



# National Qualifications 2019 and 2020

## Candidate malpractice data

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and resources being focused on the 2020 and 2021 Alternative Certification Models, the production and publication of some SQA statistics and outputs for the 2018–19 and 2019–20 sessions have been postponed.

On 30 September 2021, under its statutory duty as the regulator for National Qualifications in Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) published information on malpractice in the 2018–19 and 2019–20 academic sessions.

### 2018–19

The data shows the number of reported incidents of malpractice investigated in the 2019 diet of examinations for National Courses at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. We also provide data on the outcome of the investigations.

The number of candidates accused of malpractice while sitting SQA examinations in 2019 remains extremely low. Penalties were applied in 150 cases — 0.030 per cent of the total number of entries (497,943).

### 2019–20

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the cancellation of the 2020 exam diet, no instances of candidate malpractice were identified in 2019-20. Consequently, no penalties were applied.

## Malpractice terminology

### Categories of malpractice

**Collusion:** Collusion with others when an assessment must be completed by individual candidates. Copying work from another candidate (including using ICT to do so) and/or working collaboratively with other candidates on an individual task.

**Frivolous content:** Producing content that is unrelated to the examination paper/question in exam scripts or coursework.

**Misconduct:** Behaviour in the examination room that causes disruption to others. This includes talking, shouting, abusive and/or aggressive behaviour and/or language, and having a prohibited electronic device that emits any kind of sound in the examination room.

**Offensive content:** Content in scripts or coursework that includes vulgarity and swearing that is out with the context of the assessment, or any material of a discriminatory nature (including racism, sexism and homophobia).

**Personation:** Assuming the identity of another candidate or a candidate having someone assume his/her identity during an assessment.

**Plagiarism:** Failure to acknowledge sources properly and/or the submission of another person's work as if it were the candidate's own.

**Prohibited Items:** Physical possession of prohibited materials (including mobile phones, electronic devices, handwritten notes, etc) in the examination room.

### **Penalty definitions**

**Warning:** Warning given to candidate that will be taken into account should there be any future breach of SQA rules.

**Warning with Revision of Marks:** Marks awarded are revised in cases of collusion and plagiarism in the candidate's work.

**Cancellation:** Cancellation of external award.

**Table 1: Candidate malpractice data**

<b>Number of penalties issued to candidates by category</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>NQ 2020</b>	<b>NQ 2019</b>	<b>NQ 2018</b>
Collusion	0	16	29
Frivolous/Offensive	0	7	23
Misconduct	0	*	*
Personation	0	*	*
Plagiarism	0	61	73
Prohibited Items: Mobile Telephones	0	32	45
Prohibited Items: Notes etc	0	33	31
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>204</b>
<b>Number of penalties issued to candidates by consequence</b>			
<b>Penalty</b>	<b>NQ 2020</b>	<b>NQ 2019</b>	<b>NQ 2018</b>
Warning	0	32	63
Warning: Revision of Marks	0	25	25
Cancellation	0	93	116
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>204</b>

\*The number of penalties is not reported for categories with fewer than five instances, so that individual candidates cannot be identified.