



December 2020

Dear Grove Higher/Advanced Higher Candidate,

NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS 2021 - HIGHER AND ADVANCED HIGHER ASSESSMENT UPDATE

I wrote to you recently to provide you with important information on the approach to assessing your progress and attainment this year. I said that I would update you if there were any changes, depending on any further SQA guidelines.

As you will probably know, the Depute First Minister has now cancelled the Higher/Advanced Higher exams in 2021, due to the Covid situation. We have therefore had to adapt our plans.

Higher and Advanced Higher Awards will now be based on evidence produced by each candidate and assessed by their teachers, adhering to the national standard at that level. After due quality assurance procedures, schools will submit provisional results to SQA by Friday 28 May 2021. As the Awarding Body, SQA will then carry out their own quality assurance checks before awarding grades in August.

With the cancellation of the SQA exams, we no longer need to have a mock run-through for pupils to replicate an exam which is not happening this year.

SQA have stated:

- it is important that learning and teaching time is maximised,
- there is no requirement for schools and colleges to hold prelims.
- Question papers can be split to support assessments which are carried out during class time.
- Other types of evidence can also be used when producing learners' provisional results.
- The course requirements have changed

In making the decision to replace the Prelim Diet with an assessment window, I consulted with pupils and staff. The overwhelming Pupil Voice was in favour of assessment windows – as this would result in much less stress for them. A substantial majority of PTs are in favour of moving to an assessment window and felt this was the best way to assess our young people over time, rather than on one day.

We shall also have a second assessment window in April, after the Easter holidays, to collect enough evidence to ensure all candidates get the best grade possible.

So how will we reach these provisional results?

Your class teachers will be monitoring your progress throughout the session.



TYPE OF ASSESSMENT	WHY?
<p>1. Timed class assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ongoing throughout the session ● completed during class time ● your teacher will inform you of dates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To check your knowledge and understanding of a topic/unit. ● To help you develop a skill required in the subject. ● To help you to learn and revise course content at a gradual pace. This avoids last minute cramming and stress. ● To capture your progress over time. ● To identify gaps in your knowledge and understanding so that you can improve. ● To back-up your Working Grade in reports.
<p>2. Assessment Windows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● there will be no study leave ● within the dates below. ● school timetable will be issued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To assess the application of your skills, knowledge and understanding across the course, possibly using unseen SQA questions. ● To provide evidence to determine your final provisional result. Provisional results will be subject to quality assurance procedures by the SQA.

Please note that if you are absent due to self-isolating, alternative dates will be arranged for you to sit assessments.

Your teachers will keep you informed of arrangements relating to your subjects, for example, practical assessments in Music, Drama, PE, etc.

ASSESSMENT WINDOW	DATES
Higher/Advanced Higher 1	Monday, 18 January to Friday, 29 January 2021 inclusive
Higher/Advanced Higher 2	Monday, 19 April to Friday, 30 April 2021 inclusive

A timetable for assessments during the first window is currently being finalized and will be published shortly on our Website.

I hope that you find this information helpful. Please note that these arrangements may be subject to change, depending on any further amendments to SQA guidelines.

Your success is so important to me and to all of the staff. All of the procedures detailed above are designed to support you and give you every chance of attaining your very best.

Wishing you every success.

Please, stay safe and well!

Yours sincerely,



Graham W Hutton
Rector

