

Our Ref: MR/LR

Education, Communities & Organisational Development
Corporate Director: Ruth Binks

Your Ref:

Date: 27 April 2020

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Dear Parents and Pupils,

SQA qualification process 2020 - update

Further to my letter on the 6th of April, I can now provide you with an update on the SQA Senior Phase qualification process.

On Monday 20th April, the SQA provided schools, parents and learners with the details of how the qualifications process will now proceed. Details of this can be found in more detail on their website here: <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/93920.html>

While schools have been contributing, in the normal manner, to the SQA Estimate process, the authority have been engaged with schools to ensure that the arrangements that are in place meet the expected SQA quality assurance processes. Our discussions will continue over the coming weeks and we will be linking with the SQA to ensure that all of our school staff are fully aware of the expectations that these changes are placing upon the schools.

Head teachers and their teams are working exceptionally hard to ensure that this guidance is interpreted and put into practice as soon as possible. We are all highly committed in doing our best to secure the best outcomes possible for our young people in these circumstances.

A brief summary of the process that has been agreed is given below.

Teachers will be asked to submit an estimate grade which will be their holistic professional judgement based on a candidate's attainment in all aspects of the course (i.e. attainment of the required skills, knowledge and understanding for the estimated grade and band).

To make accurate estimates, teachers already have a clear understanding of:

- the range of skills, knowledge and understanding covered by the course
- the structure and the assessment requirements of the course
- the components that contribute to the course award, including weightings where appropriate
- the grade descriptors for the course

and will use this to make their professional judgement.

When determining an estimate, schools will be asked to firstly gather and review the key evidence they have for each candidate. For example, prelim or mock papers, additional tasks or assignments,

performance or practical evidence. The estimate is therefore not just based upon one prelim mark but on all the evidence available.

There will then be a process of quality assurance carried out by each school to determine the estimate grades, banding and ranking within the estimates. These will be required to be checked and signed off, both at course level and school level, by the Head Teacher, before submission to the SQA.

Once SQA procedures have been completed and the results announced on August the 4th in line with the normal procedures there will be an opportunity for schools to consider making an appeal on behalf of any individual student. This is a free process and will be open to our schools to use for any individual where concerns arise about the final result. However, this appeal process will rely upon the identification and collation of clear evidence to support that request. This evidence will be looked at by the SQA, and a final decision made.

We know that this is an exceptionally challenging time and that pupils and parents will be concerned about how these results will pan out. I can assure you that we are all working hard to ensure that the process being used is fair and focusses on using the widest range of evidence we have to secure as positive an outcome for our young people as is possible.

Should you have concerns or queries about individual cases I would encourage you to contact your Head teacher so that they can directly address your concerns and clarify the process further.

Thank you in anticipation of your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely



Michael Roach
Head of Education