



Parent and Carer Guide to the Alternative Certification Model - Demonstrated Attainment

PARENT AND CARER GUIDE TO THE ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION MODEL – DEMONSTRATED ATTAINMENT

This session, young people have experienced an extended period of remote learning (January to March 2021). During this time, teachers and pupils have concentrated on new course content (knowledge and skills) and consolidating understanding through formative assessment. In April/May and, if required, early June, our young people will complete assessments to capture key pieces of evidence to demonstrate their attainment.

It is essential that we support each young person in a fair and consistent manner as they work through their 2021 National Qualifications. The purpose of this document is to provide clarity on the approach to collecting evidence of demonstrated attainment and to detail the adjustment

s made for candidates in 2021 given the pandemic. It is important that we begin by outlining the advice provided by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and the National Qualifications 2021 Group. The arrangements put in place by each of our schools to gather and moderate demonstrated attainment is based on the expectations set by the SQA. Each school will communicate their own specific arrangements.

SECTION 1: SQA ADVICE TO SCHOOLS ON GATHERING EVIDENCE

The information contained within this section is current at time of writing. The SQA and National Qualifications 2021 Group will continue to provide regular updates, please visit [Sqa.org.uk/NQ2021](https://www.sqa.org.uk/NQ2021).

The SQA has provided guidance on how schools gather evidence of demonstrated attainment to inform teacher judgement and the submission of provisional results. Secondary schools across Aberdeen City have followed both general and subject-specific guidance, referencing the following SQA documentation:

National courses: guidance on gathering evidence and producing estimates (320 KB)

This document provides general guidance on gathering and judging assessment evidence with a clear focus on the quality rather than quantity of the evidence.

“We (SQA) developed this guidance to support centres with estimates, which are normally part of our awarding processes for National 5 to Advanced Higher. While this guidance is not specific to session 2020-21, it contains general information and principles which may be helpful to centres when gathering evidence for provisional results.”

Supplementary guidance issued by SQA on the 18th March states that:

“The amount of key evidence required to determine provisional results in National 5 to Advanced Higher courses varies between subjects. It is not the quantity of evidence but the quality of evidence, in relation to its predictive value, that will support you in determining provisional results this session.

Please refer to our [subject-specific guidance on gathering evidence](#) for details of the evidence requirements for each course. This guidance is available for each subject and level at www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects

On 13 April 2021, the NQ2021 Group published further guidance reiterating the points made above and included the following additional points:

“There is no requirement to replicate full formal exams or prelims this year. Classroom based assessments should be spread over the remaining weeks to help manage the marking and quality assurance activities as well as reduce pressure on learners.”

“It is important that learners are aware of the arrangements being put in place for them and what assessment evidence may count towards their provisional results. Assessment opportunities should not be one-off, high stakes scenarios and should accommodate, as far as possible, the maximum opportunity for learners to perform well. This includes providing assessment arrangements for those who need additional support or who have been shielding.”

SECTION 2: ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO GATHERING DEMONSTRATED EVIDENCE BASED ON GUIDANCE FROM THE SQA AND NQ2021 GROUP

All teaching staff across Aberdeen City Council follow the SQA general and subject specific guidance when gathering demonstrated attainment evidence to support teacher professional judgement on provisional results. In particular, they have considered instruments of assessment and resulting evidence which has a high predictive value. This links to the quality not quantity advice from SQA regarding key pieces of evidence.

Timing of assessments (key pieces of evidence)

The SQA advise that assessment evidence which covers a larger part of the course has a greater weighting than a smaller piece of assessment which covers a more limited amount of the course. This means that assessments young people complete in April and May under timed conditions will have a greater influence on their overall provisional result.

Given that our young people have experienced an extended period of remote learning, the larger assessments, including SQA papers have been split across a number of lessons and will be completed under supervised conditions within class time. During April, teachers will consolidate learning and support revision by, for example, the completion of SQA Past Papers.

Course Coverage

The SQA has advised that schools gather assessment evidence later in the course as this is when there is more course coverage. “Evidence does not need to cover the entire course specification, but the more course content that is covered, the better the predictive value is likely to be.”

In using instruments of assessment which cover more content, including SQA Papers, it will be necessary to split these assessments up. Despite this, these papers will still have a high predictive value and weighting.

Level of Demand

The instrument of assessment has to contain questions or tasks which allows for the gathering of demonstrated evidence (A-D).

Bias

To avoid implicit bias, assessments will be cross marked by teams within each Faculty. This will ensure fairness for all candidates.

Type and quality of evidence

- Secure SQA Papers, Practice Papers (which cover more course content/skills, have appropriate level of demand) and coursework assessments will have a higher predictive value.
- Class tests which sample key aspects of the course and which have been completed under assessment conditions, can be used as supplementary evidence.
- Performance evidence such as live recordings (video or audio) may be used in gathering demonstrated attainment.
- Classwork and work completed during remote learning is unlikely to form a strong evidence base on its own, but may supplement other evidence.

SECTION 3: SUPPORTS AND ADJUSTMENTS FOR CANDIDATES IN 2021

Remote learning

Aberdeen City schools have provided extensive remote learning provision. As advised by the SQA, whilst in remote delivery, our class teachers concentrated on learning and teaching to secure knowledge and understanding. Our young people have also benefited from formative assessment feedback during remote learning.

HWB supports

Throughout lockdown, tracking pupil health and wellbeing has been a key priority. All staff have worked tirelessly to offer support to all of our young people and to keep them connected with school and their learning.

Phase 1 Return to School Plan

Young people completing National Qualifications with a high level of practical activity were invited into school from 22 February.

The Phase 1 Plan has been highly effective in allowing pupils to complete practical coursework and demonstrate their attainment. Staff have managed to capture some coursework assessments prior to the Easter holidays in subjects with a high level of practical activity.

Phase 2 Return to School Plan

Based on subject specific tracking information and requests from Faculty Principal Teachers, young people were invited into school where there had been a concern with non- engagement.

Communication

It is vital that our young people have a secure understanding of how they can demonstrate their attainment and the requirements for each National Qualification. Senior staff delivered presentations on how the school will capture demonstrated attainment as part of the Phase 2 Return to School plan. [National Qualifications Alternative Certification Model](#). Each school will ensure that each young person has a clear understanding of when key pieces of assessment will take place. We encourage parents and carers to get in touch with your child's school if any further information or support is required.

Practice Assessments/Feedback

Given that our young people have been in remote learning, it is essential that they have the opportunity to settle back into school on a full-time basis and that we check understanding prior to the completion of key assessment pieces. Our young people will benefit from completing smaller pieces of assessment within class time and they will receive feedback to help them identify next steps in learning. This work will also allow staff to see gaps in individual pupil knowledge/skills and if there are any common knowledge/skill areas where consolidation and further revision is required.

Key Pieces of evidence

Where required, each young person will have the opportunity to complete the secure SQA Papers across the summer term. These assessments will take place in class. The SQA Papers will be split and completed during class time.

Other supporting evidence

SQA papers, coursework and practice timed class assessments completed later in the session, hold greater weighting and provide a good evidence base in terms of demonstrated attainment. That said, staff will consult other supplementary evidence including classwork and smaller class tests from across the session.

Study skills/revision support

Each pupil has been provided with information from their class teacher on key knowledge and key skills to learn and practise. This revision advice allows for purposeful study and clarity for each pupil on how to achieve success and demonstrate their attainment. Young people have also been signposted to nationally available study support materials.

SECTION 4: MODERATION

As a Council, we are committed to ensuring that we are rigorous and fair in our approach to capturing demonstrated attainment for each young person. As such, we have worked to develop city wide moderation guidance which will help ensure that all 5 stages of the moderation process are consistently implemented to ensure that everyone can have confidence in our approach.

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All assessment evidence will be subject to moderation. In summary, this involves teams of staff within and across our schools cross-marking key pieces of evidence. Clerical marking checks will take place and individual pupil data will be checked and re checked by class teachers, principal teachers, senior leaders and central officers. As such, young people will not be in receipt of percentages or grades generated through the completion of the secure SQA assessments. This final piece of key evidence will be used (with a greater weighting) alongside other supplementary evidence when deriving provisional results. In June 2021, each school will share the provisional results with their young people.

If you or your young person have any questions about how progress will be assessed please contact school staff.