

Statement by the Chief Executive of the Scottish Qualifications Authority and Scotland's Chief Examining Officer

Thursday 19 March 2020

This is an unprecedented situation, and the closure of schools for an extended period will affect almost every family across Scotland.

The Scottish Qualifications Authority has recently been working through a range of scenarios in relation to the exam diet, including disruption and postponement. However, as the Deputy First Minister has outlined in Parliament today, the exam diet in 2020 cannot go ahead and I have been asked by the Deputy First Minister to develop an alternative certification model.

That work has started, at pace, and I will say more on that as soon as I can. What I can say now is that we want to ensure that we have as much information on the achievements of learners as possible. That is why the Deputy First Minister has asked schools and colleges to continue to work with young people to ensure that any units and coursework are completed and estimated grades are provided by teachers, drawing on the available evidence gathered throughout the year, to SQA's existing deadlines, or earlier if that is possible. For many learners, we will also have prior attainment information which will be helpful to us.

I fully appreciate that this will be an uncertain time for learners who have worked hard throughout the year and will now, with their families, be worried about what this means for them. Everyone here at SQA will do their utmost, with the support of the education system, to ensure that their hard work is rightly and fairly recognised, and allows them to proceed to further learning or work.

We will work to ensure that learners receive their results no later than 4 August, as planned. We are considering more fully the impact this decision will have on our exceptional circumstances and post-results services. I will confirm that we will offer a free post-results service to ensure that schools and colleges continue to have a mechanism to question any result.

I would strongly encourage all candidates to [sign up to MySQA](#), our online and text service, as a direct way to receive their results.

Everyone at SQA is fully committed to delivering for Scotland's young people at this exceptionally difficult time.

Fiona Robertson

SQA Chief Executive and Scotland's Chief Examining Officer