



December 2020

Dear Parent/Care-giver

SQA NQ Courses - Update

As you may know the Deputy First Minister has cancelled the Higher and Advanced Higher exams for 2021, as he did with the National 5 exams earlier. Instead, all National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher awards will be professional teacher judgement based on evidence, subject to SQA quality assurance.

We have also learned that these provisional results must be in to the SQA by Friday 28th May 2021.

National 5

The final submission date of Friday 28th May 2021 allows us a little more time to collect the evidence required. I have therefore decided to push the third assessment window for most subjects, except for English and History, back to April, after the Easter holidays, to allow more time for learning and teaching and to collect enough evidence for all candidates to ensure you get the best grade possible. (The exceptions are due to the high quantity of marking that needs to be done in a very short time in April when we shall also have H/AH assessments).

Higher/Advanced Higher

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.

ASSESSMENT WINDOWS	DATES
National 5 - 1	Monday 7 December to Friday 18 December inclusive
Higher/Advanced Higher 1	Monday, 18 January to Friday, 29 January 2021 inclusive
National 5 - 2	Monday 1 February to Thursday 11 February inclusive
National 5 – 3a	English: 10 & 12 March 2021 (S4) 10 & 15 March (S5/6) History: 4C – 17 March; 4F -19 March
National 5 – 3b and Higher/Advanced Higher 2	Monday 19 April to Friday 30 April 2021

These assessments will be conducted during class time, following SQA examination procedures. For example: pupils will not be allowed mobile phones in the classroom while undertaking an assessment.

A whole school overview of assessments has been created to try to avoid overburden of assessment in any one day and over time. The schedule for the Higher/Advanced Higher Assessment Window in January is currently being finalised and will be published shortly on our website. The N5 Assessment schedule remains as previously published for the February window, but the March/April window is currently being finalised and will be published in the New year.

If you feel that a pupil's performance in an assessment may have been affected by illness, a personal circumstance, or an unplanned incident on the day, which was out with their control this must be reported to the pupil's Guidance Teacher no later than one week after the assessment so this may be taken into account.

Our reporting calendar has been reviewed, as below, in line with revised assessment arrangements.

REPORTING EPISODE	DATE ISSUED
S4 Tracking Report	February 2021
S5/6 Tracking Report (Prelims)	February 2021

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

Please stay safe and well!

Yours sincerely,



Graham W Hutton
Rector

