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Dear Parent / Carer and Learner

SQA Provisional Results (Estimates) 2021 – Update March 2021

As you will be aware, with the cancellation of the 2021 SQA exams for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses, we now find ourselves in the position where course results will be based on appropriate school evidence, this evidence showing achievement at the estimated grade.

To support learners with the difficulties of current times, the Government established the National Qualifications Group 2021 and they have made several changes to the awards system this year, with the creation of the Alternative Certification Model, to which two links can be found below, the first for parents / carers and the second for learners.

[2021 Delivering National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher results in 2020-21 – parents/carers \(sqa.org.uk\)](https://www.sqa.org.uk/parents-carers)

[2021 Delivering National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher results in 2020-21 – learners \(sqa.org.uk\)](https://www.sqa.org.uk/learners)

This group, which includes the SQA, have considered the current pandemic situation as well as the decisions Government have made regarding school closures and online learning, and after a public consultation exercise, modifications were made to courses and schools have been given a flexibility in terms of having in class assessments as an alternative to prelim exams and the opportunity to schedule several assessments to try and gather the appropriate evidence.

This has all been done with the aim to mitigate the impact of the situation our learners find themselves in, and we do appreciate that these have been difficult and challenging times for all, **but it is clear from guidance published that results will be based on demonstrated evidence and not include an element of inferred attainment as per last year.**

The clear and consistent message from this group and the SQA, has been that schools focus on Learning and Teaching with progression through courses in line with revised SQA subject specific guidance, rather than on formal assessment and at Fraserburgh Academy we have followed this guidance with our online learning programme.

Staff at school have spent some considerable time reviewing the SQA course modifications and course standards, completing the SQA training on Producing Estimates as well as preparing assessments based on SQA material for when we get back in school.

We are now starting to see some learners back in school to complete essential practical activities associated with specific courses and after the First Ministers statement on Tuesday 23 Feb 2021, there appears to be a timeline when learners will be back in school for Learning and Teaching as well as further assessments allowing us to gather evidence.

However, as a school we are concerned about a lack of engagement from some of our senior learners. We do appreciate that there are difficulties associated with online learning, but we cannot stress enough that even with the final SQA deadline for submissions of provisional results being put back that there is an urgency for learners to fully engage with the online learning set by their teachers and not wait until back in school to try and catch up with work.

Provisional Results (Estimates)

As stated, we can only base our estimates on demonstrated evidence and this evidence must come from in-school assessments, not online work, but **learners do still have an opportunity over the next few weeks to discuss with their teachers where they are with their learning and if there are any areas of course work that need to be reviewed or completed.**

By doing this, learners will give themselves a focus for their studies and an opportunity to ensure that they are giving themselves the best chance of success when we return to school for these assessments, and staff will be more than happy to support our learners to try and ensure they get the best results possible.

To help learners, **from week commencing 8th March**, class teachers will send a direct email to learners advising them of their current working at grade, teachers having reviewed their work relevant to SQA standards – this email will be sent through the learners online class and I would ask that you watch out for that email and discuss the content with your son or daughter.

This information will be based on the evidence we currently have from in-school work done under appropriate conditions prior to the school closure and this evidence may be from our Term 1 Prelim, class tests, unit tests or any other suitable piece of work as per the SQA guidelines.

In most cases this Working at Grade will be based on assessments which only cover parts of the course therefore, they must not be viewed as the final grade as further assessments will be required to ensure we have evidence of a broader course coverage, but learners do have time and an opportunity here to positively influence their grades.

It must be acknowledged that with further assessments based on greater course coverage and new material, that grades can not only change in a positive way but there is the possibility that grades may fall once the overall picture is considered of all course coverage and all evidence, therefore learners should continue to give all schoolwork and assessments their full attention as we move forward.

If any parent, carer, or learner has other concerns about upcoming assessments or online study then contact the appropriate Principal Teacher of Guidance who can offer support and advice. We are all very eager to help in any way that encourages learners to keep going.

Regards

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