

Assessment of National Qualifications in Academic Year 2020/21

1. Introduction

This paper builds on the previous work of CERG Workstream 3 and sets out the principles that the approach to assessment for Academic Year 2020/21 should meet. It also sets out SQA's proposed approach for the modification of course assessment; modelling of an adjusted examination diet timetable; and high-level consideration of what might be required should further disruption occur during the year.

2. Principles

A number of overriding principles were discussed at a meeting of CERG on 6 July 2020. The DFM set out four principles which should guide the adoption of any approach, including changes to approach, for AY2020/21.

1. A consistent approach across Scotland.
2. Clarity for the system before schools return in August.
3. Any approach should not unnecessarily negatively impact on options for learners in AY2020/21 but should be able to mitigate for any in-year disruptions.
4. Acting with the welfare of young people in mind.

3. Context

There are several factors to consider, including:

3.1 Loss of teaching and learning time

Lockdown began on 23 March 2020 and the AY2019/20 Exam Diet was scheduled for 27 April until 4 June 2020 with Easter holidays typically beginning on 3 April 2020 for two weeks. Therefore, the learning loss for senior phase pupils who would typically have been on exam leave from 20 April 2020 to 4 June 2020 when the diet was due to end, might be considered to only take real effect during June 2020 when the new AY began.

This represents around 10% of the 38 weeks of the school year albeit many schools would have online arrangements in place although the engagement of pupils with these is recognised to have been variable. Learners in colleges will have had similar disruption.

Learners in S3 and below when lockdown started will have experienced 12 weeks or around 30% of disruption of varying levels across schools to their teaching and learning time.

3.2 Return of schools and anticipated delivery of teaching

Current plans are for a close to full return to schools in August 2020. Subject to further guidance, the return to school should accommodate the full delivery of teaching with minimal disruption.

3.3 Potential for further disruption

International experience suggests that there is a risk of further local or national lockdowns, with a subsequent impact on teaching time. This risk could result in widespread disruption to teaching,

localised disruption to teaching, or potentially minimal disruption if any lockdown was short in duration and/or coincided with school holidays. Such variability raises a significant challenge for planning purposes.

Additionally, there may be a risk of public health advice at the time causing disruption to the sitting of exams, and a repeat of the circumstances of this year.

3.4 Improved measures for continuity of teaching

There have been many examples of innovative approaches to teaching over lockdown, and these will be captured to inform actions for any future lockdowns. In addition, the e-Sgoil offer should also provide a significant level of support for distance learning (in conjunction with the provision of IT equipment). This may mean that any disruption of subsequent lockdown periods will be able to be reduced.

4. Status

4.1 Proposed approach for the modification of course assessment and modelling of an adjusted examination timetable.

SQA has agreed high level principles to support modifications and in some cases, enhanced guidance to National 5 to Advanced Higher course assessments, where practicable, that will aim to support:

- The delivery and assessment of subjects that are constrained by current social distancing measures. For example, in practical and performance-based components.
- Increased learning and teaching opportunities, where possible.
- A more flexible approach to assessment for learners, whilst retaining the validity of the qualifications.

The number of Advanced Higher course modifications may be less than in National 5 and Higher courses due to the expectation that learners undertake self-directed study at this level. Practical and performance-based subjects may propose modifications at Advanced Higher, however minimising the level of change reduces contention and concern for teachers and allows focus on National 5 and Higher courses.

In addition, SQA has been modelling various iterations of the examination timetable with a view to exploring if more time can be found for teaching and learning. This includes the scope to delay the start of the exam timetable, the impact of removing qualifications from the timetable, re-ordering the timetable, and the use of weekends.

4.2 Draft parameters for the modification of course assessment at National 5 – Advanced Higher in session 2020/21.

National Courses are diverse in nature and the high-level principles can be underpinned by a variety of different approaches at subject level. It is therefore important that the scale of any proposed modifications are considered and appropriate, to ensure coherence across the catalogue in line with SQA's Principles of assessment. To support this, a draft set of parameters have been produced that propose to manage the scale of change (Appendix 1).

The parameters outline:

- A menu of options for the modest modification of National 5 to Advanced Higher course assessments in 2021.

- Broad parameters for those modest modifications

It is anticipated that where modest modifications can be made to course assessments, they will be straightforward in nature and will not require course materials to change. For example, there should be no requirement for course specifications to be altered, as any changes to course materials may have the undesirable consequence of increasing learning and teaching time. It is not the intention to remove critical content from any National Courses.

SQA recommends that a short consultation on any proposed changes to course assessments should be undertaken in order to determine the feasibility and support for the proposed models. Support for change, given the timeframe involved, is critical.

The impact of any modifications or changes to assessment would be equality impact assessed against the protected characteristics with opportunity for comment in the consultation.

4.3 Guidance on evidence gathering

SQA will provide refreshed and easy to access guidance on the approach and evidence base that can be used for determining candidate estimates for National Courses for AY2020/21 during August 2020, should this be required. Whilst this already exists on our website and in SQA Academy courses we will ensure this is easy to engage with and sets out clear guidance on what to do and what to avoid.

4.4 Modelling of an adjusted examination timetable.

Delaying the timetable has implications for time to quality assure and mark course assessments and would require teachers and lecturers to support SQA with marking beyond the start of school summer holidays. Changes to the timetable will require a later certification date, necessitating negotiation with stakeholders, such as UCAS. However, it is important to highlight that a later start to the exam timetable would have implications for teaching and learning in the AY2021/22, as there would be less time for teaching and learning in the month of June 2021.

In any year, a number of factors are considered in developing the timetable, including the number of coincident exams (a clash of exams scheduled at the same time for a candidate), candidate workload (the number of exams on a day and/or during a week), and the volume of assessment arrangements. These issues create additional complexity and demands on centres supporting their learners during the exam period. SQA works hard to optimise the timetable each year, in the interests of learners.

Early consultation with UCAS suggests RoUK will certificate on 19 August 2021 and Scotland could also certificate on that day. In addition to the existing timetable for AY2020/21, four versions of the timetable have been modelled using this later certification date and details of these versions can be found at **Appendix 2**. All of these would require further checks for operational viability but, on paper, they all provide more time for teaching and learning.

However, the various iterations present implications for the wider system, including the need for teachers and lecturers to mark well into the start of summer holidays; difficulties observing religious observance with the introduction of examinations at weekends; support for schools and colleges opening as exam centres at the weekend, with associated costs; and for version 0.18, a significant increase in the number of coincident exams for candidates causing workload issues for learners and their centres.

Version 0.15 gives the best combination of delayed start and lowest coincident exams whilst minimising the requirements on markers in the summer break – albeit this includes marking periods where the end date is extended from 30 June in 2020 (had the diet gone ahead) to 16 July in 2021

which represents a significant risk to successful certification as this involves c.7,000 markers across c.13,000 marking appointments. It also proposes examinations at weekends, including Sunday.

The existing draft timetable (v0.0 below) for AY2020/21 has been through extensive consultation with SQA's Timetable Advisory Group. Any changes made to that version require further consultation as there would be likely impacts further in the awarding and certification process. This means that all four iterations of the timetable have significant implications which would need the agreement and support of the wider system.

The impact of any modifications or changes to the examination timetable would be equality impact assessed against the protected characteristics.

4.5 Timing and scope of implementation of course and timetable modifications

It is important to note that the level of risk to and difficulty of successful implementation of any changes increases as time progresses. As data is entered on school MIS and SQA systems and teaching and learning takes place the more difficult it becomes to introduce modification.

As such all final modifications should be known and communicated as soon as possible. Once changes are in place it is proposed they would stay in place until at least the end of AY2020/21 unless public health advice prevails. Modifications would also apply to all centres.

4.6 Engagement and consultation

It must be noted that work has been constrained by the focus on safe delivery of Awarding 2020 and availability of resource in SQA and in schools. However, SQA Principal Assessors and their senior subject teams, SQA Subject Implementation Managers and in some cases, existing National Qualifications Support Teams have been involved in considering potential approaches. A short technical consultation on the proposed modifications to course assessments can begin on 10 August 2020 as schools return.

The purpose of this consultation is to gather feedback from the teaching profession on the proposed modifications to determine how these might work in practice. **Appendix 3** sets out the purpose, intended outcome and timelines. A technical consultation with teachers via the SQA website provides the best combination of coverage, access to technical expertise and timescale.

Discussions with the Timetable Advisory Group (see **Appendix 2** for membership), with appropriate representation including the voice of the learner, on timetable modifications, will commence in early August 2020 and provide valuable data on the feasibility and implications of the movement of the timetable.

4.7 In Summary

We propose:

- A short SQA technical consultation with teachers on the proposed modifications to course assessments from 10 August 2020.
- Further discussion with the augmented Timetable Advisory Group on timetable changes.

It is anticipated that finalised modifications to course assessments and timetable will be confirmed and implemented by 31 August 2020. This is later than the start of term, but will hopefully achieve the support of the system, for successful implementation.

5. Potential disruption - approach and contingencies

5.1 Approach in AY2020/21

The approach suggested for AY2020/21 is a set of contingencies broadly in line with the approach that SQA was asked to adopt for AY2019/20. This moved through:

- Offering a full diet and coursework.
- Then run exam diet with some disruption.
- Then no exam diet but it will be possible to submit and mark coursework.
- The Alternative Certification Model based on teacher estimates.

The movement through these contingencies was led by changing public health advice at each point in time when we agreed a change of approach.

The central **working assumption** is that centres are open during the full school year with a full diet of national qualifications offered and running albeit with modest modifications to assessment to help mitigate the disruption already incurred and to account for social distancing and other related arrangements. Delivery models may have reduced presentation levels overall and unit entries and two-year courses may be more commonplace. The diet will begin on 17 May and end on 13 June with a proposed certification day of 19 August 2021, pending discussion.

All courses and all levels being available to candidates and centres provides the flexibility of choice to utilise the full portfolio of courses and units as suits their local needs.

Courses

As highlighted above, there will be modifications made to course assessments where appropriate (guidance will be provided in August 2020) including on how to deliver practical and performance subjects in line with public health advice.

Units

Additionally, there is a full range of units (c.430) that were previously part of the National 5, Higher and Advanced Highers that are available for centres to use. This could be helpful where centres decided to offer two-year courses with units being used to certificate learners in year one. In the small number of subjects where units are now significantly different from the current course, they will be revised to match the current course.

Delivery models

Local Authorities and Centres should determine the delivery model that best suits their local needs.

5.2 Contingencies

In the course of the session potential contingency arrangements may be required to be invoked. In broad terms:

Contingency 1

SQA will make available a full diet of examinations and coursework with appropriate modifications to course assessments. *This work is underway and is being planned for implementation at subject level, where practicable for AY2020/21.* Modelling of an adjusted timetable will continue, as proposed in this paper.

Contingency 2

In the event of local lockdown SQA would work closely with local authorities and schools to agree 'routine' arrangements such as extensions to coursework and submission of data deadlines, and re-arrangement of visiting assessment and quality assurance where this is possible. These are the types of contingencies generally invoked when schools have experienced disruption such as in the event of a fire or school closure.

Contingency 3

It is not possible to run the exam diet in AY2020/21, so utilise an Alternative Certification Model based on teacher estimates and other data utilised in AY2019/20 but, if at all possible, include coursework data for each candidate, assuming that is completed and can be marked. With developments in the models of blended learning, it may be helpful to revisit the assumption about the remote completion of coursework.

Contingency 4

It is not possible to run the exam diet in AY2020/21 and it is also not possible to include coursework, so we would utilise an Alternative Certification Model, based on teacher estimates and other data as in AY2019/20.

5.3 Considerations

With regards to the potential risk of in-year disruption to teaching and/or sitting of exams we need to consider how best fairness for all learners can be delivered and the potential for local or national lockdowns to disproportionately impact some learners more than others.

Additionally, we also need to consider the ability of in-year contingency measures to mitigate any impact of local or national lockdowns that may occur, versus taking a mitigating approach from the start of the year on an assumption of further disruption. Risks in this approach include:

- Any significant early mitigating action may eventually turn out to have not been necessary, with subsequent impacts on some or all learners that could have been avoided.
- In-year mitigating actions may not be effective or feasible and could equally lead to negative outcomes.
- Changes to arrangements in-year are difficult to execute and apply fairly to all involved.

It should be noted that for AY2019/20 the Alternative Certification Model has been possible on the basis that the vast majority, if not all, of course content was delivered before lockdown began. If enough course content is not delivered over AY2020/21 then there would be challenges to using the 2020 Alternative Certification Model again without a risk to the integrity of the awards.

It should also be noted that in March 2020 there was little online material in place and a lack of understanding of the preparedness of the wider system and what was needed to put online or blended learning in place. This position is improved since then and must continue to evolve as a further safeguard.

5.4 Equity and fairness

Within an area there may be several schools with differing resources, levels of preparedness and they may demand different arrangements to be made in the event of local lockdown. Across the country there may be demands for different arrangements in the event of national lockdown.

For example, removing the option of an National 5 external assessment and offering unit only National 5 courses from August 2020 would free up time and focus for Higher and Advanced Higher candidates but if there is no subsequent disruption to teaching and learning then calls for National 5 external assessments to be put in place made part way through the year could not easily be delivered – by SQA or by teachers and candidates.

5.5 RoUK approach

Previous advice has set out that Ofqual are considering options around adaptations to free up teaching time, adaptations to address obstacles that could be created by public health advice, sampling of course content, and changes to the exam timetable. There has subsequently seen a media campaign by a range of head teachers arguing that the Ofqual measures are not sufficient and that more consideration needs to be given to learner wellbeing, with course content for exams reduced.

5.6 Young people

CERG Workstream 3 has not been able to engage with young people directly to this point to seek their views. Indirectly we are aware of a range of views that appears to be lacking any consensus.

Additional support through a recovery period with attendant funding will be needed to allow learners to re-engage with school and with learning. However, some evidence suggests that learner capacity may be reduced as an impact of their experiences through lockdown and may also need further mitigation.

Practically, S4 candidates will have gained no experience of sitting exams in AY2019/20, and many will progress to Highers in AY2020/21 and so will be experiencing exams for the first time. Consideration will need to be given to how best to support this.

Whilst there has been recent work carried out with Children's Youth Parliament, Young Scot, and other CYP focused groups further impact assessment, engagement and consultation on multiple aspects of post COVID recovery including modifications to assessment and timetable will be necessary in the coming months. Whilst the focus of SQA's proposed consultation on assessment is a technical one and aimed largely at teachers the proposed timetable consultation will seek to include the learner voice.

6. Conclusion

SQA is undertaking significant work to address the impact of the loss of learning and teaching time within schools, whilst recognising and planning for the potential threat for further disruption. However, the complexity of this work and the timescales involved are challenging.

We propose:

- A short SQA consultation with teachers on the proposed modifications to course assessments from 10 August 2020.
- Further discussion with the augmented Timetable Advisory Group on timetable changes.
- Further engagement and consultation with CYP on multiple aspects of post COVID recovery to be explored and carried out

It is anticipated that any finalised modifications to course assessments and timetable will be confirmed and implemented by 31 August 2020. All courses and all levels will be available to candidates and centres have the flexibility of choice to utilise our full portfolio of courses and units as suits their local needs.

It has been widely recognised that there will need to be support from the system for any changes not least because of the potential workload which may be created, so agreement from CERG, and consultation, is important.

In addition, scenario planning based on the contingencies, scenarios and the other factors noted should be carried out by SQA and Scottish Government and considered by the National Qualifications Contingency Group in order to develop thinking more fully in this area.

Scottish Government
Scottish Qualifications Authority

July 2020

PARAMETERS FOR THE MODIFICATION OF NATIONAL 5 TO ADVANCED HIGHER COURSE ASSESSMENTS DIET 2021

WHY ARE WE MODIFYING NATIONAL 5 TO ADVANCED HIGHER COURSE ASSESSMENTS?

The Scottish Government's Coronavirus (COVID-19): strategic framework for reopening schools, early learning and childcare provision¹ makes clear that a full timetable of SQA exams and coursework is planned at all levels in 2021.

However, as the country continues to suffer from the impact of the Coronavirus, there remains a risk of disruption to the amount of teaching that can be delivered in Session 2020/21. It is important that there is an appropriate balance between the amount of teaching able to be delivered for each course and the level of assessment within National 5 to Advanced Higher Courses. This must guide our approach to assessment for Diet 2021.

SQA must, therefore, consider what changes can be made to the National 5 to Advanced Higher course assessments to support greater opportunities for learning and teaching in session 2020/21, whilst retaining national standards.

As in all other years, the approach to awarding qualifications for 2020/21 must meet SQA's Principles of assessment and remain valid, reliable, practicable and fair in line with SQA's Code of Practice and Governing Principles (SQA, 2017).

WHY DO WE NEED PARAMETERS?

SQA has agreed high level principles to support modest modifications to National 5 to Advanced Higher course assessments that aim to support:

1. the delivery and assessment of subjects that are constrained by current social distancing measures. For example, in practical and performance-based components.
2. increased learning and teaching opportunities, where possible.
3. a more flexible approach to assessment for learners, whilst retaining the validity of the qualifications.

National Courses are diverse in nature and the high-level principles can be underpinned by a variety of different approaches at subject level. It is therefore important that the scale of any proposed modifications remain modest to ensure coherence across the catalogue in line with SQA's Principles of assessment.

This document outlines:

- A menu of options for the modest modification of National 5 to Advanced Higher course assessments in 2021.
- Broad parameters for these modest modifications.

¹ Scottish Government (2020) Coronavirus (COVID-19): strategic framework for reopening schools, early learning and childcare provision [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/excellent-equity-during-covid-19-pandemic-strategic-framework-reopening-schools-early-learning-childcare-provision-scotland/pages/6/> (Accessed 30 June 2020)

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS FOR THE MODEST MODIFICATION OF NATIONAL 5 TO ADVANCED HIGHER COURSE ASSESSMENTS?

National 5 to Advanced Higher course assessments must ensure that both qualification and assessment standards are appropriate for the qualification. Qualification standards define the levels of knowledge and skills required to achieve a qualification.

Assessment standards are the levels of demand on candidates and what the assessment covers.

The course assessment in the majority of National 5 to Advanced Higher courses is a combination of question paper and coursework. However, there are a limited number of subjects where the course assessment is a question paper only.

Appropriate modifications to National 5 to Advanced Higher should be proposed based on their ability to increase opportunities for learning and teaching time, where possible.

Modifications can be made to **either the question paper component or the coursework component or both. However, it is appreciated that modifications to course assessments will not be possible in all subjects at all levels.** A rationale outlining what modifications are proposed or why modification cannot be made, within a particular subject or level will be required.

Of paramount importance is the requirement that National 5 to Advanced Higher Courses remain valid and therefore credible with end users. Therefore, **the removal of key subject content should be avoided** to ensure the maintenance of standards. **However, consideration may be given to assessing content in a different way to free up teaching and learning time.**

The following modifications and considerations are designed as guidelines to ensure equity of scale across National 5 to Advanced Higher course assessments. The list is not exhaustive and alternative arrangements can be made at subject level, provided they broadly align with the scale exemplified below. The modifications can be applied singularly or in combination but overall, they should be modest and relatively easy to adopt at centre level.

Modification	Consideration
Increased optionality in the question paper, where appropriate	Increased optionality in the question paper may allow centres to focus their available learning and teaching time on a narrower range of topics or content. For example, in Geography or Modern Studies. However, this approach can result in problems with setting levels of demand and differentiation, so this will require to be considered carefully.
Removing a component of course assessment	A course assessment component could be removed where its removal is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the national standard. For example, the spoken language component could be removed in English. The assignment could be removed in Accounting with all the critical content sampled within the examination.
Adjusting the volume of evidence required in coursework tasks.	Modest adjustments to the volume of evidence required may increase learning and teaching time by reducing the amount of evidence required to be produced by candidates. For example, in Drama: performance, consideration of interactive group sizes would be required and there would be no application of make-up and hair unless circumstances change. In Music Technology the assignment could be reduced to lessen the need for the use of recording equipment.
Provision of guidance to support teachers during the	Guidance can be provided to further support teachers to make decisions around the volume of evidence candidates submit for assessment. This may

evidence collection process.	naturally reduce the volume of evidence required to be produced by centres. For example, in Art and Design and Health and Food Technology.
Alternative approaches to the conditions of assessment within the coursework component.	Conditions of assessment within coursework could be altered or relaxed to support increased learning and teaching time in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ time ◆ resources ◆ reasonable assistance ◆ supervision, control and authentication ◆ volume

WHAT ARE THE PARAMETERS FOR MODIFICATION OF NATIONAL 5 TO ADVANCED HIGHER COURSE ASSESSMENTS?

Appropriate and considered modifications can be defined as approaches that continue to support the validity of National 5 to Advanced Highers, whilst mitigating the challenges of a reduction in programmed learning at school level by reducing the overall assessment burden for a single year, rather than introducing wholesale change.

Where modifications are proposed, developers must consider the impact of those modifications on:

- ◆ Learning and teaching time.
- ◆ Centres' understanding of the assessable content.
- ◆ Validity, reliability, practicability, equity and fairness.
- ◆ Progression across levels.
- ◆ Subjects within the same curriculum area that may share the same assessment approach.
- ◆ The volume of administration SQA would have to undertake to support those changes for example, changes to quality assurance arrangements, development of specimen question papers.

MODIFICATIONS TO AY2020/21 EXAM TIMETABLE - SUMMARY

APPENDIX 2

Version	Title	Start Date	End Date	Duration	Public Holiday Avoidance	Religious Observances	Scottish Holyrood Election Avoidance	Business Guidelines Adherence	Coincident Levels
v0.0	Original Agreed NQ TT– 10 th August Cert Date	26/04/2021	03/06/2021	29 (28 Exam Days)	No	Ramadan	No	Yes – Where possible	76
v0.14	19 th August 2021 Cert Date	17/05/2021	23/06/2021	28 Days	Yes	Ramadan Concluded before TT starts	Yes	Yes – Where possible	76
v0.15	19 th August Cert Date – Inc. Weekends	17/05/2021	13/06/2021	28 Days	Yes	Days of Religious Observance	Yes	Yes – Where possible	76
v0.16	19 th August Cert Date – Inc. Saturdays Only	17/05/2021	17/06/2021	28 Days	Yes	Days of Religious Observance	Yes	Yes – Where possible	76
v0.18	19 th August Cert Date – N5 First	13/05/2021	23/06/2021	30 Days	Yes	Nil	Yes	No	631

This table shows some potential timetable options with 19 August certification date.

The full timetables can be found from the links below. Please note that stakeholder groups will need to be consulted if any changes are to be made to the original and agreed timetable.

Links to timetable variations in full

V0.14 Certification Date moved to 19th August 2021



v0.14 Working
Draft Examination Ti

V0.15 19th August Certification including weekends



v0.15 Draft Exam
Timetable 2021 19th

V0.16 19th August Certification including Saturdays



v0.16 Draft Revised
Exam Timetable 2021

V0.18 19th August Certification with N5 subjects scheduled first



v0.18 Draft Revised
Exam Timetable 2021

Timetable Advisory Group Membership

Position Held	Organisation
Principal	Local Authority
Senior Operations Manager	Liaison Team - SQA
Staff	College sector
SQA Coordinator	School sector
Principal Assessor	Local Authority
Chief Invigilator	Local Authority
Member	Parent Group
Member	Parent Group
Professional Officer	Teaching Union
Chief Invigilator	Local Authority
Liaison Manager	Liaison Team - SQA
Deputy Director	School sector
Member	Education Network
SQA Coordinator	Independent School
Qualifications Co-ordinator	Qualifications Development - SQA
Vice Convenor	Teaching Union
Executive	Education Network
Note - We will augment the standard membership to include parent and learner voices as appropriate.	

Appendix 3 - Technical Consultation on modifications to course assessment of National Qualifications in AY 2020/21

SQA has engaged with SQA Principal Assessors and their senior subject teams, SQA Subject Implementation Managers and in where possible, existing National Qualifications Support Teams to consider potential modifications to National Course assessments using the parameters provided.

It is anticipated that a short technical consultation, on the proposed modifications to National Course assessments can begin from the 10 August 2020, as schools return.

There are five potential models for this consultation, as detailed below, including the option to not consult. Each model has a different approach, audience, purpose, benefits and risks and will result in a different publication date for the Modification Summary documents for N5 to AH course assessments for AY2020/21.

Recommended Approach

The consultation approach should be determined by how well it will fulfil the need to gather technical feedback on how the proposed modifications to assessment will work in practice in schools to extend learning and teaching time. To this end, either proposal 2 or 3 is recommended as the most effective way of gathering feedback from the end users of the proposed modifications who have professional knowledge and understanding of teaching, learning and assessment methodology. Option 3 is the approach taken by WJEC. Ofqual, by statute, are required to use Option 5.

	Proposed approach	Audience	Purpose	Benefits	Risks	Publication of Modification Summaries
1	No consultation	N/A	N/A	Schools will be informed of modifications quickly.	No feedback from teachers would be gathered.	17 August 2020
2	Small scale technical consultation	NQSTs	To gather technical feedback on the proposed modifications from key stakeholders at subject level, including their wider teaching networks.	NQSTs would be given more time to consider the proposed modifications and engage with their own networks on the technical details.	Not all teachers in Scotland would be consulted on the proposed modifications.	31 August 2020
3	Small scale technical consultation (Consultation document on the SQA secure site – questionnaire on the open site)	Teachers	To gather technical feedback directly from the teaching profession on the proposed modifications to determine how these might work in practice to extend learning and teaching time.	This approach would control the volume of responses and allow SQA to consider more carefully the feedback at subject level from teachers.	The general public would not be able to access the consultation document.	31 August 2020.

4	Technical consultation (Consultation on SQA open site – questionnaire directly emailed to schools with a link for teachers)	Teachers	To gather technical feedback directly from the teaching profession on the proposed modifications to determine how these might work in practice to extend learning and teaching time	This approach would be targeted at teachers but would allow the general public to view the consultation document.	As the consultation is in the public domain, it is likely that wider stakeholders will wish to respond. However, there will be no facility for them to do this, within this proposal. This may mean that the email link gets circulated more widely by the teaching community to other stakeholder groups. Although only responses from the teaching profession would be considered, analysis of wider responses would require greater work and extend deadlines, since we anticipate a high volume of responses.	30 September 2020
5	General National consultation	General public	To gather general feedback on the proposed modifications from the general public.	This would allow the general public to comment on the proposed modifications.	This would be a general consultation and significant time would be required to analyse and report on responses. Timelines would be extended.	30 September 2020