

Update on National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses 2020-21

A message for learners

27 January 2021

With remote learning continuing until at least mid-February, the National Qualifications 2021 Group* appreciates that you may be anxious to know how this will impact on you and your school or college.

We have written to schools and colleges to remind them that maximising learning and teaching time remains the current priority. Overall assessment of your educational achievements (also described as attainment) should therefore take place once you are back in school or college.

Evidence of your attainment remains a key part of awarding your grades in 2021. During January and February 2021, SQA is publishing subject-specific guidance and assessment resources for Higher and Advanced Higher courses. This will support your teachers and/or lecturers with assessment planning for later in the 2020-21 session.

Understanding Standards

Ensuring that your assessment is marked to the national standard is critical for reassuring everyone that qualification results in 2021 are credible. Teachers and lecturers are being supported by Understanding Standards resources produced by SQA. These resources form an important part of the checks that your school, college, local authority and SQA will carry out – referred to as *quality assurance*. They also support your teachers and lecturers by helping them strengthen their understanding of the national standard required for assessment.

Keeping you updated

We are working as quickly as possible in a changing situation and will continue to issue regular updates on the next steps. Ministers will update Parliament about lockdown measures and the reopening of schools and colleges on 2 February 2021.

Stay up to date on [2021 National Qualifications](#).

National Qualifications 2021 Group

*The National Qualifications 2021 Group is represented by the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), Colleges Scotland, Education Scotland, the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), School Leaders Scotland (SLS), the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS), Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the Scottish Government, National Parent Forum of Scotland, and the Scottish Youth Parliament.