



2nd November 2020

Dear Parent /Carer,

On the 7th October, the Deputy First Minister announced a number of measures for the awarding of National Courses at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher in 2020-21.

National 5

There will be no external assessment of National 5 courses this year – either by an exam or by coursework. National 5 courses will now be assessed using an alternative certification approach. This will be based on teacher and lecturer judgement supported by assessment resources and quality assurance. SQA will work with schools through the year on the quality assurance of their learners' work, including sampling work and feeding back to teachers and lecturers to ensure standards are maintained.

Higher and Advanced Higher

Higher and Advanced Higher exams are planned to start on Thursday 13 May 2021 and finish on Friday 4 June 2021, with Results Day on Tuesday 10 August 2021. SQA will publish the full exam timetable at the end of October.

Contingency arrangements for Higher and Advanced Higher

Scottish Government has stated that a clear contingency plan will continue to be developed, including key checkpoints up to the February break to assess public health advice and its impact on the plans for these exams.

Senior Phase Assessment at Kelso High School

Given all the information above, together with the ongoing uncertainty regarding the development of COVID-19, we are working with our staff and young people to ensure we are gathering and moderating quality evidence, in order to support the estimates we are required to make.

All faculties are assessing pupils both formally and informally throughout their courses. Many have contacted you directly to inform you of key dates for topic or skills assessments.

In addition to these, we are proposing two key whole school assessment periods:

1. **Tuesday 5th- Friday 15th January. All N5/H/AH classes will have formal assessments during class time.** These may not be the same length as a full prelim, but will be to the same standard and where possible will be sat in the hall.
2. Once we have the dates from SQA for submission of estimates, we propose to run a formal prelim diet, replicating fully the timings and rigour of the final exams. It is likely that this will take place in March but will be as far as possible into the course, whilst still allowing us to meet SQA deadlines.

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I would welcome your support in discussing with your child the importance maintaining a high level of commitment in all the subjects they have chosen to study this year and in emphasising with them the importance of **every assessment**, particularly for National 5 who will not have a final exam.

If you have any concerns regarding your child's progress please do not hesitate to contact their Pastoral Teacher.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AM Wilson'.

Mrs Alison Wilson
Depute Head Teacher