



Portlethen Academy
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25th April 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

SQA Update

Last week, pupils had assemblies going over the expectations and requirements for the SQA exams which are detailed in their '**Your Exams**' booklet which was given out last term as a paper copy. A copy of the presentation can be found on the school website here: <https://bit.ly/3rL8779>.

All pupils should also have registered with **MySQA** to ensure they have the correct exams and also their personal details are up to date. This is the quickest and most successful method of ensuring exam dates and times are known, over and above the paper copy of each individual timetable which was distributed in school last week. If once a pupil has checked their MySQA and something is not correct, please contact Mrs Campbell-Robertson (Depute Head Teacher / SQA Co-ordinator) in the school as a matter of urgency.

As a school, we appreciate that this may be a stressful time for many of our pupils – not least that they are about to sit exams but indeed, the first time any of them have experienced them. Below you will find some information relating to current Covid-19 regulations and imminent changes which may answer any questions you have.

The exams taking place over the next six weeks are a chance for all learners to demonstrate their hard work, skills, and knowledge. Please continue to follow public health guidance, including during the exam period. Whilst face coverings are no longer mandatory in schools, there will be supplies available for anyone who wishes to wear one as they enter their SQA Exam location and main entrance of the school.

The Scottish Government's **current public health guidance** remains in place up to and including 30th April 2022. This asks individuals to self-isolate if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID and to book a PCR test. However, as per the Test and Protect Transition Plan published on 15 March 2022, public health guidance is set to change in Scotland from 1st May.



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As set out on the Public Health Scotland website, this new guidance will be published on **NHS Inform** on 1st May and will broadly align with the **current UKHSA ‘Stay at Home’ advice** that asks children and young people to stay at home if they have a high temperature and feel unwell.

It is important that you speak to the school/college if you cannot attend the exam for any reason so that you get the advice and support you need on next steps. This should preferably be done before the start of the exam that will be missed.

To summarise:

This week (25th – 29th April 2022):

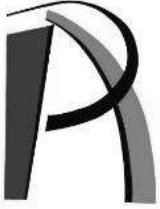
- LFD asymptomatic testing is no longer required but should a pupil have symptoms of Covid-19, they should isolate and book a PCR. Parent/Carer to contact school before any exam.

From next week:

- LFD asymptomatic testing is no longer required and from 1st May the general public will no longer be advised to seek a PCR test if symptomatic unless directed to by a health professional.
- Children and young people with mild symptoms such as runny nose, sore throat or slight cough and are otherwise well can continue to attend their education setting. **Pupils should not attend if they have a high temperature.**
- Pupils who miss the exam for any reason do not get a chance to re-sit it at a later date as the papers will be nationally available and content cannot be kept secure. This is the same as in previous years.
- Pupils who are absent from an exam due to COVID19, however, may have an Exceptional Circumstance request submitted by the school which will involve evidence of the pupil’s work and attainment being sent to the SQA.
- Parent/Carer to contact School Office if a young person will miss an exam due to COVID19. Mrs Campbell-Robertson will be notified, and Exceptional Circumstances process will be initiated.

Appeals Process:

To ensure learners are accessing the service on an equitable basis, eligibility criteria are in place. Should a pupil attain an award lower than what was estimated, a pupil will only be able to request an appeal if they meet the following criteria (please note the third and fourth points in particular):



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- *Learner's estimate is greater than their certificated grade. For example, if the learner's exam result is a grade C but their estimate was a grade B.*
- *All centres must submit an estimate to SQA for each learner per subject/level. Estimated bands of zero or blank will not be eligible.*
- *Learners must have taken and/or submitted all coursework and formal assessments including exams.*
- *At least one component of the course assessment must be marked by SQA. Fully internally assessed courses are not eligible for appeals.*

Further details about how to seek/apply for an appeal will be shared before the summer break.

Parents will also have received a letter from Vincent Docherty (Head of Education & Children's Services) last week which listed a number of links for pupils to use for support. Pupils can access the following site through their Glow: [Exam stress and study support | \(glowscotland.org.uk\)](http://Exam stress and study support | (glowscotland.org.uk)) along with the information already hosted on our own school website under the Pupil Wellbeing TAB.

We look forward to welcoming pupils back for our Awards Ceremony in June and, those staying on in Portlethen Academy and moving up a year, timetable will change from Monday 6th June 2022.

May I take this opportunity to wish all our young people all the very best for their exams and to those who are leaving school, the best of luck in whatever is next in your journey.

Yours sincerely

Barry Drennan
Head Teacher