

Welcome to our Assessment and ACM Information Evening

Tuesday 4th May



**The Meeting will begin shortly.
We request that microphones are muted to avoid
interference.**

Session Aims:

To reiterate our already shared plan for assessing the progress of students to support their SQA qualifications

To offer opportunities to raise general questions. We remind parents/carers that we cannot address personal questions relating directly to your child as this is an open meeting. Please email such questions to penicuik_hs@midlothian.gov.uk

We will also address questions raised with invite responses.



SQA Qualifications this year:

All National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses for 2021 are to be awarded on the basis of centre determined Provisional Results based on 'demonstrated' evidence.

We are gathering evidence of 'demonstrated attainment' through formal assessments.

We will use this evidence to support students' Provisional Results.

These Provisional Results will be submitted to the SQA and shared with students, parents and carers. ***We are still waiting for confirmation of the timescale for this from Midlothian Council.***



What are the key features of our Assessments Schedule to support Provisional Results at Penicuik High School?

- **Clear Communication** – from staff to students in class and via revision session. Students were issued with Assessment Schedules before the Easter break to allow for preparation time.
- **Feedback and Practice** – majority of class time has been focusing on consolidation and preparation.
- **Fairness and Equity** – Alternative Assessment Arrangements are in place for students who require additional support when sitting assessments. New referrals in light of pandemic.
- **Validation and Moderation** – all staff are working with their Midlothian Network (other teachers from across Midlothian) to ensure that all assessments are in line with SQA standards and consistent with other schools
- **Spaced Out** – we have deliberately ensured that no assessments 'clash'. Students will not have more than 2 assessments in one day. In most cases, only one. Some subjects felt the students would benefit from 'chunked' assessments (listed as 'Part 1' and 'Part 2').
- **Demonstrated Attainment** – all grades will be based on evidence we have, not what we think a student could achieve.

Formal Assessment Schedule:

Formal Assessments will run from today until Friday 4th June.

Each subject/ level are supporting students by sharing overviews of what is required in each assessment and the weightings of each part towards the Provisional Result. This information has been shared in class time and during 1:1 teacher/student discussions. This information has also been provided to parents who made the request.



Formal Assessments Conditions:



As assessments will be taking place at different times, not just in our school, but across Scotland, it is extremely important that learners **do not discuss** the papers.

All papers are secure and will not leave our school premises.



Supporting students with AAAs:

All students who receive AAAs will have them in place for all assessments.

All staff aware of, and using, appropriate AAAs to support students.

Where possible, we are using additional invigilators to support with AAA and extra time rooming.



How are we checking our marking?

As the work is based on 'demonstrated attainment', student work will be subject to internal verification within the school and external verification in Midlothian and from the SQA.



How do I know how my child is doing?

- Tracking Report September 2020 - S4,5,6
- Parents' Evening 8th December 2020 S5&6 / 19th January 2021 S4
- Tracking Report November 2020 S5&6 / December 2020 S4
- 'Key Contact' Phone Calls throughout lockdown December to March
- Full Report March 2021 S4/5&6

Targeted support (RAG rating/supported study)

Other communication i.e. phone calls/emails



What if my child is ill/ self-isolates etc?

This year's Alternative Certification Model provides a lot of flexibility for schools.

If a student is unwell or required to self-isolate, we can reschedule the assessment for another time. However it is vital that we know about any issues in advance of an assessment or as close as possible to the time of the assessment.

We are limited to a deadline of June 25th. There are no exceptional circumstances this year. Whilst we have flexibility with scheduling, all Provisional Results must be based on demonstrated attainment.



What about Appeals?

The SQA ran a consultation for Appeals in 2021.

Prior to submitting Provisional Results, we have a number of processes in place to ensure that decisions made are fair and evidence based.

Where there is disagreement, it is only right that an external organisation- the SQA- takes responsibility.

Arrangements will be shared with schools early May.



What supports are available for my child?

- No study leave – students will continue to see subject teachers on a daily basis in the lead up to assessments (*we will offer flexibility with S6, on request*)
- The day before an assessment – all students will have the opportunity to focusing solely on revising for the assessment they have the following day
- Supported Study – 65 targeted study sessions took place as part of our Recovery Of Learning in March/April. 22 study sessions were offered during the Easter holiday. There are still numerous study sessions running throughout our Assessment Schedule.
- Pupil Support Department – new premises in the school, more space



Feedback from HMle

Fiona Robertson, Executive Director Children, Young People & Partnerships

“I received feedback from HMI this morning and delighted to share with you that our arrangements are considered to be effective practice with the following strengths shared:

- Effective collaboration with all key stakeholders
- Support provided by Liz Gray, external consultant; Jim Fair, DHT Newbattle CHS and Subject Leads
- Proactive approach has boosted skills and confidence
- Improved collegiate working and empowerment of staff

HMI have stated that there are no areas for improvement for Midlothian Council.”



Questions

We will now address questions raised in advance of this session.

While we do this, we would welcome any additional questions to be typed in the chat section.

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SQA update on 13 April it states "there is no requirement to replicate full formal exams or prelims" and "Assessment opportunities should not be one-off, high stakes scenarios" and, for some reason, this is what PHS has opted to do - against the explicit advice of the SQA. Why were the school not more creative in designing their alternative model?

Midlothian students are facing further disadvantage since these assessments are being bundled into one large exam per subject. This option only helps the school timetable, and disadvantages the students.

Students must be able to have the opportunity to sit extra assessments if they don't do well, as other schools can pick and choose evidence from several smaller assessments.

I fear this year's exam diet will result in an even greater disparity between rich and poor schools than last year.

