



Midlothian Council

National Qualifications Update March 2021

As the end of the Spring term approaches, we should like to take this opportunity to bring you up to date with the most recent developments in National Qualifications (NQs) and with what is happening next for your child.

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Support

As you are aware, the [Alternative Certification Model](#) for National Qualifications has been in place since the Autumn of 2020. Since then, the SQA, in consultation with its partners, including young people, parents and carers, has continued to provide support and guidance on all aspects of understanding national standards.

This includes specific guidance for each National Course and a range of formal assessment materials. These are designed to help teachers (and college lecturers where appropriate) apply national standards consistently and fairly when assessing your child's attainment evidence for their provisional results.

In February 2021, the SQA published a new, later date by which all secondary schools/colleges have to send in their provisional results. This is **Friday 25 June 2021**, which is at the end of the Summer term.

The SQA also published clear guidance about the roles and responsibilities of teachers who are delivering NQ courses. In addition, they outlined the roles and responsibilities of senior leaders in schools and of local authorities in supporting young people to achieve success in their NQs.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Until June, your child will continue to have opportunities to extend and consolidate their learning in each subject. This will be followed by formal assessments for each of their National Courses which will provide evidence of each young person's attainment against national standards.

The SQA has indicated that since all National Courses are internally assessed in 2020-21, schools across Scotland have the flexibility to gather assessment evidence in ways and at times that are appropriate to the needs of their learners and their individual school contexts. There will therefore be variations in approaches to delivering assessments across schools and subjects in Midlothian.

Your child's school will provide you with full information about its assessment processes. You will be informed of the timetable for your child's formal assessments and you will be kept up to date with any changes. You and your child will also be advised how and what evidence is being gathered for each of their National Courses and your child will continue to be given feedback on their learning and progress. This should mean that there are no surprises for you or your child when they receive their provisional results.

Quality Assurance

All Midlothian secondary schools already have robust processes in place to check that no young person will be disadvantaged throughout the assessment process, as do Midlothian Council Schools and Learning Service and nationally, the SQA.

Quality Assurance of National Qualifications is the process of carrying out checks to make sure that assessments are accurate and consistent with national standards. This is to ensure fair and credible



certification. In Midlothian, we will do this in each department in every secondary school and across all secondary schools, so that evidence gathered in different schools and in different subjects is checked widely.

A central Midlothian team is also supporting schools in this process as are members of Midlothian's subject leaders' networks. These staff are working very closely with subject colleagues to promote understanding of national standards and to check that these are being applied consistently.

Throughout May, the SQA will sample and check some assessment evidence from every school to make sure that it is appropriate and consistent with national standards. Feedback will be given to each school about this and any necessary adjustments will be made to provisional results.

After Provisional Results are Submitted

The SQA *will not change your child's provisional results* when they are submitted by their school for the deadline of 25th June. They will check **only** for any administrative errors that may have occurred when the data were entered into the system.

Your child will receive their final results by post on Tuesday 10 August 2021, and by text and or email if they register for this service at [MySQA.org.uk](https://mysqa.org.uk) . We would encourage them to sign up.

The SQA has indicated there will be an Appeals Service in place from August. They have consulted widely on this and details of the final model will be published in May. Your child's school will share information about this when it becomes available.

Further Support and Guidance

Please don't hesitate to contact your child's Pupil Support leader or Head Teacher if have any concerns or require further information about how your child is progressing or the assessments they will be doing. They are there to help, can update you on the latest guidance and advice from the SQA and provide support for your child to manage their studies to achieve their best results.

Parents/carers and young people can also refer directly to the SQA website for the very latest updates on national qualifications 2020-21.

- Link - [2021 National Qualifications](#)
- twitter [@sqanews2021](#)

The SQA has also produced a very helpful learners' booklet, [What you need to know for 2021](#), which explains this year's processes for NQs.