

# SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

## APPEALS REPORT 2020 SUMMARY



### Key points

On 11 August 2020, the Deputy First Minister issued SQA with a Ministerial direction to award candidate results based on the estimates provided by centres. The Ministerial direction also stipulated the development of an appeals process.

This release provides information on the number of Appeal requests<sup>1</sup> made and accepted following the Ministerial direction. There were three grounds upon which a head of centre, or their nominated representative, could submit an appeal: SQA Error, Centre Administrative Error or Centre Discrimination. This report provides data on the breakdown of changes that resulted from such requests<sup>2</sup>. A detailed breakdown of Appeals requests at subject level is provided in 'Appeals Report – Tables 2020'.

The key findings of the release are as follows:

- There was a total of 664 appeal requests made<sup>3</sup>.
- There were 2 requests submitted under SQA Error, 565 under Centre Administrative Error and 97 under Centre Discrimination.
- 83.9% of all requests were accepted. The percentage accepted by grounds for appeal were:
  - SQA Error: 0% accepted.
  - Centre Administrative Error: 88.8% accepted.
  - Centre Discrimination: 56.7% accepted.
- Of the appeals accepted, the outcomes<sup>4</sup> were:
  - 12.6% new entries.
  - 2.0% withdrawn entries.
  - 79.4% amended up.
  - 4.7% amended down.
  - 1.4% no grade change.

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<sup>1</sup> The Appeals process was only available for subjects at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher.

<sup>2</sup> The Appeals process was ongoing at the time of data collection, as such these figures are reflective of the position at that time.

<sup>3</sup> A candidate can have multiple requests for a single qualification and each request would be included in this report.

<sup>4</sup> Definitions of the possible outcomes can be found in the 'Further Notes' section.

## SQA Error

Appeals were submitted under grounds 'SQA Error' where the head of centre, or their nominated representative, believed that there had been an error within SQA's internal processes for reinstating the original centre estimate.

Figure 1: SQA Error summary

SQA Error	Total Appeals Received	Total Accepted	Percentage of Appeals Accepted	Accepted Appeals				
				New	Withdrawn	Amended Up	Amended down	No Grade Change
National 5	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Higher	2	0	0.0%	-	-	-	-	-
Advanced Higher	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overall	2	0	0.0%	-	-	-	-	-

## Centre Administrative Error

Appeals were submitted under grounds 'Centre Administrative Error' where the head of centre, or their nominated representative, believed an administrative error within the centre led to the provision of estimate information to SQA which did not accurately reflect the centre's intention at the time they submitted the estimate in May.

Figure 2: Centre Administrative Error summary

Centre Administrative Error	Total Appeals Received	Total Accepted	Percentage of Appeals Accepted	Accepted Appeals				
				New	Withdrawn	Amended Up	Amended down	No Grade Change
National 5	213	200	93.9%	48	4	137	8	3
Higher	331	282	85.2%	18	5	236	18	5
Advanced Higher	21	20	95.2%	4	2	14	0	0
Overall	565	502	88.8%	70	11	387	26	8

## Centre Discrimination

Appeals were submitted under grounds 'Centre Discrimination' where the head of centre, or their nominated representative believed that discrimination or other conduct contrary to the Equality Act 2010, and relating to protected characteristics, led to the provision of estimate information to SQA which did not accurately reflect the centre's view following their internal investigation of the circumstances.

Figure 3: Centre Discrimination summary

Centre Discrimination	Total Appeals Received	Total Accepted	Percentage of Appeals Accepted	Accepted Appeals				
				New	Withdrawn	Amended Up	Amended down	No Grade Change
National 5	23	15	65.2%	0	0	15	0	0
Higher	67	36	53.7%	0	0	36	0	0
Advanced Higher	7	4	57.1%	0	0	4	0	0
Overall	97	55	56.7%	0	0	55	0	0

## **Further notes**

### Definition of appeals decisions

'Accepted Appeals' were approved for the category under which they were submitted.

'Rejected Appeals' were not approved for the category under which they were submitted.

### Definition of outcomes

Once an appeal was accepted there were five possible outcomes:

- 'New Entries' - appeal requests in which a centre requested that a candidate be entered and certificated for the qualification.
- 'Withdrawn Entries' - appeal requests in which a centre requested that a candidate be withdrawn from the qualification.
- 'Amended Up' - appeal requests submitted by a centre that resulted in a candidate receiving a higher grade.
- 'Amended Down' - appeal requests submitted by a centre that resulted in a candidate receiving a lower grade.
- 'No Grade Change' - appeal requests submitted by a centre that did not result in a change to the grade awarded to the candidate.

All changes are defined with respect to the grade awarded to candidates in the August 2020 Revised Attainment published on 31 August 2020.

### Notation

Percentages are rounded to one decimal place. In cases where the rounded percentage would be displayed as 0.0%, to one decimal place, '<0.05%' has been used in the summary tables.

All percentages are rounded separately, and breakdowns may not sum to 100 per cent.