

National Qualifications 2021 Group – Disruption to Learning – Learner message

Monday 10th May 2021

The National Qualifications 2021 Group* appreciates that you may have concerns regarding the levels of disruption to your learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the effects this will have on gathering the evidence that your teachers or lecturers need to determine provisional results for National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher.

Flexibility in gathering learner evidence

Provisional results in 2021 will be based on teachers and lecturers using assessment evidence of your knowledge, skills and understanding of the course. For teachers and lecturers to do this, you will need to complete tests or assessments set by your school, college or training provider.

The key difference between the formal SQA exam diet, which was cancelled for 2021, and the assessments that you will take in your school, college or training provider is the flexibility around how and when assessments take place. This means that, as far as possible, there should be maximum opportunity for you to complete the required learning and be given the best chance to succeed in your course assessments. See below for more information about what to do if you feel this is not the case for you.

The flexibility available to teachers and lecturers this year means that the opportunities for gathering evidence do not need to be based on a single assessment. Schools, colleges and training providers are being encouraged to make use of this flexibility in gathering the right quality of assessment evidence that shows your knowledge, skills and understanding of your course.

Schools, colleges and training providers also need to provide additional assessment arrangements, as they would under normal circumstances, for those learners who are disabled or have identified additional support needs.

If you need any additional assessment arrangements, and do not feel they are being provided to you, or you feel that your opportunity for generating evidence is being restricted please speak to your teacher or lecturer in the first instance. Schools, colleges and training providers have established processes in place and will advise you on what to do should you remain unhappy with the outcome of those discussions. This may include, for example, at a later stage, further discussion with your headteacher/centre manager or engagement with other local processes beyond the centre, if necessary.

Summary of steps taken to address disruption to learning

A number of steps have been taken to support teachers and lecturers and to help ensure as many learners as possible can generate the assessment evidence required to decide their provisional results. This includes:

1. removing assignments and reducing content in many National Courses
2. giving schools, colleges and training providers more time to submit your provisional results
3. enhancing the e-Sgoil E-learning offer to support learners who for a variety of reasons have experienced extreme disruption to their learning
4. offering a small number of learners, who have completed their course but who have been unable to complete all the required evidence, the option to receive their Scottish Qualifications Certificate at a later date.

What to do next

If your personal circumstances have resulted in extreme disruption to your learning, including if you are or have been shielding, please speak to your school, college or training provider. As mentioned above, they will have established processes in place and will advise you on the options available to you and what to do should you remain unhappy with the outcome of your discussions. This may include, for example, at a later stage, further discussion with your headteacher/centre manager or engagement with other local processes beyond the centre, if necessary.

To stay up to date on National Qualifications for 2021 visit www.sqa.org.uk/learners