



Mrs S Brown
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Contact: Kinross High School

Our ref: SB/LMcM

Your ref:

Date: Tuesday 20 October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

SQA Examinations 2021

On the 7 October 2020, the Deputy First Minister John Swinney made an announcement in the Scottish Parliament which clarified plans for assessment of SQA Qualifications in 2021. In this statement, Mr Swinney confirmed that due to the potential of disruption by Covid-19, a full exam diet is too big a risk to take. Consequently, National 5 examinations have been cancelled and the Higher and Advanced Higher examinations have been postponed by a few weeks. This means that in 2021 awards will be made on the following basis:

National 1-4: Courses will continue as planned with internal assessment and internal coursework.

National 5: There will be no external examinations of National 5 courses this year. Instead, qualifications will be awarded based on school estimates which will be moderated. To support this, the Government has asked the SQA to work with schools and to publish clear National 5 subject-specific guidance. Where possible this guidance will include advice on 2-4 key pieces of work that young people will complete for each course. These will be assessed in the classroom and inform a young person's final grade. Given the controversies of the awards system this year, the Deputy First Minister has given assurance that awards will not be given or taken away based on a statistical model of a school's performance (an algorithm). Awards will be based on the individual progress that a young person makes in their learning.

Higher and Advanced Higher: Higher and Advanced Higher externally assessed exams will continue as planned. There will be a later start date of 13 May and the certification day will remain as 10 August. A clear contingency plan will continue to be developed nationally, including key checkpoints up to the February break to assess public health advice and its impact on the plans for these exams.

Mr Swinney has said that cancelling exams for National 5 courses will create space to assist the successful and safe delivery of Higher and Advanced Higher examinations. These qualifications involve a smaller number of candidates which enables physical distancing and other Covid-19 safety mitigations. This approach will also allow additional time for learning and teaching for all National Qualifications.

Since our return in August, staff have been gathering assessment evidence for our pupils as part of the learning and teaching process. We will now look closely at the SQA's guidance and adapt our teaching and assessment accordingly. We will also review our school calendar and change this to reflect the new assessment requirements for SQA qualifications. As further guidance is received, we will continue to update you about qualifications through *Your Kinect*.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S Brown', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mrs S Brown
Headteacher