



Learning about Scotland

This is about Scotland and has 2 parts:

(1) First there is an outline of the topics covered in an Area Studies Scotland class at Konstanz University.

(2) Second there are some tips on other ways to learn about Scotland.

(1) Area Studies Scotland class

If you would like to learn about Scotland and live in or near Konstanz, then come to an Area Studies Scotland class at the University. If you are not registered as a student, contact the Secretary of the Sprachlehrinstitut for information on how to register as a „Gasthörer“. See the homepage of the Sprachlehrinstitut at the University website.

The Area Studies Scotland class is offered primarily to students majoring in English, but is also open to students of other subjects, with a wide variety of interests. The following should give you an idea of the topics covered in an Area Studies class and the kind of questions we ask and try to find answers to. First, however, we always take a look at the facts and figures of Baden-Württemberg and Germany e.g. size, population, exports, number of universities, and use this as a kind of framework of reference to compare with the facts and figures of Scotland. For example, students discover that Scotland is roughly twice the size of Baden-Württemberg and has only half the population.

History:

Who are the Scots. How did Scotland come into existence. International relations in the past: the enemies and the allies. The reasons for the wars with England and The Auld Alliance with France. Reasons for the Union with England. The consequences of the Union of the Crowns and the Union of Parliaments. The 1715 and 1745 Rebellions. The Clearances and emigration. The role of the Scots in the British Empire.

Geography:

What are the different geographical regions of Scotland. What is life like in these different regions. How has Scotland profited from regional aid from the EU. Partnerships of Scottish regions with other European regions.

Tourism:

Who visits Scotland. What do they want or expect. What kind of Scotland is marketed and how. What does tourism contribute to the economy. Is tourism changing Scotland.

Population:

Who lives in Scotland today. How is the population made up. Ethnic minorities and integration. Government measures to increase the population.

Women:

What percentage of the population is female. What is the situation of women – in education, at work, in public life. What percentage of Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) are women. Women in top jobs. Childcare facilities. Famous women.

Sport:

What are the popular sports. Who plays them. What are the particularly Scottish sports. Who are the Olympics stars, and in what disciplines. Leisure activities: how do Scots spend their spare time.

Food:

What do Scots eat. Typical food, international favourites, fast food, Scottish specialities. How healthy are Scottish people in terms of what they eat. What Scottish specialities are (widely) available in Germany.

Film:

How big, healthy, productive is the Scottish Film Industry. Images of Scotland in film, recurrent themes. Who are the Scottish directors, producers, actors. Do films made by Scots differ from films made about Scots by non-Scots. Feature films and documentaries.

Education:

The whole education system from bottom to top – what is different from

Germany. (A lot!) The universities in particular - where are they and what are their special features.

Languages:

What are the official languages of Scotland. Which languages are spoken/written/taught in Scotland today. The attitudes of people towards them, and their relative standing. What is the difference between Scottish English and Scots. Where is Gaelic used today: TV, radio, film, print media, school, law courts?

The media:

Is Scotland's national identity catered for in the media. What newspapers are there - with what interests. Are radio and TV programmes made in Scotland. What is on the TV menu. How is Scotland represented. Is there anything specifically Scottish about soaps and series made in Scotland. Are there Scottish news broadcasts?

Music and Dance:

What kind of music is being made in Scotland today. Internationally famous bands. What is traditional music and where can you find it. What vocal and instrumental musical traditions are there. What part do they play in Scotland today. The representation of historical events in music.

Pioneers, explorers and other heroes and heroines:

Who are the Scots who have made major contributions to the world. Which Scots are important figures today.

Glasgow and Edinburgh:

Two important cities. Their different histories, their differences today. Their representation in literature. How did Glasgow come to be a UNESCO City of Music? And Edinburgh a City of Literature?

Politics:

The current political situation. How and when the Scottish Parliament came into being. The structure of the Parliament and the differences from Westminster. What responsibilities does the Parliament have. What laws of major importance has Parliament passed since coming into being. How the Scottish Parliament presents itself on the Internet. The different parties and their aims. How strong is the Scottish National Party. Opinion polls on Scottish Independence.

The symbols of Scotland:

What are their origins and how are they used today.

Festivals, traditions, celebrations:

Which are very important in Scotland today, and why.

Literature:

Who are the great figures of past literature. How are they marketed today. Contemporary figures of interest. Where are contemporary strengths - in the novel? poetry? drama? Are there recurring themes.

The current economic situation:

The move away from heavy industry in the second half of the twentieth century. Which sectors of the economy are the most important for Scotland today. Which employ most people, which earn most money. The importance of exports (to Germany). The importance of tourism.

And finally: **Identity:**

What makes a people perceive itself as a nation?

(2) Other ways of learning

If you are not able to take part in an Area Studies Scotland class you can still make use of all the other information available. Please see all the files in the *Scotland Section*, and those under *Area Studies Scotland* in the *Course Materials Section*.

In the *Handouts Section*, under *Stay Abroad* you will also find a report written by a student who spent a year working at a Scottish school as an assistant teacher of German, and one written by a student at Glasgow University:

FyF_ha_assistantteacher_report04.pdf

FyF_ha_studyreport01.pdf

There is also a whole set of materials for teaching about Scotland, all created by students in my Area Studies Scotland class for use in German schools.

FyF_sc_learnaboutscotland.pdf

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