

Education Services: SQA Provisional Results

Information for Pupils and Parents

The information below is intended to help you to understand the principles underpinning our development of SQA's Alternative Certification Model across Inverclyde's secondary schools this session. It outlines the priorities and processes we will use to reach decisions about provisional results* in 2021 and should be read in line with up-to-date guidance from SQA which can be found [here](#).

The Inverclyde Approach:

- Schools will use guidance and assessment materials published by SQA and partner agencies such as Education Scotland to help gather candidate evidence.
- Schools will be supported by SQA, the local authority, and other schools when applying the national standard to the evidence used to decide provisional results*.
- Each school and its partners across the local authority will cross-check samples of assessment evidence.
- SQA will request, review and give feedback on samples of assessment evidence from all of Inverclyde's schools.
- Each school and its partners across the local authority will look at any feedback received from SQA and ensure that provisional results* are in line with the standards.
- Each school will transmit provisional results* to SQA by 23rd June 2021.
- SQA will carry out a national check of the provisional results*. They may follow up with any school about administrative issues and make corrections if necessary.

* Please note that provisional results are based on **demonstrated attainment** of the skills, knowledge and understanding of the course only. However, these can change as a result of the quality assurance process that will be undertaken by schools, local authorities and SQA and should not be considered as final until certification is received on 10th August 2021.

Evidence gathering:

Teachers across Inverclyde are using verified assessment tools to provide young people with opportunities to demonstrate their learning throughout the course. To do this:

- Assessments are carried out under appropriately controlled conditions, with an appropriate level of demand and with additional arrangements in place for those who are entitled;
- Each subject gathers a range of quality pieces of evidence (two to four depending on subject requirements as outlined in SQA's subject-specific guidelines);
- The [predictive value](#) of each individual piece of evidence is considered and weightings are assigned accordingly to determine the provisional result* for each candidate.

Assessment verification:

To verify assessments, teachers collaborate across Inverclyde's secondary schools, ensuring that instruments of assessment are of high-quality, appropriate challenge and are fair and equitable for candidates:

- Teachers use [SQA guidelines](#) to ensure instruments of assessment replicate the requirements of SQA course assessments;
- Senior staff work collaboratively to set robust standards and ensure fairness and equity in each centre;
- Instruments of assessment are checked against agreed Inverclyde Council standards by teachers at school level and subject specialist colleagues across the authority and the West Partnership region where appropriate.

Moderation of evidence:

The moderation process is when evidence produced by young people is marked fairly and robustly before being sampled by colleagues across depts. and schools to ensure that all decisions are reached fairly and without bias:

- Marking instructions are created in line with guidance to maintain national standards and are quality assured by colleagues in schools and across the local authority;
- Evidence from schools is sampled and cross-marked by dept. colleagues and from across the local authority;
- Professional dialogue across and between schools takes place to ensure the fair and consistent application of national standards.

Post-Results Service:

Each year, SQA provide services in August which allow candidates to receive a clerical check or marker review of their exam paper. As exams are cancelled this session, SQA are consulting on how to proceed with this service in 2021:

- The [consultation](#) will close on Friday 26th March with findings expected in May.

Communication:

Information about progress at key points is provided to pupils and their families throughout the year in line with each school's reporting timeline:

- Through regular feedback from their teachers, pupils receive information on their progress and are offered any support needed to improve their performance;
- Both Tracking and Full reports are provided by the schools to indicate progress at each stage and to suggest next steps;
- Provisional results* are shared with pupils in advance of submission to SQA by 23rd June.

Next steps:

In order for young people to continue to make progress, they should:

- Prioritise attendance and participation in all lessons (both online and face to face), as organised by each school.
- Make sure they know where their school shares any updates and keep up to date with these. For example, school websites, Twitter, Teams, etc.
- Notify Guidance Teachers of any changes to personal circumstances at the earliest opportunity. This includes change of address, illness, medical appointments and changes to family circumstances.
- Keep up-to-date with the latest developments at: [SQA learner and parent information](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

At Inverclyde Council, we are aware that this is a challenging and stressful time for all our learners and the wider community and we thank you for your continued support. We continue to work closely with all our schools and the SQA to provide as much feedback as possible as the session progresses and will continue to update you when information becomes available but we hope that sharing answers to some FAQs will be helpful to you at this stage.

Learning Loss:

Pupils have missed months of face to face teaching again this session: how will this be taken into account and learning gaps addressed to ensure interventions meet the individual needs of pupils, especially those with additional support needs?

Schools are best placed to make sound judgements on their own pupils and their learning needs and will continue to be led by current SQA guidance as well as utilising tracking and monitoring of our pupils to ensure we work towards the best possible outcome for all.

Remote learning provisions have been designed to maintain progress and allow for consolidation of previous learning and, while it does not wholly replicate in-school provision, should provide sufficient breadth, depth and challenge to meet course requirements.

All departments and schools continue to offer universal and targeted support to aid pupil progression and to ensure readiness for the next stage in each learner's journey.

Home Learning Evidence:

Will the class work we have been submitting during periods of remote learning be used to determine our final grade?

All school work including remote work is designed to prepare our young people for the assessment of learner attainment. Any work that pupils within the Senior Phase are asked to complete will help them in preparing to demonstrate their learning and to be in a stronger position to be assessed in line with SQA guidelines. As pupils increasingly return to school buildings, we will ensure we build in time for learners to consolidate and prepare for future assessments in line with departmental and whole school timelines.

The SQA guidance states that schools should exercise caution where candidates have completed work outside of a controlled school environment: *"We have written to schools and colleges to remind them that maximising learning and teaching time remains the current priority. Overall assessment of your child's educational achievements (also described as attainment) should therefore take place once they are back in school or college"*. Therefore, any work that pupils are asked to complete while working at home is preparatory work and will put the learner in a stronger position to be assessed on return to school.

Assessment Evidence:

Are pupils aware of what the relevant assessment items are in each subject and when they will be administered in each school?

Departments across all schools will continue to ensure that learners are well prepared and fully informed of assessments that will go towards their provisional results*. They will share this information with candidates and parents as we move through the final term, subject to review and change as dictated by government advice on the safe return of all pupils. Please be aware, however, that different subjects and different schools will have different timings for gathering evidence as best suits their context and progress through the courses.

What specific items will form the basis of estimated grades?

The SQA have advised schools as to the types of assessment that will assist in gathering high-quality predictive evidence that demonstrates attainment. These pieces of evidence will help departments make sound judgements on our learners' attainment. Departments will use the guidance to ensure that learners are well prepared and fully informed of assessments that will go towards their provisional results*.

How are the grades actually being calculated and how do they avoid bias?

The grades are formulated using 2-4 pieces of subject specific evidence in line with standardisation of marking and moderation procedures that have been agreed at local authority level. Schools have been working with partner schools to ensure a consistency of approach and validation of both marking and assessment instruments to ensure fairness for all candidates and standards are maintained.

Do some pieces of evidence carry more weighting than others e.g. class test, prelim exam paper, coursework, etc?

SQA guidance states that some assessments are likely to be more reliable indicators of performance than others and that *"the evidence you consider should have a high predictive value; this means that it should be measured against the requirements of the course assessment, and should replicate it, as far as possible."* However, these will be part of a range of typically 2 to 4 assessments that will go towards forming a judgement.

Learners should work on the premise that all the work is important and should prepare thoroughly in line with guidance from their teachers as schools will not be relying solely on one prelim exam to generate a provisional result*. A selection of key tasks and/or questions carried out under appropriate conditions and with an appropriate level of demand will give a good indication of performance to allow provisional results* to be reached for pupils.

Will teachers be able to use inferred attainment like last session when they predicted how candidates would have performed in the exam as we are now disadvantaged by not being in school benefiting from the extra support that we would normally receive?

Schools will be guided by the SQA position where they state that demonstrated attainment remains the key principle for awarding in 2021. As assessments cannot be undertaken unless young people understand the foundations of their course content and have had time to consolidate their learning, the overall assessment of learner attainment should therefore take place later in the 2020-21 session giving time to improve candidates' confidence in assessments and overall attainment.

Will there be enough time to gather all the evidence before the end of the school year?

During the phased return, all schools are working to consolidate pupils' learning and provide appropriate assessment opportunities in line with SQA guidance. We continue to work within the SQA advice on the need for a range of evidence (typically 2 to 4 assessments) that will go towards forming a provisional result*. Learners should continue to focus on the work set by teachers with the mind-set that all work set is important.

If the lockdown is extended, will we be required to produce the same amount of evidence although we would have less time to do it?

The SQA has reduced the evidence requirements for each National Course to the minimum amount needed to preserve the validity and public confidence in the qualifications. In many subjects, assessment components have been removed and content has been reduced to enable a narrower focus for this session. Therefore, we will work as individual schools and a local authority to ensure that we are in line with these SQA requirements and that pupil assessment is in line with course coverage to date.

Practical Subjects:

What is going to happen with practical subjects results if we are restricted?

The SQA has been publishing additional guidance and updates to departments such as Music, Drama, etc to allow them to work within the changing restrictions. Every effort is being made to replicate the usual assessment practices in line with the current guidance.

All learning opportunities during the remote learning period and school session are used to prepare for assessment and pupils should continue to work fully to prepare for any future assessment within all subjects, based on teacher and departmental guidance.

Online Assessments:

Will any assessments be delivered online?

Having reviewed the SQA guidance on Remote Assessment, there are no plans to carry out online assessments across any subject areas at present. We will continue to monitor the situation in line with SQA updates and we may revise our plans where necessary. Schools currently plan to deliver all assessments in school buildings but may make bespoke arrangements for pupils who are unable to attend e.g. pupils who are shielding.

Sharing of Provisional Results*:

When will final grades be shared with candidates?

It is anticipated that provisional results* will be shared by the school before the final submission date to the SQA. When the pupils' return to school date is confirmed, schools will share an updated timeline that will include the sharing of provisional results. All of this will be determined by the guidance we receive next term.

In what format will the grades be awarded?

At present, SQA guidance states that provisional results* will be generated in the usual format of final band and grade (e.g A1, A2, B3, B4, C5, C6, D7). We are awaiting final confirmation on this aspect of the model, and we will know more once the SQA provide the final uplift details for Provisional Results* which is expected early next term.

Quality Assurance (verification & moderation):

How is consistency across all subjects and schools in Inverclyde ensured?

Schools are best placed to make sound judgements on their own pupils and their learning needs led by current SQA guidance as well as utilising tracking and monitoring of pupils. This is intended to ensure we work towards the best possible outcome for all our learners. Schools across the authority will also apply the moderation and validation guidelines set out by the local authority to ensure a robust and consistent standard is applied to all candidates. Each school will undertake quality assurance procedures on the provisional results* on behalf of all our learners before final submission to SQA.

What review of grades will SQA perform and will this affect when I receive my results?

SQA will not change provisional results* once they are submitted by schools. They will check for administrative errors that may occur when schools enter the data into the system and they may contact schools after 25th June to discuss this and make any corrections required.

Confirmed results will arrive by post on 10 August 2021. To make sure candidates receive certificates on results day, they must make sure that their school has the correct name and address details. If moving house after 25th June, candidates must contact the school office.

MySQA gives online access to results. Once signed up, candidates can choose to receive results by text message or email but will still receive a certificate by post. To sign up, candidates will need their Scottish Candidate Number (SCN). Follow this [link](#) for more information.

Malpractice:

If everyone is sitting assessments at different times, how do you make sure it is fair?

In any year, schools administer SQA assessments in classrooms. This includes assignments, coursework, practical work, etc. These have always been carried out at times that suit each

school. As a result, SQA have clear procedures around Candidate Malpractice that still apply this session. The full list can be accessed [here](#) but these include:

- breaching the security of assessment materials including the unauthorised removal of a question paper or answer booklet from the assessment room;
- collusion - working collaboratively with other candidates beyond what is permitted;
- copying from another candidate;
- plagiarism - failure to acknowledge sources properly and/or the submission of another person's work as if it were the candidate's own;
- prohibited items - possessing items that can give an unfair advantage, including (but not restricted to): mobile phones; smartwatch; or any other device that is web-enabled.

As a result, schools are duty bound to identify, investigate and respond to examples of malpractice during internal assessments including reporting them to SQA where necessary. This will continue to apply to assessments used throughout session 2020/21.

Appeals Process:

What is the process and will parents know if SQA has changed a candidate's grade?

SQA are currently consulting on the process for this year. The consultation explains SQA's statutory responsibilities in the awarding of qualifications and reflects the agreed approach to awarding in 2021, as co-created by the National Qualifications 2021 Group.

The consultation asks for your views on:

- Possible ways of managing appeals in 2021, with each needing involvement from schools, colleges, training providers and SQA in different ways and at different times;
- And a number of proposed elements that will form the basis of the appeals service.

The consultation will run until Friday 26 March, with findings, and the final appeals process, to be published in early May. The consultation can be found [here](#).