

Your National Qualifications 2021-22



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We know that the ongoing disruption to your education caused by COVID-19 has been worrying, and now there's also the thought of sitting national exams for the first time to add to the anxiety. But it's easier to cope with stressful events when you have information about what's happening. This booklet tells you what you need to do when completing your coursework. It also has useful information about how to prepare for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher exams and what will happen if the exams are cancelled.

Your teachers or lecturers can help to explain all of this to you. You might also want to show this booklet to your parents or carers to help keep them up to date.

'Course assessment'

is the assessment that determines your overall grade (A to D). It usually involves an exam and completing one or more items of coursework.

Five things you need to know for 2022

- 1 The current plan is for exams to take place in 2022.
- 2 SQA has already made changes to your course assessments for 2021–22 that take account of the current levels of disruption to your learning. If there is more national disruption to learning and teaching this year, we may provide information to help you revise for your exams.
- 3 If, because of public health restrictions, the Scottish Government decides to cancel the 2022 exams, your teachers or lecturers will decide a provisional result for each of your subjects.
- 4 Your provisional result would be based on your assessment work during the year, so you should not be asked to sit any additional assessments to determine your provisional result.
- 5 Help is available if you need additional support. Speak to your teachers or lecturers for more information about these arrangements.

'Assessment' is when teachers and lecturers check or monitor your level of skill, knowledge and understanding of your subject or course.





What are National Qualifications?

National Qualifications are mainly taken by learners in secondary schools, colleges and some training providers in Scotland. You will likely be studying for some of the following National Qualifications:

National 1 units and National 2 to 4 courses are assessed as 'pass' or 'fail' by your teacher or lecturer.

National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses have course assessments. These typically include coursework and an end of year exam marked by SQA that is graded A to D.

Skills for Work courses focus on the general skills needed for success in the workplace and are usually assessed by a range of practical activities.

Scottish Baccalaureates are available to learners in S5 and S6. They are made up of a group of Higher and Advanced Higher qualifications plus an interdisciplinary project that is graded A to D (like the exams). These qualifications enable learners to develop and show evidence of initiative, responsibility, and independent working.



Additional support

If you need additional support either during the year or at exam time, your school, college or training provider can make arrangements to give you an equal chance to show what you know and what you can do.

If you would like to know more about these arrangements, it is important that you speak to your teacher or lecturer as soon as possible so that they can discuss the most appropriate assessment arrangements with you and ensure they are put in place. If you prefer, your parent or carer can speak to your teacher or lecturer on your behalf.

'Assessment arrangements'

allow learners who are disabled, and/or have additional support needs, to use different ways to complete an assessment.

National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher exams

The Scottish Government has announced that National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher exams will take place from April to June next year, as long as it is safe to do so. For most of you, this will be a new experience after the disruption of 2020 and 2021 when exams were cancelled.

We have made changes to course assessments because of the disruption caused by the pandemic. For example, in some subjects we have removed or reduced the exam or elements of coursework. In other subjects we have removed some parts of the course. This means that you should do less assessment than in a 'normal' year so that there's more time for learning and teaching. Speak to your teacher or lecturer for more information about your subjects or visit www.sqa.org.uk/nqmodifications.

We are also looking at what we can do in case the levels of disruption increase even more than what we already have. If this were to happen, we may be able to provide additional support to help your revision and help to reduce stress in the run-up to exams.

The Scottish Government will monitor public health risks and decide whether to cancel the exams. If this does happen, teachers and lecturers will use your assessment evidence to decide provisional results. This means that your teacher will base your grade on assessments that have taken place during the session, such as prelims, practical activities, performances and class tests that best show your skills, knowledge and understanding of the course.



'Assessment evidence'

is made up of assessments that you have done throughout the year that best show your skills, knowledge and understanding of your course.



'Provisional results'

The results that your school, college or training provider will send to SQA if the exams are cancelled.



Coursework

There are different types of coursework, including portfolios, practicals, performances, assignments and projects. The type you do will depend on the course you are studying.

Coursework gives you the chance to show that you know your subject and to gain marks that could make a difference to your final grade. Each piece of coursework will have different requirements – your teacher or lecturer will tell you about these.

There are rules and essential information you need to know about your coursework. It is important that you understand the rules because they are there to make sure that coursework assessments are fair to everyone.

If you do not understand the rules, speak to your teacher or lecturer. They can also tell you what could happen if you break the rules.

You will also find lots of useful information at www.sqa.org.uk/learners

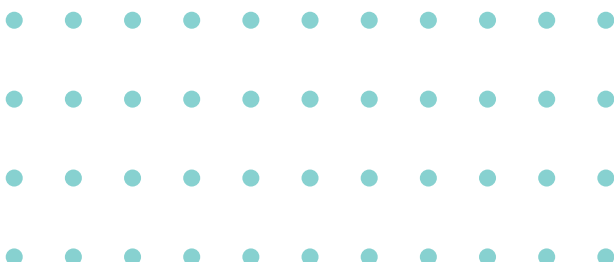
Doing your coursework

Sources

You may be able to use lots of different sources, including books, the internet and TV, to support your work. Using different sources is a great way to learn.

You can't just copy information from other sources and include it as if it were your own work. You must note down all of the material you use from other sources so that it is clear which work is not your own. Your teacher or lecturer can tell you how to do this, but here are a few pointers:

- Use 'quotation marks' around any text that has come from other sources, and clearly identify where that text comes from.
- You also need to reference any diagrams or illustrations you've used from other sources.
- Create a bibliography (a list of sources you have used) if you need one. This will go at the end of your work.





Plagiarism



You must not pretend that other people's work is your own. Passing off other people's work and ideas as your own is called 'plagiarism' and it's cheating.



If you don't reference sources as explained above, that's also plagiarism.

It's not your own work if:

- all or some of it has been produced, or worked on, by someone else
- it has been done by someone who has produced similar coursework in the past
- it is example work that has been prepared by your teacher or lecturer, or
- you've copied it from a book, website or an essay bank without trying to put it in your own words.

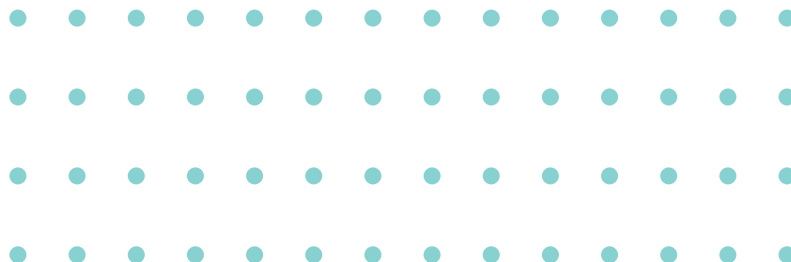
Collusion

Working with others when you should be working alone is called 'collusion'. This applies to giving help, getting help, and sharing files, passwords and paperwork.

Everyone involved in collusion is breaking the rules – not just the person who has asked for help. If another learner (for example, someone in your class) asks you for help, you should tell them to speak to the teacher or lecturer.

If you are working as part of a group (for example, a group project), you must make sure that the written work you provide as part of the group work is your own.

If you are having difficulty with coursework, ask your teachers and lecturers for advice. No other person can be involved, at any stage, in the discussion or review of your coursework.



Don't risk it

Spotting plagiarism and collusion isn't difficult

- Teachers and lecturers are familiar with your work and can spot changes in your writing style and the language you use.
- Markers know their subject inside out, so they're familiar with lots of sources.
- We use software that identifies plagiarism and collusion. This software matches copied phrases and text with the sources they've been taken from.

Language and writing

Do not include rude, abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or images in your work – if you do, markers will investigate.

Remember that written coursework must be legible. Markers will do their best to read your work, but they might not be able to award marks if your writing is too difficult to read.

Word count

If your coursework states a minimum or maximum word count, you must stick to it because you might be penalised if you don't. See 'What if I break the rules?' on page 8 for more information.

Resource sheets

Your teacher or lecturer will tell you if you need to use a resource sheet (also known as 'research sheets' or 'processed information sheets') as part of your coursework and will show you how to use it. If you are not sure whether you will need to use a resource sheet, speak to your teacher or lecturer.

If you need to use a resource sheet, it's really important that you know the rules on how to use it because you could lose marks if you do not use it correctly.



You must hand in your resource sheet with your coursework. If you don't, you will automatically lose 20% of the marks for your coursework.



Handing in your coursework

Check your work

Before you hand in your coursework, you must look over it and check that:

- everything is your own work, and you have properly referenced all sources of information, diagrams or illustrations you have used
- there is no rude, abusive or offensive language or images
- you have completed your coursework in line with the instructions your teacher or lecturer gave you.

Deadlines ● ● ●

Your teacher or lecturer will set your coursework deadlines and it's up to you to meet these. The best way to do this is to aim to hand your work in before the deadline.

If you are struggling to meet a deadline, talk to your teacher or lecturer as early as possible to see what they can do to help.



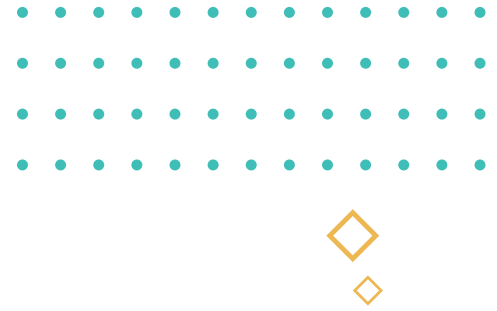
Declaration

Before your school, college or training provider sends your coursework to us for marking, they will give you a declaration to sign. It's really important that you understand the declaration. If you're unsure about anything, ask your teacher or lecturer. This is the declaration you'll need to sign:

I confirm that:

- I have read SQA's Your National Qualifications booklet and understand its contents.
- I understand that SQA may reduce or cancel my grades where I have not followed the rules specified in the Your National Qualifications booklet.
- the coursework submitted with this declaration is all my own work with all sources of information clearly identified and acknowledged.
- where I have used a resource sheet, I have submitted it along with my coursework.
- I understand that this coursework will be submitted to SQA for marking.

Note: if you plan to publish or share your work online, you must discuss this with your school or college.



What if I break the rules?

If an investigation finds you've broken any rules, there may be a penalty.

The range of penalties includes:

- Your marks can be reduced, or you can be awarded zero marks.
- Your qualification for that subject can be cancelled.
- All of your qualifications for the entire year can be cancelled.

Remember ● ● ●

Do

- all the work yourself
- properly reference all sources
- check your work before handing it in
- hand your work in on time
- hand in any resource sheet you have used

Don't

- copy someone else's work
- use rude, abusive or offensive words or images



Your 2022 exams

You can see the exam timetable at www.sqa.org.uk/timetable. This shows the dates and times of your exams.

You can also download SQA's MyExams app to create and view your personal timetable, add notes, and add your personal timetable to other calendars.



2022 exams will take place from 26 April to 1 June.

Questions we are often asked about exams



What are prelims and will I do any this year?

Prelim is short for 'preliminary exam'. Most schools and colleges choose to run prelims to help learners practise for their exams, to give them feedback on their performance, and to help identify how well a learner is progressing with the course.

Your school, college or training provider will decide if and when they will run prelims this year.



Does SQA mark the prelims?

No, the question papers you sit during prelims are created by your school, college or training provider, and are marked by your teachers or lecturers.



Who will mark my coursework and exams?

SQA will mark all National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher question papers (exams) and we will also mark most of the National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher coursework. Some coursework is assessed by your teacher or lecturer and SQA then checks their marking to make sure standards are being met.



When will I get my results?

You will get your exam results by post on Tuesday 9 August. We will also send your results to your school, college or training provider. If you have applied to a university or college through UCAS (the University and College Admissions Service), they will also receive your results.

If you don't receive your certificate by post on results day, contact your school, college or training provider. They can tell you your results and will work with us to find out what has happened to your certificate.



What is MySQA?

MySQA is your direct link to SQA. It holds your qualification information and personal details and, if you're sitting exams, you can get your results sent out by email or text. Sign up at www.mysqa.org.uk.



I have two exams at the same time or one immediately after the other on the same day. What should I do?

The first thing to do is speak to your school, college or training provider. They will be able to look at possible alternative arrangements for you.

More support and information

We will do our best to keep you up to date on what is happening with your qualifications. You will receive another booklet by the end of March 2022 with more information on assessment, and you can stay up to date on the latest information at:

www.sqa.org.uk/learners

www.sqa.org.uk/nq2022

To find out where you can get more support, including links to organisations who you can speak to if you are feeling anxious visit:

www.sqa.org.uk/learnersupport





Got a question?

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www.sqa.org.uk/learners



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