
**EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S
SERVICES DIRECTORATE**

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Your Ref:
Our Ref: ML/EF

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Dear Parent/Carer

You may remember I wrote to you in early December 2020, following the announcement made by the Deputy First Minister that the 2021 exam diet for Higher and Advanced Higher had been cancelled in addition to the National 5 exam diet. I said I would write to you again, when I had more information.

I know this time out of school has been very challenging and although most children have now been back in school for some face to face learning you are concerned about what is happening regarding your child's qualifications this year. I hope this letter goes some way to reassuring you.

Firstly, this year due to the cancellation of exams, the stages for delivering National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher results in 2021 make up what is called the [alternative certification model](#).

When your child returns to school for full time face to face learning, which we hope is after the Easter holidays, they will need time with their teachers to review their learning. This is called consolidating their learning. The time from then until June will be when most of their assessment and gathering of evidence will be done.

The final date for your child's school to send their provisional results to SQA has now been extended to **Friday 25 June 2021**, which is at the end of term. This means that there is more time for assessment and gathering evidence by teachers to determine provisional results. As we all understand this has not been a normal year. The SQA has already reduced the assessment evidence needed for each National Course this year in comparison to other years. These assessments will still maintain the standards of the qualifications so what your child is awarded will not be of less value than previous years.

SQA have indicated that teachers and college lecturers (where appropriate) have the flexibility to collate assessment evidence in ways and at times that are appropriate to the needs of their learners. Your child's teachers will tell them how they are gathering evidence for each of their subjects in their school. They will also give them feedback on their learning and how they are progressing. This should mean that there are no surprises for their provisional results.

Be assured that SQA will not change your child's provisional results. This year they will check for any administrative errors that may occur when schools or colleges enter the data into the system. SQA have indicated there will be an Appeals service and are currently consulting on how this should work. The consultation can be found by clicking **here**. Once I have detail on how this will look I will let you know.

Your child will receive their final results by post on Tuesday 10 August 2021, and by text and or email if they register for this service at [MySQA.org.uk](https://mysqa.org.uk) which I would encourage them to sign up for.

Published guidance and assessment support

The provisional results provided by the school will be based on the assessments your child will have done which are consistent with SQA's subject-specific guidance. SQA has provided subject-specific guidance documents and assessment materials, as well as Understanding Standards materials to help teachers (and college lecturers where appropriate) apply national standards consistently and fairly when assessing your child's evidence.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance of qualifications is the process of carrying out checks to make sure that assessments are accurate and consistent with the national standards. This is needed to ensure fair and credible certification. In Fife, we will do this in each department in every school and across schools, so that the evidence gathered in different schools and in different subjects is discussed widely. A central team will also support schools in this process.

There will also be sampling by SQA in each school (and college where appropriate) of your child's work to make sure that assessment evidence is appropriate and consistent with the national standard across all schools delivering the qualifications. The purpose of this is to ensure that a grade A awarded in the north of Scotland is worth the same as a grade A awarded in the south of Scotland and everywhere in between. This learners' booklet explains the process [What you need to know for 2021](#)

No Timetable changes

In a normal year each Secondary school in Fife decides on when they will move their timetable for all learners in their schools. This year, we have collectively agreed that there will be no move with any timetable until August. This will also apply to college courses although we are hoping that some of these can begin online.

This means that your child will remain in their year group and classes until the end of June. Your child will therefore be expected to attend school, even if they are a school leaver, until they have completed all their necessary assessments and teachers are happy they have gathered all the evidence they need. Once this has been done and only if your child is a school leaver, they will then be required to complete a leaver form before they can leave school.

I appreciate for some this may feel a bit unfair as their predecessors left school at the start of their exams. However, I am sure you will understand that in Fife we are trying to give your child as much time as possible until the final provisional results are submitted.

I want to assure you all that I am working with all our Headteachers in a close partnership to support them and they in turn are working with teachers to be confident in the processes for the alternative certification model.

To stay up to date with progress of SQA nationally please use the following link [2021 National Qualifications](#)

In Fife we pay for every school to access SCHOLAR programmes. Your child will have a school log in, to access this resource. A new video has been released, [Studying for SQA Qualifications Using SCHOLAR](#) to demonstrate how to use SCHOLAR in their studies as they work towards a National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher qualification. The video is suitable for your child, even with no prior experience of SCHOLAR. It may benefit your child with summative assessments or can be used to access interactive course materials and automatically marked, end of topic and end of unit assessments for consolidation and revision.

I will write to you again to update you on the progress being made in Fife.

Yours sincerely



Maria Lloyd
Head of Education (Secondary Schools and Specialist Support)