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News about National 5 results in 2020–21 — a message for parents and carers

15 December 2020

On 7 October, the Deputy First Minister announced that for 2020–21, National 5 results will be based on teacher and lecturer judgement supported by a robust set of checks — or quality assurance — which will be carried out by your child’s school or college, local authority and SQA.

The National Qualifications 2021 Group has overseen the development of the quality assurance process which will support teachers and lecturers in providing your child’s provisional results for session 2020–21. Provisional results will be based on teacher’s and/or lecturer’s professional judgement of your child’s evidence. The results will be finalised following various layers of quality assurance, including sampling by SQA senior subject specialists.

Here is how the National 5 quality assurance model will work in session 2020–21:

Stage 1: November 2020 to March 2021 — *Teachers and lecturers use guidance and assessment materials to help gather learner evidence.*

Stage 2: end of January to beginning of April — *SQA ask for samples of assessment evidence from each school and college, then review and provide feedback.*

Stage 3: end of March to 28 May — *Schools, colleges and local authorities will work through SQA feedback and carry out their own quality assurance of the provisional results.*

Stage 4: by 28 May 2021 — *Schools and colleges submit quality assured provisional results.*

Stage 5: June 2021 — *SQA carries out national check of provisional results and may follow up on any issues with schools, colleges and local authorities.*

These processes are in place to ensure that a National 5 awarded in the north of Scotland is of the same standard as one which is awarded in the south of Scotland, and everywhere in between.

Most of the support will be provided before the school or college submit your child’s provisional results to SQA. This should reduce the need for schools and colleges to resubmit provisional results following SQA review in June. If your child’s provisional results need to be adjusted to reflect their evidence, this will follow discussion between their school or college and SQA.

Fairness for your child

SQA is developing an equality impact assessment as part of this quality assurance model which aims to ensure fair and credible results for all National 5 learners. Schools, colleges, local authorities and SQA are committed to working together to support teachers and lecturers in providing their provisional results in 2020–21.

We are discussing the appeals process for 2020–21 and will keep you informed of progress. To stay up to date on 2021 National Qualifications, visit www.sqa.org.uk/NQ2021.

The National Qualifications 2021 Group*

*Represented by the National Parent Forum of Scotland, Scottish Government, Education Scotland, SQA, Local Authorities, School Leaders Scotland, Colleges Scotland, Scottish Council of Independent Schools, the EIS teaching union and, from this week, the Scottish Youth Parliament.

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