

Greenwood Academy

SQA Advice Booklet for Parents and Carers

April 2018

Greenwood Academy senior staff have continued to working closely with parents and carers through our briefing evenings to increase awareness of Curriculum for Excellence and the qualifications which our S4, 5 and 6 pupils are undertaking. In this booklet we address some Frequently Asked Questions which we hope will enable you to navigate the SQA Exam period. We would like to take this opportunity to wish all those sitting exams all the best. We hope that their hard work will pay off.

SQA Exam Timetable 2018: Exam Dates and Exam Times

SQA's timetable builder is now available for most mobile phones (Java based), Google Android, iPhone and iPod Touch.

The application lets pupils build their exam timetable and also provides key information relating to sitting the exams.

Prior to the exams, we will be providing our pupils with a paper copy of their personal timetable, focussing on the exams they are sitting.

Can the pupil sit the exam on a different day?

No, these are national exams run by the SQA and they take place at the same time in every centre across the country. If a pupil is unwell, please contact your doctor immediately and provide a medical line. Also, contact the school as soon as you possibly can so that we can ensure the absence is noted appropriately.

Where pupils have conflicts in their exam timetable, they should ensure that Depute Head Teachers, Mrs Dunker, Ms Greenlees or Ms Reid have made the necessary arrangements for them.

Receiving the results

Pupils will receive their Scottish Qualifications Certificate (SQC) by First Class mail on Tuesday 7th August. For those who have signed up, exam results are sent out by email before 9am on Tuesday 7th August 2018. (Please ensure pupils check both the inbox and junk folder for this email.) Exam results are sent out by text message between 8am and 9am on Tuesday 7th August 2018.

NB. Pupils who are tackling a National Progression Award in Computing will receive an SQA certificate in June and a further one in August.

Understanding the results

Grading for National 3 - Advanced Higher

National 3 to National 4 are not graded, but will be assessed as pass or fail. Considerable effort is applied by pupils to achieve a pass with units to pass plus an Added Value Unit. These levels feature on the SCQF framework.

Many courses at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher are graded A to D. Grading is based on the learner's performance in the Course assessment.

Grade D, like grades A to C, is reported on the Scottish Qualifications Certificate as a Course award in its own right. Grade D indicates that the candidate has:

- Attained between 45% and 49% in the Course assessment.

Grade D attracts both UCAS and SCQF points and is regarded as a "course completed".

If a pupil sat National 5 and has been awarded National 4, what does this mean?

Recognising Positive Achievement supports candidates, who do not achieve a National 5 course between grades A and D, achieve the course at National 4 if there is a hierarchical/corresponding Course at National 4. The criteria for recognition of positive achievement means that candidates are required to have passed:

- all the internally-assessed Units in the National 5 Course
- National 4 Added Value Unit
- a Literacy/Numeracy Unit (**at either N4 or N5**) this is an additional condition which applies to English, Gàidhlig and Maths (not Applications of Maths) Courses only

The opportunity to achieve the National 4 Course is open until the following April.

Is the achievement of a Grade D in a National 5 Course of more value than achieving a pass at National 4?

National 5 Courses - which are graded A to D - carry 24 SCQF* credit points at SCQF level 5, reflecting the level of demand and challenge involved.

National 4 Courses - which are not graded - also carry 24 SCQF points but these are at a SCQF level 4, which has a lower level of demand and challenge.

How do 'credit points' work? What do they mean?

Credit points are based on the amount of time the average learner would take to complete the qualification. As well as including the time spent learning in school/college it includes self-directed learning - ie study at home or the library. One SCQF credit point represents a notional 10 hours of learning. For example, if a learner achieves a Higher Course (SCQF level 6) with 24 SCQF credits, they will have undertaken about 240 hours of learning.

Why is SCQF information on the certificate?

The SCQF has been used in Scotland's colleges and universities for several years, and employers are becoming more aware of the SCQF. With more and more qualifications being placed in the framework, SQA feel that it is right to include SCQF information on the learner's certificate.

Knowing the SCQF information can help learners make decisions about what to do next. It also helps colleges and universities make decisions about entry or progression.

Are SCQF credit points the same as UCAS tariff points?

No, they are not. SCQF credit points are not the same as UCAS tariff points and do not relate to the tariff. UCAS tariff points are designed solely for the purpose of determining the utility of a qualification for progression into higher education. They relate to the type of qualification and the grade achieved and are allocated on that basis. By contrast, SCQF credit points are a measure of how much learning needs to be done to achieve a qualification, regardless of the grade achieved

The Results Services

If a pupil was expecting a better grade than the one achieved, can s/he appeal for a better grade?

No. The Appeals Service for National Qualifications which was available in previous years has been replaced by two new 'results services'.

The new Results Services are:

- *Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service - run prior to results being published* - this ensures that those candidates who have suffered genuinely exceptional circumstances, such as a bereavement

or illness etc, before or around the examination period. NB. Holidays, weddings and minor ailments are not accepted by SQA.

- Post-Results Service - *clerical check and/or a marking review of the script* - provides a safety net check of **final exam** results by checking that all parts of the script have been marked, the marks given for each answer has been totalled up correctly, the correct total/result was entered into the system for that learner's final exam paper. It must be stressed that, following a clerical check or marking review, the final grade awarded to the pupil **can go down as well as up!**

Please contact Greenwood Academy and discuss the matter with staff here. SQA **only** accept requests for a clerical check and/or a marking review from presenting centres. **Under no circumstances** will SQA accept a request from a candidate or candidate representative. It is important to stress that there are minimal changes to final grades due to robust electronic systems used by SQA. Missing a grade by one or two marks is not sufficient basis for a request.

Key Dates for post-results service:

7 August 2018	Candidates receive their results and certificates
17 August 2018	Closing date for priority marking review requests (for candidates with a conditional offer at university or college)
28 August 2018	Closing date for clerical check or marking review requests, for all qualifications

Our Senior Leaders will be in Greenwood Academy on **Wednesday 8th and Thursday 9th August** and available to answer any queries. We will also be meeting any pupils who, following confirmation of their results, wish to reconsider their options for Session 2018-2019 so that their timetable is in place for the pupil start date of August 20th 2018. Parents and Carers are welcome to attend these individual discussions.

Times for appointments for new S5 and S6 pupils for session 2018-2019 are as follows:

Wednesday 8th August

10 a.m. New S5 Annick and Gailes
11 a.m. New S5 Montgomery and Overtoun
12 noon New S5 Perceton, Shewalton and Warrix

Thursday 9th August

10 a.m. New S6 Annick and Gailes
11 a.m. New S6 Montgomery and Overtoun
12 noon New S6 Perceton, Shewalton and Warrix

For more detailed information, see

www.sqa.org.uk and www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone

*SCQF stands for Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework