Handbook

SLEA Local

SCOTTISH LANGUAGES EMPLOYABILITY AWARD

DUAIS FASTADH CÀNAINEAN NA H-ALBA

LOCAL - IONADAIL

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1. Introduction and Aims

Introduction
"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).](#)

Following a growing number of requests for support for input at cluster/network/local authority level, the **Scottish Languages Employability Award – Local** was introduced in 2023.

This provides a model for in-school events organised at a wider local level by teachers, DYW officers or cluster leads and recognises and rewards employability-focused partnerships at this level. The key aim is to encourage and support the development of partnership activities involving a number of schools within a local area or network.

This is the key difference between the existing Scottish Languages Employability Award and the newest addition to the SLEA family, the **Scottish Languages Employability Award – Local**. While the original award recognises partnership between one school and one or more business or organisations, the **Scottish Languages Employability Award – Local** allows a number of schools to pool their resources and ideas to form a mutually beneficial partnership with local businesses.

Aims of the Scottish Languages Employability Award - Local

The Scottish Languages Employability Award – Local is designed to help groups of schools and local businesses/organisations 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
- work together in communities to promote a positive awareness of local businesses and organisations
- develop corporate social responsibility activities in an innovative way
- harness and develop employees' and volunteers' language skills

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2. Details of the Scottish Languages Employability Award - Local

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 as appropriate. Success criteria and full details of the verification process are in **Appendix E.**

While the Scottish Languages Employability Award can be achieved at three levels (Bronze, Silver and Gold), the **Scottish Languages Employability Award – Local** is a single-level award.

Achievement in the **Scottish Languages Employability Award – Local** is rewarded by a certificate sent to the schools involved and by showcasing the successful project on the SCILT website and social media channels. The schools and their partners will be presented with this certificate.

The Award itself 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 – Local** 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 group-business partnership in promoting languages is required in order to continue to hold the award.

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3. Steps to achieving the Scottish Languages Employability Award - Local

This Award is designed to be organised at a central point within a cluster or network and to involve a number of partners across this network.

There is likely to be a coordinating organiser, or organising group, who will take the lead on planning and implementation of the activities. This person or group should also collate the relevant evidence and be responsible for completing the submission form in **Appendix A.**

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. Establish a local coordinator / coordinating group. They will be responsible for developing the project and gathering evidence. This could be a teacher, DYW coordinator, Chamber of Commerce group or any other with relevant responsibility within their role.

2. Identify school and business/organisation partner(s). See **section 4.a** for suggestions of approaches to establishing business links.

3. Plan an approach to integrating languages and employability involving a project, or a range of projects, aimed at showing learners across the local area 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.

4. 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.

5. Complete the **Scottish Languages Employability Award – Local** 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.

6. Send the completed form to scilt@strath.ac.uk ahead of one of the biannual submission deadlines.

7. The coordinating organiser 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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4. Guidance on developing an effective approach to incorporating Employability

    a. Building a partnership for the Scottish Languages Employability Award - Local

Submissions for the **Scottish Languages Employability Award – Local** are likely to take many different forms depending on who is involved in each partnership. While these will always consist of learners and local businesses/organisations, the group may be coordinated by and made up of teachers, senior managers, DYW officers, network coordinators, local authority/RIC representatives or any other relevant person or group.

The decision to form a partnership at a wider level and to submit for the **Scottish Languages Employability Award - Local** is likely to come out of discussion at network/local authority level and of a desire to organise an area-wide approach to languages and DYW.

Following this decision, the next step would be to identify:
- a project/set of activities to be undertaken
- the target learners
- the schools to be involved, and
- the businesses to be involved; although not necessarily in this order!

In looking for business partners, 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 for the **Scottish Languages Employability Award - Local**.
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. If the submission is being led by the school or local authority DYW lead they are also likely to 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 - Local** 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 project group.

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b. Ideas of activities

The **Scottish Languages Employability Award - Local** seeks to encourage the development of an approach which integrates Employability throughout the languages curriculum across a number of schools. While it is less about an individual project or set of activities than about a process or mindset whereby languages and intercultural competencies are fostered to prepare local learners for their role as part of a global workforce, it is likely that the outcomes and content of submissions for this award will be in the form of events and/or projects.

The following are suggestions of activities that partners could organise in order to inspire language learners.

- Online or in-person talks by business representatives to groups of schools (all in the same sector, or for example a secondary school with its associated primary schools) about how languages are important to their organisation. 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.
- School visits to businesses or organisations 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 local schools.
- Access to company/organisation resources and documents in target languages
- Linking with Chambers of Commerce at home and in other countries to explore jobs using languages.
- Any other activities which the schools and their partner businesses and organisations feel will benefit both parties within the context of the Award.

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 supporting them to develop these skills. 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 - Local**.

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

The Scottish Languages Employability Award - Local 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.

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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 - Local** 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 Qualtrics 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.

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6. FAQs

? **How is the Scottish Languages Employability Award – Local different from the standard Scottish Languages Employability Award?**
Good question! In a nutshell, the original SLEA recognises partnership working on languages and employability involving one school and any number of businesses. The **SLEA – Local** recognises partnerships between any number of schools and any number of businesses in an area, whether that be a cluster, a network, a local authority or a RIC. This allows for high-quality, centralised events and projects to be organised, ensuring that all schools in the group can participate in promoting languages and DYW. It allows the role of local DYW coordinators to be tapped into and raises the profile of employability in languages to a higher level locally.

For schools who would still like to develop their own DYW programmes, the original SLEA is still very much available. You can submit for that even if you are also part of an **SLEA – Local** group!

? **Is the award a lot of extra work?**
The SCILT **Scottish Languages Employability Award - Local** is designed to help recognise the great work that is already being done in schools in Scotland towards promoting languages through employability, and to extend this to network/local authority level. There is a great deal already happening in schools around employability and much of that could easily be adapted and broadened in order to contribute towards the award. For example, activities related to European Day of Languages could be offered across your cluster; DYW events could be organised to tie in with Languages Week Scotland, existing careers events could be shared with other local schools.

? **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 business partners?**
SCILT created the Scottish Languages Employability Award originally, and now particularly in the case of the **Scottish Languages Employability Award - Local**, 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.

? **How many schools/groups should be involved?**
This will very much depend on the nature of the activities which you plan to undertake. An activity with a specific local company may involve as few as two schools working closely together, while an online careers event with a range of speakers could involve 20 schools! The main feature of this award is partnership working, not just between one school and one business, but between a range of local schools and organisations. If this is achieved then this rather than a specific number of partners is the key to a successful submission.

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? **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 reward 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, or if it could be extended in order to do so. 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.

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SUBMISSION FORM

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1. Information			
Name of submission coordinator			
School / organisation			
Local authority			
Coordinator contact e-mail and telephone number			
Schools involved	**Name of school**	**School address**	**Contact at school**
Project title(s)			
Languages incorporated			
Date started		**Date completed (if appropriate)**	
Please note that all projects within a submission should take place within the same academic year (see section 3 of handbook)			
Partner organisation(s)			
Contact(s) at partner organisation(s)			

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2. Project Report	
a) Briefly give an overview of your project and activities. (approx. 300 words) **Please include the following:** • description of partner(s) involved • planning processes • activities undertaken • feedback • impact • future plans The Checklist for Award (see Appendix B), although not mandatory, will be useful for recording this information throughout the project and in completing this report.	
b) Evidence	**Please submit evidence via this link.** **This should be a maximum of 6 pictures (photos/screenshots etc) – see section 5 of the handbook.**

| 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** | |

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Signed by Coordinator	Name		Date
Signed off by SCILT/CISS	Name		Date

For SCILT/CISS use only
Comments and Feedback:
Award criteria met: Date:

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B. Submission Checklist

Scottish Languages Employability Award - Local

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 A local partnership group has been established and a coordinator nominated to carry forward work incorporating employability and languages.	e.g. names of those involved, how the group came about, decisions made at first meeting
1.2 Local business partner(s) identified and planning meeting arranged	e.g. date of meeting, agenda
1.3 The partners have agreed to develop a project (or projects) for students in 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 Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes and the Career Education Standard Entitlements, and is signed off by representatives of all partners.	e.g. a signed plan of the project

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2. Learning	Evidence
2.1. The Partners have facilitated visits 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. **And/Or** The Partners have sent in a representative or representatives to schools (in-person or online) 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 schools are inspired 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
2.3 Activities A short description of the activity, the outcomes, the year groups and number of learners involved. Groups 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.	
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 Schools and Partners have collected feedback from the participants for reflection and to inform next steps.	e.g. feedback forms

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3. Impact	Evidence
3.1 The Schools have developed a culture locally 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 wider network/authority basis.	e.g. press clippings, screenshots, url links

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C. Verification Procedures and Success Criteria

Scottish Languages Employability Award - Local

Verification procedures and success criteria

Before verification

Professional Services staff at SCILT will collate submissions and contact coordinators by email.
An acknowledgement email will be sent within one week to the coordinator 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

Coordinators 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 - Local 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 key points for each SLEA – Local 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
- 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.

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D. 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
- 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
- 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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