
**EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S
SERVICES DIRECTORATE**

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Your Ref:
Our Ref: ML/EF

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Dear Parent/Carer

I have not written to you since last May 2022 and I wanted to update you on recent SQA information. I also wanted to reassure you that exams that were originally organised for the 8 May, which clashes with the Kings Coronation public holiday have been changed. Please see information at the end of this letter.

National Qualifications: Helping your child prepare for SQA exams in 2023

We understand that the lead up to exams can be an unsettling time for both you and your child. The following information explains the services and support we have in place for learners, including those facing exceptional circumstances during their exams, and those who believe the grade they receive on results day is incorrect.

Services

Appeals 2023

Your child can request an appeal if they feel that a grade they receive on results day – Tuesday 8 August 2023 – is incorrect. This service is free and available to all. It is similar to the service used before 2020 and, unlike last year, does not need alternative assessment evidence to support a request. Instead, learners will be able to ask for their SQA-marked assessments to be reviewed by a senior SQA marker.

Appeals 2023 includes a priority service for learners with a conditional offer for college, university, training or a job.

Examination Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (EECCS)

This aspect from the SQA recognises that there are times when your child cannot sit an exam for reasons out with their control. The EECCS will continue to be available this year, meaning those learners who need help the most due to exceptional circumstances can have alternative assessment evidence reviewed to help determine their grades. The service will be available to support learners who are unable to attend an exam and widened to include those whose performance in the examination may have been affected by a personal

circumstance, or an unplanned incident on the day, which is beyond their control. This could be a medical condition (including Covid-19 related absence) or bereavement, or disruption on the day of the exam as reported by the Chief Invigilator.

Any decision to submit an EECSS request needs to be discussed with your child's teacher or lecturer.

Support for learners

Changes to assessment

Changes – known as modifications – to assessments made to National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses, as well as some National 3 courses and freestanding units are already in place. They were introduced to make up for lost learning and teaching during the pandemic and vary depending on the course.

Modifications may include:

- removing an exam or an item of coursework
- removing or reducing parts of an exam or coursework
- removing one or more topics or sub-topics from an exam
- providing more choice or more time in an assessment
- providing your child's school or college with information about what will or will not be assessed in the 2023 exam
- reducing the amount of work learners need to do for a unit assessment

[Click here](#) to view a summary table of the modifications made to each course.

There are no plans to provide any additional revision support materials such as advance information about what is or is not going to be in an exam. However we will provide exam tips and advice in the *Your Exams* booklet (see below).

Your Exams booklet

Each year, the SQA create a series of booklets for learners to help with the various stages of completing National Qualifications. The next booklet, due to be issued in March, is 'Your Exams' and will be sent directly to your child's school or college. It will also be available digitally. This booklet includes helpful hints and tips for preparing for exams and what to expect on the day. We encourage you to read this to help your child get ready for their exams.

Evaluation and partnership working

The SQA developed this year's appeals and exceptional circumstances services by taking advice from learners, parents, carers and teachers on the National Qualifications 2023 Group and SQA's Advisory Council.

The SQA remain committed to protecting the standard of Scotland's National Qualifications while supporting your child. To summarise, this year the SQA are:

- Keeping the changes (modifications) to course assessments in 2022-23 – as advised in April 2022
- Providing *Your Exams* – a learner information booklet with guidance and top tips on studying for and sitting exams – to be issued mid-March
- Continuing the Examination Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service – available during exams

- Providing an appeals service for 2023 that is free, available for all learners and based on a review of SQA-marked exams and coursework – to open on Tuesday 8 August

Information from Skills Development Scotland:-

We all want you to be effective lifelong career planners who can make informed and confident decisions about your future. To support this, Skills Development Scotland's (SDS) professionally qualified Careers Advisers work in every secondary school to support you, parents and teachers with a comprehensive range of career information advice and guidance services on a 1:1 and group basis. The SDS Results Helpline will reopen for Results Day on Tuesday 8th August 2023. To access support call 0800 917 8000 or get in touch with your school Careers Adviser.

My World of Work is SDS online career information and advice service and is used by yourselves throughout your time at school and beyond. There's a dedicated area for parents and carers on My World of Work that offers information to help those career conversations with you, understand skills in demand from employers, and suggests ways to explore the different routes and pathways that you can take. www.myworldofwork.co.uk

2023 National Qualifications exam timetable change due to the King's Coronation, public holiday 8 May

Due to the King's Coronation and public holiday on 8 May 2023, the SQA has reviewed the 2023 exam timetable. There is now a revised version of the 2023 National Qualifications exam timetable. The exams that were scheduled for this date have been moved to alternative dates. This affects German and Design and Manufacture exams at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. German exams have been moved to Friday 5 May 2023 with Advanced Higher in the morning, and National 5 and Higher in the afternoon. Design and Manufacture exams have been moved to the afternoon of Tuesday 30 May.

Thursday 1 June will remain as a contingency day within the timetable.

The full timetable is also now available on the main website at www.sqa.org.uk/timetable.

The exams will begin on Monday 24 April and finish on Thursday 1 June 2023. Please visit the National Qualifications section on the SQA website to stay up to date.

Further information

Please stay up to date on the latest information regarding exam services for 2023 by clicking through to [Learner Services on the SQA website](#).

I hope you find the above information useful.

I will write again with further updates as soon as they are released.

Yours sincerely



Maria Lloyd
Head of Education (Secondary Schools and Specialist Support)