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8 October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

The Ministerial Statement: **Assessment of SQA National Qualifications in 2020-21** was delivered in the Scottish Parliament on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October by John Swinney (Deputy First Minister). Please find below the key points made and the steps we will be taking in response.

### **N5 Qualifications - N5 examinations in 2021 are cancelled**

The N5 examination diet in May 2021 is suspended and N5 qualifications will be awarded on the basis of schools' estimate grades. Estimate grades will be based on teacher professional judgement and supported by validated assessments.

### **Higher and Advanced Higher Qualifications - Higher and Advanced Higher examinations in 2021 will go ahead**

In order to maximise teaching and learning time:

- The Higher and Advanced Higher examination diet will start later than normal, on 13 May 2021.
- The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) will make modifications to course assessments (details to follow).

Please note that a contingency plan is being developed by The Scottish Government in partnership with SQA to take account of ongoing public health advice. If required, the Higher and Advanced Higher examination diet in May 2021 may be suspended. If this is the case, Higher and Advanced Higher qualifications will be awarded on the basis of schools' estimate grades. Estimate grades will be based on teacher professional judgement and supported by validated assessments.

### **Appeals**

There will be a review of the appeals system for National Qualifications.

### **Our Next Steps**

- The SQA will provide schools with further detail on assessment and moderation arrangements for each National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher qualification. It is anticipated that this information will be communicated to schools at the start of next term.
- On receipt of this information, all pupils will be advised of the work required and the assessment arrangements for each subject they are studying.
- Parent/carers will be provided with an overview of assessment arrangements for each subject at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher level.
- Class teachers will continue to gather evidence of pupil progress and attainment. *Please note that pupils are being assessed, on an ongoing basis, in each subject. Our preliminary examination in the 3<sup>rd</sup> term will be **only one part** of the assessment evidence gathered by teachers.*
- Evidence gained from ongoing assessments will inform the estimate grades which will be submitted to SQA in April 2021.

I appreciate that these are unsettling times and wish to reassure you that we will work tirelessly to support our young people as they prepare for national qualifications this session. Thank you for your support.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lesley Adam', written in a cursive style.

Lesley Adam  
Head Teacher