

**Delayed Office Opening
for Employee Training**

*This office will be closed from
8.45 am - 11.00 am on the first
Thursday of each month.*



Education & Children's Services
Executive Director – Sheena Devlin

2 High Street, PERTH, PH1 5PH
Tel 01738 475000 Fax 01738 475710

Parent/Carer

Contact Sheena Devlin
Direct Dial 01738 476312
Email: sdevlin@pkc.gov.uk
www.pkc.gov.uk

Our ref SD/AMcE

Your ref

Date **25 February 2021**

Dear Parent/Carer

In October 2020 the Deputy First Minister announced that National 5 exams would be cancelled. This was followed with an announcement in December 2020 that Higher and Advanced Higher exams would be cancelled. An alternative certification model has been implemented for session 2020/21 and will be based solely upon teacher judgement of assessment evidence.

Perth & Kinross Council have established a short life working group to ensure this alternative certification process is fair and robust across all our secondary schools. The group met a number of times prior to Christmas and continue to engage with the SQA to ensure our young people are supported fully and given the best chance of success. The assessment and moderation approaches used in schools this year will be refined for this session and I wish to reassure you that all young people will be given the opportunity to demonstrate their learning across various assessments throughout the year.

What will the alternative certification model look like?

Learning and teaching will continue both in schools and remotely over the coming months. Once returned to school young people will, as part of their learning, carry out several different and ongoing assessments. These will vary and utilise a range of approaches, depending on each subject. Some examples of assessments may include submission of essays, presentations, practical demonstration of skills, submission of a folio of work, assignments or a timed internal class test.

Over the coming months, school staff will be working closely with colleagues across other PKC schools as well as engaging with SQA and National support groups to moderate the assessment evidence which is being generated. This will help ensure a common standard is established across Scotland. Throughout this time and as part of this process, SQA will sample different young people's work and provide feedback to teachers on their assessment of each sample. This ongoing process will continue until the end of the summer term when all schools will submit their provisional results to the SQA by 25 June 2021. The SQA will then issue young people with their final SQA results and certification in August 2021.

What can I expect as a Parent/Carer?

As with any other year you can expect as a parent/carer to receive regular updates on your child's progress. These may come in various forms including reports, virtual parents' evenings, email communication, telephone calls and text alerts etc. Each school has their own tracking and monitoring processes in place as well as their own ways of communicating with parents/carers. These will continue. Throughout the remainder of the year you will be provided with information on your child's current working grade. This is the grade that, at that point in time, the assessment evidence gathered, the professional judgement of the teacher and ongoing moderation activities would indicate your child is on track to achieve. The working grade will change depending on your child's progress and performance across the remainder of the year and in relation to the various assessments that will be undertaken. This grade is a guide for pupils and parents/carers. Although it indicates progress it may not be the final grade that your child will be awarded in August 2021. The final grade awarded for all National Qualifications will be decided and determined by the SQA following the extensive moderation and actions as laid out above.

Will there be prelims and study leave?

Your child has and will continue to undertake various assessments within each of their subjects. In previous years, young people would undertake preliminary exams in order to prepare them for the final, culminative exam at the end of the year. With the cancellation of these culminative exams there is now not the necessity to provide all young people with this prelim exam experience. However various ongoing assessments will take place throughout the year and these will involve different tasks and activities. They may be in the form of assignments, class tests, delivering a presentation or submitting a portfolio of work. The assessments will differ according to each subject requirement. Young people will be presented with a suite of ongoing assessment activity within each subject and this will be explained to them by their teachers and other school staff. Careful consideration will be given by schools to ensure no young person is undergoing multiple assessments across multiple subjects on the same day. Schools may create a summative assessment calendar for clarity in this.

I would like to reassure you that there is much resource and expertise going into ensuring every young person is given the best opportunity to succeed in what are very difficult circumstances. We will continue to support all within our school communities to ensure young people's progress and achievements are not only recognised but their mental and emotional wellbeing is supported every step of the way. If you have any questions or queries relating to the processes explained above, please do not hesitate to contact your child's school in the first instance.

Yours sincerely



Sheena Devlin
Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)