying evidence. They will consider this against the success criteria below and come to a mutually agreed decision on the outcome of the submission.

The verification process should normally be completed within one month of the submission date. This may change depending on capacity and if there is need for any additional information to be requested.

### **After verification**

Schools will be informed of the relevant decision regarding their Award within a week of the verification panel. This is part of the one-month timeframe indicated above. They will be provided with comments and feedback as agreed by the panel.

Successful submissions will receive a certificate within one month of the Award being granted. Materials will not be returned except on request.

Professional Services staff will update the spreadsheet to show the level of award, the date awarded and the date it will lapse.

Case studies of successful awards will be published on the SCILT website.

SLEA Awardees will be highlighted in bulletins and in other SCILT communications on an ongoing basis.



## Success criteria

During the verification process, panel members will assess the following for each submission:

- number of classes/year groups involved
- number of partner organisations involved
- strength of partnerships – input from partners, evidence of two-way planning and involvement
- different languages incorporated – this is a recommendation at Bronze and Silver levels and a requirement at Gold level
- evidence of planning, learning and impact

These are the key criteria which will determine awards. All of these criteria should be met if a submission is to be successful. The degree to which they are met may vary, and feedback from the panel will reflect this. The table below expands these further:

Criteria	Reason	Where this information will be found
Number of classes/year groups involved	To assist in allocation of award level	Submission form section 1
Number of partner organisations involved	To assist in allocation of award level	Submission form section 1
Strength of partnerships	To grant an award	Submission form section 2
Different languages incorporated	To assist in allocation of award level	Submission form section 1
Evidence of planning, learning and impact	To grant an award	Submission form section 2

## E. Additional support and resources

- SCILT Employability resources: <https://scilt.org.uk/Employment/Toolkitforschools/tabid/8062/Default.aspx>
- SCILT Developing Partners resources: <https://scilt.org.uk/S1-S3/Developingpartnerships/tabid/2455/Default.aspx>
- DYW Scotland: <https://www.dyw.scot/>
- DYW - Developing Partnerships: [https://www.dyw.org.uk/files//GuidanceforEmployers0915\\_tcm4-871657.pdf](https://www.dyw.org.uk/files//GuidanceforEmployers0915_tcm4-871657.pdf)
- DYW blog – Guidance on Partnerships: <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/dyw20/2015/09/25/guidance-on-schoolemployer-partnerships-career-education-and-work-placements-standard-available-now/>
- Scottish Government – DYW document: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2015/09/developing-young-workforce-guidance-school-employer-partnerships-guidance-schools/documents/00485674-pdf/00485674-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00485674.pdf>
- Education Scotland – Careers Education Standard: <https://www.education.gov.scot/Documents/dyw2-career-education-standard-0915.pdf>
- Education Scotland – Careers Education Standard resources: <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/career-education-standard-3-18-suite-of-learning-resources/>
- Education Scotland – School/Employer Partnerships: [https://education.gov.scot/documents/dyw\\_guidanceforschoolemployerpartnerships0915.pdf](https://education.gov.scot/documents/dyw_guidanceforschoolemployerpartnerships0915.pdf)
- Skills Development Scotland – DYW Partners: <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/scotlands-careers-services/education-team/developing-the-young-workforce/dyw-partners-section/>
- Ready Unlimited - Developing Effective Partnerships: <http://www.readyunlimited.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Creating-effective-partnerships-with-employers-guidance-for-teachers1.pdf>



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