



Update from SQA – Qualifications

The current healthcare situation has created a lot of uncertainty, and for young people completing SQA qualifications in school, college or with a training provider or employer, the cancellation of the 2020 exams and coursework assessments has amplified this for them and their parents or carers.

The NPFS understands that you may have lots of questions and will want reassurance that your child will receive results that accurately and fairly demonstrate their skills, achievements and abilities.

SQA is adapting to this unprecedented situation and continues to issue information and guidance to schools and colleges. They are also working with us to get relevant information directly to you.

We will continue to update you with information to answer questions and concerns as and when we know.

The Qualifications

The qualifications listed are covered within the information below:

- National Courses (National 2, National 3, National 4, National 5, Advanced Higher and Higher)
- Baccalaureate Interdisciplinary Project Units
- National Certificates
- National Progression Awards
- Skills for Work Courses
- Awards
- Freestanding units at SCQF level 5, 6, and 7

Exams

Why have exams been cancelled?

- On the 19th March 2020 the Deputy First Minister announced that the 2020 exams would be cancelled. The decision was taken by the Scottish Government due to the latest medical and scientific advice surrounding COVID-19.

How will National Qualifications be certificated this year?

- To make sure that your child's hard work is recognised, schools and colleges are providing SQA with estimated grades and bands for all learners entered in National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Courses.
- Schools and colleges have a strong understanding of your child's performance in class. They are also able to consider your child's performance in previous exams and assessments, where applicable. This information can be used to estimate grades.
- Teachers and lecturers are expected to use their professional judgement to estimate your child's grade and band. This should be based on both what your child has demonstrated throughout the course as well as what their teacher or lecturer would have expected them to achieve.

When and how will schools and colleges supply estimated grades to SQA?

- SQA is providing guidance to schools and colleges by Monday 20 April on how teachers and lecturers should determine and submit your child's estimate grades and bands.
- The closing date for SQA to receive estimate grades has been extended by a month giving schools and colleges until Friday 29 May to submit your child's details.
- Estimates that have already been sent to SQA will still be processed, however schools and colleges will be able to update these following the guidance issued by 20 April.

Does my child need to do any further work?

- No. The NPFS does not expect schools to be setting any additional tasks to estimate grades. SQA does not need schools or colleges to set additional prelims, mock exams, or any homework tasks to form an estimate.

Coursework

What does this mean for internally assessed qualifications?

- National 2, National 3, and National 4 courses, as well as the Baccalaureate Interdisciplinary Project, are made up of units and do not have exams. These units are assessed by schools or colleges and awarded a pass/fail. The results are then checked by SQA.
- Schools and colleges will provide unit results for National 2, National 3, National 4 and the Baccalaureate Interdisciplinary Project by either using existing evidence

from assessments, and/or using their professional judgement and knowledge of your child's progress and achievements so far. These are due to be submitted by 22 May for schools, and 1 June for colleges.

- For National Certificates, National Progression Awards, Skills for Work courses, and Awards all schools, colleges, employers and training providers have been asked to submit the results of their assessment decisions based on their professional judgement and the work your child has carried out through the year.

Why isn't SQA marking coursework?

- Due to the current public health advice it has not been possible for all coursework to be completed and sent to SQA.
- In order to be as fair as possible to all learners across Scotland and to protect the safety of markers, SQA realised that it would not be possible to mark the National 5 coursework that they had already received. SQA staff are unable to access, and therefore return, this coursework.
- We know this will be disappointing news. But SQA have taken this difficult decision to be as fair as possible to all learners, whilst responding to and following the latest public health guidance.

Results

When will my child receive their results?

- Everyone at SQA is working to ensure that learners who have studied National Qualifications, including Skills for Work courses, will receive their results no later than Tuesday 4 August, as originally planned.
- We strongly recommend that your child signs-up to MySQA (www.mysqa.org.uk) to receive their results by text and/or email. If your child has already received their results through MySQA previously, they will continue to do so this year. We recommend that your child checks their account to make sure that their contact details are up to date.

Will my child be able to progress to the next stage of their education or employment with the grades they receive this year?

- Yes. SQA is working with UCAS (The University and College Admission Service), Colleges Scotland, Universities Scotland and Skills Development Scotland to ensure

that colleges, universities and employers are aware of the situation and help learners progress to the next stages of their learner journey.

Will schools and colleges still be able to question results?

- Yes. A free appeals service will be available to ensure schools and colleges can question candidates' results. SQA will provide more details about the appeals service in the coming weeks.

What still needs to be worked out?

- SQA is providing detailed guidance to schools and colleges on how to determine and submit your child's estimate grades and bands. This guidance will be available by Monday 20 April 2020. SQA will also provide fuller details of our approach to certification, and its appeals process as soon as possible.

The NPFS will continue to work with SQA to provide parent dedicated information. The NPFS is here to support parents and answer questions from you. You can contact us at enquiries@NPFS.org.uk For other information including resources go to www.npfs.org.uk or visit www.sqa.org.uk/2020qualifications



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