

What you need to know for 2021

National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher



This booklet tells you what you need to know about your qualifications in 2021.

If you are unsure about any of the information in this booklet, speak to your teacher or lecturer. You might also find it useful to share and discuss this information with your parent or carer.

We are committed to ensuring that young people across Scotland get the results they deserve and are able to progress to further learning or work.

To stay up to date on National Qualifications in 2021, visit **www.sqa.org.uk/NQ2021**

National 1 to National 4 and vocational qualifications

We know that you may also be studying vocational qualifications. SQA is supporting schools, colleges and training providers in delivering these qualifications for 2021. To stay up to date, visit www.sqa.org.uk/HNVQ2021

National 1 to National 4 qualifications have always been assessed and marked by teachers and lecturers. If you are studying any of these qualifications and have questions about them, please speak to your teacher or lecturer.



National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher

The 2021 National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher exams are cancelled due to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This also means that coursework will not be marked by SQA, however it can still count towards evidence of your result.

It also means that we need a different way to decide your National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher results. We call this the **alternative certification model**.

We expected a lot of disruption to learning this session, therefore SQA has reduced the evidence needed for each National Course to the minimum while making sure that your qualifications remain valid and credible. We have introduced more flexibility for how and when assessments need to be done and have extended the date for teachers and lecturers to send provisional results to us to help provide more learning and teaching time.



Alternative certification model

The alternative certification model has been created in partnership with the National Qualifications 2021 Group in order to deliver results for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses. This group includes representatives from across the education system including the National Parent Forum of Scotland and the Scottish Youth Parliament.

We are also working with a panel of learners who are helping us to understand some of the challenges you face as well as advising on how we can best meet your needs.

This year teachers and lecturers will use the assessments you have done as evidence to decide what your results should be. This is referred to as using **demonstrated attainment**.





A strong set of checks will be done to support teachers' and lecturers' decisions. We call this **quality assurance**. These checks will be carried out by schools, colleges, training providers, local authorities and SQA.

The results that your teacher or lecturer give you will be called **provisional results**.

SQA will not change your provisional results. We will check for any administrative errors that may occur when schools, colleges and training providers enter the data into the system.

Quality assurance

Quality assurance helps to make sure that results are decided consistently across the country. It is carried out in schools (with support from local authorities where appropriate), colleges and training providers, as well as by SQA.

The quality assurance carried out by your school, college or training provider involves looking at assessment evidence to help make sure that your results are consistent and fair across the whole of Scotland. We call this **local quality assurance**.

SQA carries out quality assurance to help make sure that the way your teacher or lecturer has assessed your evidence is appropriate and consistent with the national standard. This involves looking at examples of assessment evidence from all schools, colleges and training providers. We call this **national quality assurance**.

Together, local and national quality assurance helps to make sure that an A grade in the north of Scotland is worth the same as an A grade in the south of Scotland and everywhere in between.

Your 2021 results

SQA is committed to ensuring that your 2021 results are fair and enable you to continue in education or move on to employment or training.

Your teachers and lecturers will take time to provide your provisional results so you can be confident that the results you receive reflect your work and will be recognised as they would in any other year.

It is important that you talk to your teachers and lecturers about your progress as well as what provisional results are being sent to SQA.

Additional support

If you need additional support, arrangements can be made to give you an equal chance to show what you know and what you can do – we call these **assessment arrangements**.

If you would like to know more about these arrangements, speak to your teacher or lecturer.

If you need to use assessment arrangements, it is important that you talk to your teachers or lecturers as soon as you can.



Moving on to further learning or employment

We are also talking to universities, colleges and the Universities and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS) to inform them of the approach to awarding this year.



SQA National Qualifications remain a gold standard in the University of Glasgow's assessment and selection of the brightest and best future world changers.

We consider all SQA National Qualifications at SCQF levels 5 – 7 for Year 1 and Advanced Entry as a truly excellent preparation for transition to our undergraduate degrees.

Our confidence in the curriculum, assessment and awarding of SQA National Qualifications, remains at the highest level. As such, we will continue to recognise, offer and admit Scottish pupils in Academic Year 2021/22 on the strength of SQA National Qualifications, with confidence that both grades and learning outcomes achieved continue to provide an excellent foundation for future success at degree level and beyond.



Rachel Sandison
Vice Principal, External Relations
University of Glasgow



National Qualifications continue to provide some of the essential skills needed in the workplace. They will always be valued by ScottishPower as we work to give young people the best possible start in their career.



Caryn Jack
Head of Asset Management
ScottishPower



Students applying for college courses can feel confident that their National Qualifications will be valued as they are in any other year.

As students move on from this extraordinary time, where they have dealt with so many challenges, qualifications they gain will last for their lifetime and can be trusted as they move into work or further study.

Students have earned their qualifications wholeheartedly and with great resilience, and awarding agencies including SQA are clear that assessment and awarding of qualifications have been carried out with rigour.



Shona Struthers
Chief Executive Officer
of Colleges Scotland

Getting your results

Your results will arrive by post on 10 August 2021. To make sure you receive your certificate on results day, check that your school or college has the correct details for you, including your correct name and address.

If any of your personal details change, or are going to change over the summer, you must tell your school or college before you finish for the summer break.

Your school or college will also receive your results. If you have applied to a university or college through UCAS, they will also receive your results.

If you don't receive your certificate on results day, contact your school or college immediately. They will be able to tell you your results and will work with us to find out what has happened to your certificate.





MySQL

MySQL gives you online access to your results. Once you sign up, you can choose to receive your results by text message or email. You will still receive your certificate by post if you sign up for MySQL.

To get your results by text message or email, you will need to create an account at www.mysql.org.uk. Please note, you will need your Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) to create a MySQL account.



Remember, if you change your mobile number or email address after signing up for MySQL, you will need to update your details.

On results day

Your SQA certificate will arrive in the post on Tuesday 10 August 2021.

There is useful information on our website that helps to explain your certificate. You can find this at www.sqa.org.uk/certificate

If you have any questions about your certificate, you can contact our Candidate Advice Line on **0345 279 1000** or email customer@sqa.org.uk

You can also contact us by filling in a candidate enquiry form at www.sqa.org.uk/candidateenquiryform

If you don't understand your certificate or think something is wrong, contact your school or your college's student-records department.

Skills Development Scotland is also available to help. Their Results Helpline is open from results day morning and offers careers advice, information and guidance for you and your parent or carer. You can call the Results Helpline on **0808 100 8000**.

Appealing your result

During March, SQA is asking a range of individuals and groups including learners, parents/carers, teachers and national organisations to share their views on appeals. This will help to develop the appeals process for 2021.

Further information on the appeals service for 2021 will be available at www.sqa.org.uk/NQ2021



Your information

As part of the alternative certification model, SQA will collect information about you from your school, college or training provider. This will include provisional results and, for some, assessment evidence. This information relates to your qualifications and we will use it to:

- Undertake national quality assurance checks. This will involve senior subject specialists from SQA checking samples of assessments from your school, college or training provider (see the section on Quality Assurance for more detail)
- Award and issue your Scottish Qualifications Certificate
- Provide services you have asked for, such as MySQA and appeals

We will also use your information to undertake research and to produce statistics on SQA's qualifications. Information about your results will be shared with other organisations. This includes the Scottish Government, UCAS, your school, college or training provider, your local authority and other organisations that provide services to SQA, for example, to print your Scottish Qualifications Certificate. You can find out more about how we use your information and your rights at www.sqa.org.uk/privacystatement



Your rights include the right to ask for a copy of the information we hold about you. You can find out more about how to do this at www.sqa.org.uk/requestpersonalinformation – look under ‘How do I request my information?’.



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March 2021 BA8348