



# 2020 Revised National Qualifications Results

On 31 August 2020, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) published the [Attainment Statistics \(August\) 2020 Revised](#).

This publication replaces [Attainment Statistics \(August\) 2020](#), previously published on 4 August 2020, that was based on the outcomes of our Alternative Certification Model, to maintain standards, commissioned by the Deputy First Minister for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses, in this unprecedented year.

The results for all other courses and awards contained in the attainment tables - National 2, National 3, National 4, National Certificates, National Progression Awards, Skills for Work courses and Awards - are largely unchanged from the publication on 4 August. There may be a few minor adjustments to some figures as a result of centre amendments, that are made in any year.

On Tuesday 11 August, the Deputy First Minister outlined in a statement to the Scottish Parliament that he was using powers available to him under the Education (Scotland) Act 1996, to direct SQA to change the previous approach to certification this year and instead award candidate results based solely on the estimates provided by schools and colleges. The results of those learners who were awarded a higher grade during the initial moderation process, have been maintained.

SQA has provided schools, colleges, local authorities and UCAS with reports confirming candidates' final grades based solely on school and college estimates. Revised certificates will be delivered on Tuesday 8 September. We have also introduced a revised appeal service for schools and colleges.

It is the prerogative of Ministers to issue a direction of this kind. It is SQA's responsibility to fully comply. This report reflects my brief observations, as Chief Examining Officer for Scotland, on the national attainment statistics that we now have for 2020, a truly unprecedented year for everyone living in Scotland and for learners who have completed National Qualifications.

Given the Ministerial direction, the Scottish Government is undertaking an Equalities Impact Assessment on the change in approach.

## Attainment

The distribution of 2020 revised attainment by grade is summarised below. Further statistical information about 2020 revised results are available on [SQA's statistics page](#).

**Table 1: 2020 August revised attainment rates**

Award level	Candidates awarded						Total
	A	B	C	A to C	D	No Award	
National 5	127,299	74,063	66,196	267,558	21,383	11,698	300,639
Higher	74,478	50,142	41,588	166,208	12,982	7,024	186,214
Advanced Higher	10,919	6,550	4,466	21,935	1,088	547	23,570

Award level	Grade awarded					
	A	B	C	A to C	D	No Award
National 5	42.3%	24.6%	22.0%	89.0%	7.1%	3.9%
Higher	40.0%	26.9%	22.3%	89.3%	7.0%	3.8%
Advanced Higher	46.3%	27.8%	18.9%	93.1%	4.6%	2.3%

A to C attainment in 2020 at National 5 is 267,558 or 89.0% (225,594 or 78.2% in 2019). At Higher it is 166,208 or 89.3% (138,972 or 74.8% in 2019). At Advanced Higher it is 21,935 or 93.1% (18,627 or 79.4% in 2019).

Some variation in attainment is to be expected between courses and over time. This year, the absence of external assessment information and the Ministerial direction to award estimated grades, have led to a different pattern of attainment than we would see in a normal year. The revised results for graded courses published today should not be compared to those in previous years.

## Conclusion

SQA has fully complied with the Ministerial direction, and has today published the [Attainment Statistics \(August\) 2020 Revised](#).

In this truly exceptional year, I offer my congratulations to Scotland's learners on their achievements.

**Fiona Robertson**

Scotland's Chief Examining Officer

31 August 2020