

# SQA Information 2020

As you are aware, the Depute First Minister has announced that this year's exam diet will not go ahead. **Firstly and most importantly please do not worry.** We will be doing everything we can to ensure no young person in the Senior Phase is disadvantaged and the Scottish Government, with SQA, will be working with us on this. We understand that this is an uncertain time for everyone but we will keep you up to date with the important information as soon as we know more.

You can read the latest updates from the SQA [here](#).

In the meantime, here are the details we currently know and answers to some questions we know many of you are asking:

## **Will my achievements this year be recognised?**

Yes. Your achievements over all of your courses will be recognised this year. The SQA will ask your teachers to provide an estimate grade for each of your courses. The estimate must be based on evidence but will include all of your achievements in assessments throughout the year and **not only your prelim results**. The SQA will also look at a variety of data including your prior attainment information where appropriate.

## **What happens if I did not complete the coursework for my course?**

The latest advice issued on Tuesday 24 March stated that schools are now not required to submit coursework for marking in Higher or Advanced Higher courses. For National 5, most of the coursework has already been submitted to SQA and will be marked accordingly. However, they have now confirmed that coursework which was due to be uplifted in April and May will now not be required to be submitted. This applies to the following subjects: Art & Design; Design & Manufacture; Music; PE; Practical Cookery.

## **Will I be able to do my coursework online with my teacher?**

Every course is different with different course arrangements. The reason that work is not able to be completed online is that for some courses, it is mandatory that aspects of the course must be completed under exam conditions – timed, without notes, and in full view of the teacher. We therefore cannot have a 'one size fits all' approach to coursework which is one of the reasons why the SQA have decided that schools do not submit it this year.

## **Will I receive certification for achievements this year?**

Yes. The SQA have explained that that results should be issued no later than Tuesday August 4 2020 as planned. SQA are also encouraging everyone to sign up for MySQA which you can access by clicking [here](#).

## **How do you decide on an estimate grade?**

An estimate grade is normally based on a number of different factors including: how you perform in prelims; how you perform in any coursework, practical or performance elements; and your teacher's professional judgement of how you are progressing – based on evidence produced throughout the year.

This year we know these estimate grades matter more than ever. For this reason, once we know more information from the SQA, we will work with all teachers to make sure they are truly representative of your performance in your subjects.

**I was disappointed with my prelim grade – does that automatically mean a poor estimate grade?**

No. In many cases a prelim does not provide ‘full’ evidence of your likely performance in the final exam often because the prelim has only assessed a portion of the whole course, it has been superseded by other exam practice and the mark for any coursework has not been included when creating this grade. We know that there is often an improvement in performance between the prelims and the final exam and we will also take this into account where appropriate.

**Can my teacher tell me what grade I am going to get in my exams?**

No. We are currently awaiting more information from the SQA about estimation of grades and fuller details of the SQA’s approach to certification and will update you once we know more details. We know that grades will be based on coursework (where this has already been submitted), teacher estimate grades and prior SQA attainment from previous years (where possible). We normally submit estimate grades by the end of April and similar to other years, teachers do not know what you will get awarded for a subject and will not know until Tuesday 4 August when you receive your certificate. Estimates provided by the school will form only one part of the process, it is SQA who will make the final decision and not the school. Please **do not contact teachers** directly about your estimated grades.

**Can I find out what my final grade will be before Tuesday 4 August?**

No. The SQA will make this decision based upon any course work which has been submitted and marked by the SQA, the estimate submitted by the school, and any other relevant information for that subject.

**What about my UCAS application?**

UCAS have provided a statement on their website stating that the grades you receive will be equally as valid as those in previous years and that there is no reason for the usual admissions cycle to be disrupted. Universities UK has confirmed that institutions will be flexible and do all they can to support you to progress to higher education. You can read their full advice [here](#). Remember all young people in the country are in the same position.

**Will my estimated grade be the same as my UCAS predicted grades?**

No. Your predicted grades were provided at a very early point in your course and based on your teachers’ judgement in November. Your estimated grades will be based on much more robust knowledge of your progress in your courses and might differ from grades provided at the time of your UCAS application.

**Can I still apply for courses at SRUC and Dumfries and Galloway College e.g. full-time, school partnership courses and Foundation Apprenticeships?**

Yes. As you will be aware the colleges, like your school, is currently closed due to the COVID-19 outbreak. SRUC and Dumfries and Galloway College staff are continuing to work remotely and will continue to process all applications. Applications must be completed as soon as possible. If you have already applied to a course, then you should have received an email from the colleges with details of what will happen next.

**Will I still get my Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) when the school is closed?**

EMA payments will continue. It is assumed that you are accessing learning online.

**I am leaving this year and I need support with what to do next. How can I still get help with this?**

We remain committed to supporting our leavers into a positive destination and will do all we can to continue to offer our support during these uncertain times. If you have any questions, then contact the school office.

**What if I have any more questions?**

You can contact your Pupil Support teacher using the school email address. Updates and information will be provided as and when we receive it.

Please be assured, you are our absolute priority. We are committed to supporting you and ensuring that your hard work throughout this year is recognised. We will all get through this difficult time together.

**Wallace Hall Academy**

**Friday 27 March**