

## INDEX OF ENCLOSURES

<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Explanation of redactions</b>	<b>Clause</b>
Enclosure 1. <i>Draft text</i> – Exam Diet 2019 – Publication of analysis papers and agreed next steps	17 February 2020	Earlier draft of published document	
Enclosure 3. <i>Email</i> – News release - 2019 Exam Results Analysis	20 February 2020 – 3 additional emails	Personal details redacted.	Section 38(1)(b)
Enclosure 6. <i>Email</i> – Education publication	21 February 2020 – 2 additional emails	Personal details redacted and out of scope attachment redacted	Section 38(1)(b)

## ***Enclosure 1 – Draft text – Exam Diet 2019 – Publication of analysis papers and agreed next steps***

This note has been prepared by the Scottish Government's Learning Directorate and accompanies the publication of four analytical papers that were produced as part of a consideration of the results of the 2019 exams diet. The note sets out the background to the production of the four papers; provides a high level summary of the papers; and highlights the agreed actions to follow-up from discussion of the analysis.

### Context

Monitoring performance and conducting analysis of performance are regular activities of government. These activities are important in informing and supporting decision-making in order to help ensure effective and efficient delivery of public services. The consideration of the performance demonstrated in Scottish exam results is no different and regular analysis is carried out by the Scottish Government and its partners. On an annual basis the Scottish Qualifications Authority publishes an analysis of the exam results, and an exam by exam report.

An analysis of the results from the 2019 Exam Diet was carried out by the Scottish Government, the Scottish Qualifications Agency (SQA), the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) and Education Scotland. As part of this work, each partner prepared a paper providing analysis on the performance of the 2019 exams diet and comment on the potential factors/drivers influencing it. The four analysis papers are provided in full alongside this note.

It is important to note that the papers comprise a mix of information that is already in the public domain along with some opinions, hypotheses and views of officials and key stakeholders. The papers were prepared for the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills on the basis of a free and frank exchange of views with the intention of informing thinking about possible future actions. Whilst it would not be normal for the Scottish Government to publish some of this material, a decision has been made to do so at this point due to the interest in the issue and in order to focus the discussion on action to deliver further improvement in relation to Scotland's education system in order to help all its children and young people reach their full potential.

### Key points from the papers

The four papers consider the performance in the 2019 exam diet, offering a range of views for consideration.

Overall the papers note that good progress has been made in a number of areas and suggest some issues which can be considered further to either entrench progress made, or to develop and deliver further improvement. It should be noted that as the drop in the Higher pass rate from 2018 to 2019 was relatively small, it has been difficult to identify significant drivers of change at this point. Equally, it is difficult to draw conclusions about some subjects because of small numbers of entries.

The following summarises key points from the papers:

- Changes to the format of qualifications and assessments have taken place over recent years, and may have required a period of adjustment for teachers and schools. However, assessments at National 5 and the first year for Higher performed as intended.
- Ensuring effective professional learning opportunities for teachers is essential and a range of offers exist to support this.
- Pass rates are only part of the attainment story.
- Annual variation in results by subject is expected. The main subjects contributing to the drop in pass rate from 2018 to 2019 were History, English, Psychology and Mathematics.
- Course reports are published for each National Course at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher – each report provides performance information on the assessment components.
- The SQA provides support for teachers in understanding standards.
- The Education Scotland paper provided a subject by subject commentary. Strengths in subjects were noted and questions were raised for consideration for possible positive and negative impacts on exam performance, including possible changing patterns of exam presentation; possible impact of changing form of assessment for some subjects; levels of teacher awareness of assessment criteria; model of subject delivery; and supply of teachers.

#### Agreed actions

As noted by the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills in providing evidence to the Education and Skills Committee on 27 November 2019, the key areas for focus in following up this analysis include:

- partners conducting further work to ensure there is alignment of the curriculum and assessment journey from S1 to S6;
- partners considering how to better support professional learning and development; and
- maintaining a clear focus on enhancing learning and teaching.

The analysis papers attached set out further detail on actions to deliver the broad aims above, and includes:

- Reminding teachers and schools of the various materials and activities (guidance, course materials, or face-to-face support) available to support professional learning, and particularly for any subjects where specific issues have been identified through the course reports.
- The SQA evaluating its approach to assessment and the ongoing appropriateness of that approach, and to arrange a discussion on the SQA Assessment Future.
- Identification of key priorities for support for learning, teaching and assessment.
- Senior regional advisers discussing National Qualifications results with local authority directors and identifying which schools need further support or challenge; the subjects and levels; and how best this need should be met in a collaborative and empowered system.

- Agreeing how to identify schools that need the most support to raise attainment and how to identify follow-up action.
- Agreeing how to share performance across RICS and include follow-up action in RIC plans.
- Longer term work to ensure the alignment of the curriculum and assessment journey from S1 to S6.
- All partners considering coordinated enhancement to support professional learning and development
- All partners providing evidence to feed into the ongoing discussions on performance
- Continuing to raise the profile of celebrating the mixed economy of awards and pathways including consider a second national achievement day, celebrating the impact of a wider range of pathways.

February 2020

Published version available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/exam-results-analysis-2019/>.

### **Enclosure 3 – Email – News release - 2019 Exam Results Analysis**

**From:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 20 February 2020 19:25  
**To:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Director of Learning; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Pentland MK (Malcolm); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; McAllister C (Colin); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications DFM & Education; Website (gov.scot); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: News release - 2019 Exam Results Analysis

Hello

This is now live: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/exam-results-analysis-2019/>

Hopefully all should be in order but let me know if you spot anything that needs updated.

Thanks

[Redact 38(1)(b)]  
Senior Digital Manager  
Digital Communications  
Scottish Government  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)  
0131 244 [Redact 38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 20 February 2020 19:14  
**To:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Director of Learning; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Pentland MK (Malcolm); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; McAllister C (Colin); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications DFM & Education; Website (gov.scot); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: News release - 2019 Exam Results Analysis

[Redact 38(1)(b)],

Yes, it's just that the four papers have been collated into a single Word document.

Thanks,

[Redact 38(1)(b)]

**[Redact 38(1)(b)] | Senior Phase Unit | Scottish Government**  
2B North, Victoria Quay | Edinburgh | EH6 6QQ  
Tel: 0131 244 [Redact 38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 20 February 2020 19:11  
**To:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Pentland MK

(Malcolm); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; McAllister C (Colin); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications DFM & Education; Website (gov.scot); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: News release - 2019 Exam Results Analysis

Will do, [Redact 38(1)(b)]. Am working on now.

[Redact 38(1)(b)] – can I just check. Does this attachment contain the four analytical papers, or are these separate?

Thanks

[Redact 38(1)(b)]

Senior Digital Manager

Digital Communications

Scottish Government

[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

0131 244 [Redact 38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 20 February 2020 19:10

**To:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Director of Learning; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Pentland MK (Malcolm); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; McAllister C (Colin); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications DFM & Education; Website (gov.scot); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: News release - 2019 Exam Results Analysis

[Redact 38(1)(b)] can you pls send link asap so the release can go. Ta. .

**From:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 20 February 2020 19:03

**To:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Director of Learning; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Pentland MK (Malcolm); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; McAllister C (Colin); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications DFM & Education; Website (gov.scot); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: News release - 2019 Exam Results Analysis

[Redact 38(1)(b)]

Many thanks for speaking just now. Please find attached everything you should need to get upload the publication and get it to go live.

Kind regards,

[Redact 38(1)(b)]

[Redact 38(1)(b)] | Senior Phase Unit | Scottish Government

2B North, Victoria Quay | Edinburgh | EH6 6QQ

Tel: 0131 244 [Redact 38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]  
**Sent:** 20 February 2020 18:11  
**To:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills  
**Cc:** Director of Learning; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Pentland MK (Malcolm); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; McAllister C (Colin); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications DFM & Education; Website (gov.scot); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: News release - 2019 Exam Results Analysis

Thanks, [Redact 38(1)(b)]

Copying to [Redact 38(1)(b)] and the web team to supply the url and to publish the report (sent to him under separate cover).

Copying to [Redact 38(1)(b)] to issue the FOI Review response once the news release issues.

[Redact 38(1)(b)]

**[Redact 38(1)(b)] | Senior Phase Unit | Scottish Government**  
2B North, Victoria Quay | Edinburgh | EH6 6QQ  
Tel: 0131 244 [Redact 38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 20 February 2020 18:07  
**To:** Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills  
**Cc:** Director of Learning; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Pentland MK (Malcolm); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; McAllister C (Colin); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications DFM & Education  
**Subject:** RE: News release - 2019 Exam Results Analysis

[Redact 38(1)(b)]

This has been cleared. I am now in meeting so only on email for questions.

Can the report be published, link sent to [Redact 38(1)(b)] and the release issued to main, lawn and education pls?

Thanks  
[Redact 38(1)(b)]  
Head of Communications - DFM & Education  
Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG  
0131 244 [Redact 38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]

**Sent:** 20 February 2020 17:59

**To:** Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

**Cc:** Graeme Logan; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Pentland MK (Malcolm); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; McAllister C (Colin); [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications DFM & Education

**Subject:** News release - 2019 Exam Results Analysis

PO - I'd be grateful for DFM's comments/clearance on this news release please, agreed with officials and spads.

Duty comms – no action yet please I'll call.

Thanks

[Redact 38(1)(b)]

### **Publication of exam papers**

Four papers considering the 2019 exam results published.

An analysis of exam results carried out by the Scottish Government, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) and Education Scotland has been published.

Each organisation prepared a paper providing analysis on the performance of the 2019 exams diet and commentary on the potential factors influencing it.

Deputy First Minister John Swinney said:

“The Scottish Government regularly monitors and analyses performance to inform decision-making.

“Taken together, this analysis demonstrates good progress in a number of areas and that it is challenging to identify significant drivers of change or to draw firm conclusions about some subjects due to small numbers of entries. The analysis has however identified areas that justify further exploration and highlight actions that have been agreed.

“My key areas of focus are to ensure that curriculum and assessment are aligned, how to better support professional learning and development and maintaining a clear focus on enhancing learning and teaching. I will continue to do that in my regular discussions with partners on performance.”

INSERT HYPERLINK

END

## Enclosure 6 – Email – Education Publication

**From:** : [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; **On Behalf Of** Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

**Sent:** 21 February 2020 09:38

**To:** : [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Lloyd E (Elizabeth) <Elizabeth.Lloyd@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; Pentland MK (Malcolm) <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>; : [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** : [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; McAllister C (Colin) <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Nicolson S (Stuart) Special Adviser <Stuart.Nicolson@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Education publication

Liz

I've attached an email [Redacted – out of scope] from officials which includes the document.

Kind Regards

[Redact 38(1)(b)]

[Redact 38(1)(b)] Deputy Private Secretary to John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills | The Scottish Government | Web: [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot) |

☎ 0300 24 [Redact 38(1)(b)] Email: [DFMCSE@gov.scot](mailto:DFMCSE@gov.scot) | [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

5N.07 St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

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**From:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 21 February 2020 08:55

**To:** Lloyd E (Elizabeth) <[Elizabeth.Lloyd@gov.scot](mailto:Elizabeth.Lloyd@gov.scot)>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <[DFMCSE@gov.scot](mailto:DFMCSE@gov.scot)>; Director of Learning <[DirectorofLearning@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorofLearning@gov.scot)>; Pentland MK (Malcolm) <[Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot](mailto:Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot)>; [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; McAllister C (Colin) <[Colin.McAllister@gov.scot](mailto:Colin.McAllister@gov.scot)>; Nicolson S (Stuart) Special Adviser <[Stuart.Nicolson@gov.scot](mailto:Stuart.Nicolson@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** RE: Education publication

Liz

I've copied in officials, will revert asap.

[Redact 38(1)(b)]

**From:** "Lloyd E (Elizabeth)" <[Elizabeth.Lloyd@gov.scot](mailto:Elizabeth.Lloyd@gov.scot)>

**Sent:** 21 Feb 2020 08:50

**To:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> ; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <[DFMCSE@gov.scot](mailto:DFMCSE@gov.scot)>  
**Cc:** [Redact 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; "McAllister C (Colin)" <[Colin.McAllister@gov.scot](mailto:Colin.McAllister@gov.scot)>; "Nicolson S (Stuart) Special Adviser" <[Stuart.Nicolson@gov.scot](mailto:Stuart.Nicolson@gov.scot)>  
**Subject:** Education publication

Morning

I'm looking (on FM's behalf) for an explanation of why we issued this education analysis at 8pm last night, rather than during normal hours.

DFM PO – Can FMPO also be sent a copy of the document...which she would have like to have been aware we were publishing, given it would attract interest.

Can I also be sent any rebuttal lines we're using for the opposition attacks

Liz

**Elizabeth Lloyd**  
**Chief of Staff to the First Minister**  
St Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
Tel: 0131 244 [Redact 38(1)(b)]  
Mobile: [Redact 38(1)(b)]  
[Elizabeth.Lloyd@gov.scot](mailto:Elizabeth.Lloyd@gov.scot)

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