



June 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Following the latest medical and scientific advice, The Scottish Government decided to cancel the SQA exam diet due to social distancing and to keep everyone safe during the Coronavirus pandemic. As a result, an Alternative Certification Model using teacher estimates was devised for awarding pupil grades at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher for session 2019-2020.

Teachers have taken account of any available work that your child has completed throughout the course. Using their teaching experience, and their knowledge of your child's work and their progress across the session, they made an estimate of the grade your child would have achieved under normal circumstances. This estimate grade was sent to the SQA.

To be as fair as possible to all learners from across the whole of Scotland, the SQA need to include multiple checks and decision rules, when checking school estimate data. This includes using senior qualifications staff in SQA and senior subject experts, to check, and where appropriate adjust, the school estimates.

The pre-results service – the Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service – did not run this year as there were no exams. This pre-results service offered by the SQA in normal circumstances allows for the school to submit alternative supporting evidence should a pupil be unable to sit an exam, for very good reason, e.g. a family bereavement or serious illness. Instead schools were asked to take exceptional circumstances of learners into account when submitting Estimates.

The SQA has intimated that this year's results will be sent to your child, by post, on Tuesday 4 August or via the SQA's online and text service MySQA. It is strongly recommended your child's signs up for the MySQA service. To receive exam results by text and/or email your child must sign up to MySQA by 5pm on Tuesday 14 July. To sign up they will need their Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) and an email address.

After 4 August, a Post-Certification Review Service – an appeals mechanism - will be available to schools.

This will have 2 stages. Stage 1, with a closing date of 14 August, will be for Priority Reviews required for pupils whose grades fall short of what is required for entrance to college or university courses. Stage 2, with a closing date of 21 August, will be for the remainder of Post Certification Review requests. Requests can only be made by schools.

The criteria which need to be met before schools can submit a request for a review have been made clear by SQA:

- The grade awarded by SQA must be below the estimated grade submitted by the school
- There must be assessment evidence available to support the estimate grade submitted by the school.

When a request for a review is submitted to SQA, the evidence on which the decision has been made has to be sent to SQA and this will be considered by senior subject specialist examiners. SQA may then make one of three decisions:

- It may accept the request and upgrade the award
- It may reject the request and confirm the original grade awarded by SQA will stand
- It may reject the request and give a lower grade if it feels the evidence supplied does not reflect the required standard for the original grade awarded.

If a parent/pupil has a concern about a grade awarded, please contact Ellon Academy as detailed below. The school will be able to advise whether or not a request would meet the SQA's criteria. Final decisions about whether a request should be made will, therefore, be taken by the school, following consultation with Faculty Principal Teachers.

On Results Day and in the days following, Ellon Academy will be operating a call back service where your child has one or more of the following queries

- I didn't get my certificate or MySQA text/email and need to know my results
- I think something is wrong or missing from my certificate
- One or more of my results looks wrong.

A link will be shared via Groupcall email and the Ellon Academy website to an electronic form to manage any queries. The information will be passed to the most appropriate person who will call you back to discuss your query. We will aim to call you back within 48 hours. However, we would be grateful for your patience in the event of heavy demand for the call back service.

There will also be a remote telephone service on Tuesday 4 and Wednesday 5 August using the school number shown in the letterhead above, should you encounter any difficulties with the electronic form or not have access to technology. This service will operate from 8.30am till 3.45pm.

Due to the current national health rules and Lockdown restrictions, there will be no face-to-face meetings or staff in school on Results Day. Therefore, to avoid disappointment, please do not attend school hoping to see or speak to someone about your child's results.

The last few months have been challenging for everyone, but teachers have been united in their desire to do the very best they could for the learners they work with.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Booth
Depute Head Teacher
SQA Co-ordinator