



SQA Presentation Policy

Session 2019-20 onwards

Changes to National Qualifications from Session 2019-2020

As you may be aware the Scottish Government has recently made some changes to the way in which young people are assessed in National Qualifications. The most significant change has been the decision to remove mandatory unit assessment from National Qualifications, with units now removed at National 5 level and Higher. Mandatory units will also be removed at Advanced Higher level in session 2019-20. Pupils will now only be required to complete the course assessment at the end of the course. The course assessment will involve a question paper (exam) or coursework, or both. Candidates will no longer be required to undertake unit assessments as they progress through the course. The purpose of this change is to reduce the amount of assessment undertaken by young people studying National Qualifications and to address concerns raised by Professional bodies.

As a result of this decision to remove mandatory unit assessment, from session 2017/18 onwards, for each National 5, Higher (2018/19) and Advanced Higher (from 2020) course, the changes have resulted in one or more of the following:

- extension of the existing exam question paper;
- extension/revising the existing coursework assessment;
- the introduction of a new exam question paper and some Higher exams will be split on to two question papers from 2019 onwards;
- the introduction of a new item of coursework.

A detailed breakdown of the changes to assessment by subject can be accessed at:

<https://www.sqa.org.uk>

Implications of this change

In order to support this change the Scottish Government, working alongside the SQA, has agreed that the threshold to achieve a Grade D award has been extended at National 5 and Higher and Advanced Higher (in 2020) to include candidates who achieve between 40% and 49%. Previously the cut off for a Grade D was 45% or more. Normal SQA grade boundary decisions for each subject still apply.

Our Approach at Knox Academy

At Knox Academy our staff will always be aspirational for all our young people and strive to support them to attain the best results possible. Our Tracking and Monitoring Policy helps support a young person's attainment through two reports during the year, in all subjects, which enable targets to be set with relevant 'next steps' agreed to support progress.

However if a young person is not meeting the criteria to be presented at National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher, class teachers and Curriculum Leaders will discuss options with the young person



and their parents/carers as to the next steps in learning/presentation. Options that will be looked at may be to:

- Continue with the course and achieve as many UNIT passes as possible.
- Complete as many N4 and/ or N5 Units as is feasible and where possible complete the N4 AVU in order to secure a N4 qualification (if the pupil does not already have N4)
- Transfer to a National Progression Award (NPA) at the equivalent level if one aligns with the original course the pupil was following e.g. If the pupil is withdrawn from a Higher (SQA level 6) they may be able to secure a Level 6 NPA. NPA courses do not have an external exam. An example of this is completing Level 5 Applications of Maths as an alternative to sitting National 5 Maths.
- Continue with the course, with the aim of sitting the external exam the following session i.e. it becomes a two-year National 5 or Higher.

Each individual case will be evaluated on its merits, with the focus being on what offers the pupil the most aspirational and progressive route forward. Please note: It is unlikely that any such changes to presentation levels or consideration of options will take place until after prelim results are known.

In line with normal practice, Curriculum Leaders will confirm to you and your young person the designated presentation level. Final decisions can be communicated to parents/carers through tracking reports or a letter home and will be an informed judgment based on progress throughout the course and prelim results/class assessments (please also see attached Flow Diagram in Appendix 1 for steps taken to advise pupils/parents of concerns following prelims). Both pupils and parents/carers will know this final presentation level by March at very latest.

National Qualifications - Added Value Components

The new SQA National Qualifications from N4 to Advanced Higher all involve what is known as an 'Added Value' component. What this means, is that achievement in these new qualifications is not based solely on performance in a final exam. The nature of the Added Value component differs from subject to subject. In Music, for example, it is a practical performance. In History, it is an essay, written in exam conditions and in Modern Languages, it is a speaking assessment. The attached calendar will give you more information on what exactly the Added Value task is for each subject and level, when in the year it will be done and what percentage of the final course award it is worth.

It is very important that pupils treat the preparation for and completion of their Added Value components as seriously as they would that for their final exam. At N5, Higher and Advanced Higher levels, this Added Value component contributes a significant percentage of the final grade. At N4 level, the Added Value component is one of several units that have to be passed in order to achieve the course award. Specific dates will be published on the school calendar for each Added Value component nearer the time that each one has to be done. If the Added Value component is in the format of a formal examination write-up or performance, it is obviously imperative that pupils attend on that day. If the Added Value component is a folio or submission to the SQA by a deadline, it is obviously imperative that pupils meet this deadline and deadlines set by the school in advance of the final submission date for the preparation of this work.



The SQA has very strict rules to make sure that any work submitted by pupils is their own work. Plagiarism, or unreasonable assistance by teachers, parents/carers or anyone else, is not acceptable.

A 'Your Coursework' booklet from the SQA gives further guidance on the submission of coursework. This booklet can be accessed at the following web address:
<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/71527.html>.

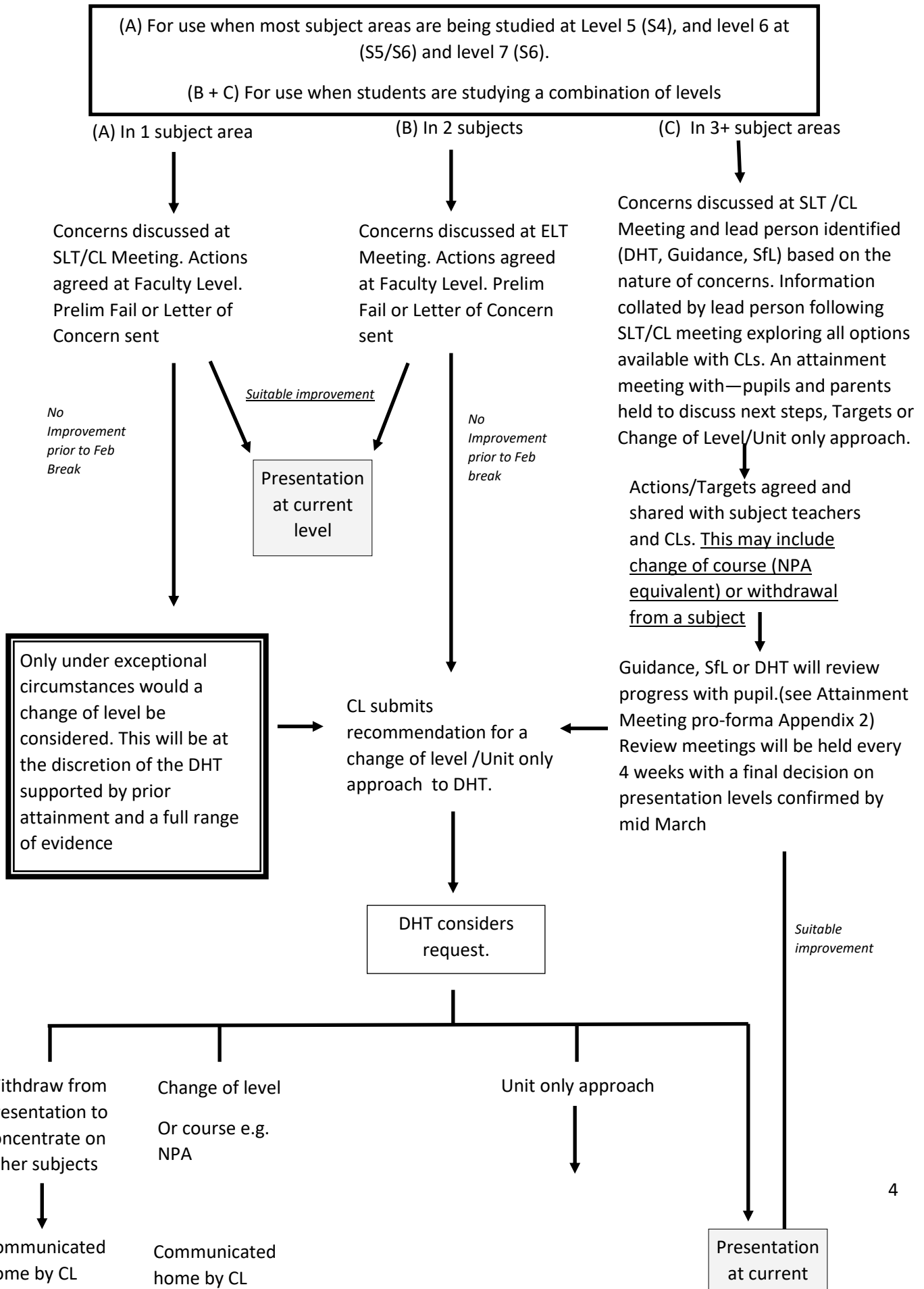
As always, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Guidance Teacher, or our SQA Coordinator Mr Luke, should you wish further information about the change in qualifications. Staff in schools will be continuing their development of the modified National 5 and Higher courses, while Faculty Heads and House Teams (Guidance and DHT) staff will be regularly reviewing and analysing information about pupils' progress in order to ensure that appropriate presentation levels are discussed with and communicated to you.

Further information on Changes to National Courses can be found at:
<https://www.sqa.org.uk>



Appendix 1

Post Prelim students identified 'At Risk'





Appendix 2



Attainment Review Meeting communicated home by CL

Student Name	
Register Group & House	
Date of Meeting	
Present	
Lead Person	

Nature of Concerns

Course	Current Level	Attainment concerns

Barriers to Learning/Studying
Summary of agreed Actions and Targets

Date of review meeting _____

