

24 February 2014

Dear Candidate

National Qualifications 2014

As you continue to study for your 2014 National Qualifications, I wanted to contact you directly to share some information from SQA that you, your family and those who support you will find useful.

If you are studying for National 2, National 3 or National 4 qualifications, there will be no SQA exam at the end of your Course. Your teacher will determine if you pass and SQA will assure that standards are consistently applied across Scotland. All the Courses and Units you complete are valuable recognition of your learning achievements and will help you progress your learning and training in the future.

If you are studying for National 5, Intermediate, Higher or Advanced Higher, I am sure you are working hard to get ready for your exams that begin in April. I hope that your preparation and the exams themselves go well and you achieve the results you are hoping for. As with anything in life, though, unexpected things can take place — and I want to make sure you are aware of the support that is available, should something unexpected happen.

Our new **Results Services** arrangements are now available for all candidates who complete a Course at National 5, Intermediate, Higher and/or Advanced Higher from 2014 onwards. It is really important that you and, if appropriate, your parents/carers talk to your school about these services. I have enclosed a copy of our 'Introduction to Results Services' leaflet for your information.

The new Results Services arrangements are fairer and ensure those who face really exceptional circumstances are not disadvantaged. It replaces the previous Appeals system.

There are two parts to Results Services.

The **Exceptional Circumstances** Consideration Service is open to candidates who could not sit an exam for an exceptional reason, such as a major illness or recent family bereavement, or who sat an exam but had their performance affected by an unexpected occurrence (such as taking seriously ill during the exam and being unable to complete the paper).

If this happens to you, please tell your head teacher straight away. The vast majority of candidates taking exams will never have to use this service, but it is available to support you if required. If your school decides to use this service, they will send evidence on your behalf such as class tests, coursework and a 'prelim' produced by you during the year, to allow us to determine your examination grade.

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Reasons such as holidays or attending a wedding or festival will **not** be accepted as exceptional circumstances. Your head teacher will consider your reason for seeking to use the Exceptional Circumstances service, and will decide whether it is appropriate.

The other part of the service, the **Post-results Service**, can be used if your school believes that there could be an error in the marking of your exam paper because it does not match with other evidence they have of your work (such as classwork, 'prelim' or tests). In this event, your school can ask us for a clerical check, where we will double-check that all the marks awarded to you have been totalled correctly and the right grade awarded. Schools and colleges can also ask for a marking review of your exam paper. This involves a senior member of the marking team reviewing the paper to ensure it was correctly marked to the national standard set for the examination. It is not a 're-mark' of your paper, but is a review to ensure consistency of marking.

If you believe there is something wrong with the grade you have been awarded, you and or your parent/carer should contact your school as soon as you receive your results to discuss it with your teachers.

Do remember to make good use of all the study information available to you. You can download specimen question papers from our website by visiting www.sqa.org.uk/cfesubjects or access past papers at www.sqa.org.uk/pastpapers And you can register for MySQA at www.mysqa.org.uk to receive your qualification results by text and e-mail.

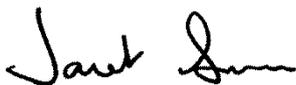
From results day, support will be available through both SQA and Skills Development Scotland (SDS). We will be operating our Candidate Advice Line, providing advice on the content and layout of your certificate, while the SDS Exam Results Helpline will offer impartial careers advice and information on university vacancies and college options.

If any of your details at the top of this letter are wrong, please tell your school or college immediately. They will confirm the change to us and we will ensure that your certificate has the right details on it.

Please share this letter and leaflet with others such as your parents/carers as it is important that they are aware of these changes too. If you have any trouble understanding this letter, please contact your school or contact SQA on 0345 279 1000.

I wish you well in the months ahead, and every success in the future.

Best wishes



Dr Janet Brown
Chief Executive