



Dear Parent/Carer

Following the decision by the Scottish Government and SQA that the 2020 exam diet can no longer go ahead, further guidance was issued yesterday to all Local Authorities and schools from SQA. The guidance outlines the new processes that will ensure that the awards made this year, are as robust and fair as possible. [SQA News](#)

All secondary schools in SBC will be working together to ensure that approaches to providing estimates are consistent across the schools. The education leadership team will also be linking with colleagues nationally to ensure that the guidance is being applied constantly across all local authority areas.

SQA are basing work on three broad principles, whilst adapting to the current challenges we all face:

- Fairness for all learners;
- Safe and secure certification of qualifications, while following the latest public health advice;
- Maintaining the integrity and credibility of the qualifications system, ensuring that standards are maintained over time, in the interests of learners.

Estimates

With no exams taking place this year and no feasible way for SQA to mark coursework, this means estimated grades will be the core element of certification.

Teachers and lecturers are best placed to have a strong understanding of how your child has performed and, based on their experience and the evidence available, what they would be expected to achieve in each course. An estimated grade is not just the result of one prelim or one project, but is an overall holistic judgement based on all activity across the year. School will submit this information to SQA by the extended deadline.

For session 2019–20, there is no requirement for schools to set additional mock or prelim exams or homework tasks for the purpose of determining a candidate's estimate. Schools are not required to mark non-question-paper components that would have been externally marked by SQA, but may use any work completed by candidates as evidence to help inform estimates. Your child will not be disadvantaged if they were unable to complete any work set after schools were closed.

Please do not contact the school or any individual member of staff to discuss your child's predicted grade as they will not be able to discuss any details with individual pupils or parents.

Awarding

SQA will then check and validate school information, will moderate it if necessary to ensure consistency across schools and colleges and with results from previous years.

SQA will use the information from these estimates, in addition to prior learner attainment where this is available. For example, if learners achieved National 5 or Higher courses, in a previous year. They will also look at schools' previous history of estimating and attainment in each subject and level and may moderate these estimates up or down if required.

This process will produce the results for learners, using our national grades for each subject and level.

Results and Certification

SQA will then process the results to allow them to issue your child with their individual results by 4 August.

Appeals

After 4 August, a free appeals service will be available to schools to allow them to request a review of the grade awarded for you child or a group of learners. It is important that such a service be in place in this exceptional year. Assessment evidence must be available to support an appeal and the evidence will be reviewed by senior examiners. SQA will provide us with full details of this service shortly.

Further information is available for learners, parents and carers in the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) section of the SQA website.

National 2,3,4 and other awards

There is no change to the recent guidance to schools for these awards and further details can be found on this link [SQA 2nd April](#)

SBC would like to assure parents and young people that we will be working to ensure that everyone receives the grade that reflects their ability, work and potential.

Yours sincerely



Catherine Thomson
Quality Improvement Officer
Scottish Borders Council