

## INDEX OF ENCLOSURES

| No. | Description  | Date                  | Explanation of redactions  | Clause                                    |
|-----|--|-----------------------|--|---|
| 1   | <b>Email RE: EIS Request for an additional Inset Day</b> | 24 May 2022<br>16:34  | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)                                 |
| 1.1 | Attachment: Word document                                |                       | Personal Information<br><br>Free and Frank Exchange of Views<br><br>Legal Advice | s38(1)(b)<br><br>s30(b)(ii)<br><br>s36(1) |
| 1.2 | Attachment: Word document                                |                       | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)                                 |
| 2   | <b>Email RE: SQA Appeals Guidance</b>                    | 30 May 2022<br>17:32  | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)                                 |
| 2.1 | Attachment: Word document                                |                       |  |   |
| 2.2 | Attachment: PDF  |                       |  |   |
| 3   | <b>Email RE: SQA Appeals Guidance</b>                    | 15 June 2022<br>10:49 | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)                                 |
| 3.1 | <b>Attachment: PDF</b>                                   |                       | Information already published – link provided                                    | s25(1)                                    |
| 4   | <b>Email RE: EIS Request for an additional Inset Day</b> | 01 July 2022<br>11:37 | Personal Information<br><br>Free and Frank Exchange of Views                     | s38(1)(b)<br><br>s30(b)(ii)               |
| 4.1 | Attachment: Word document                                |                       |  |   |

|     |   |                      |  |            |
|-----|---|----------------------|--|------------|
| 4.2 | Attachment: Email   |                      | Duplicate of Enclosure 1.1                                       |            |
| 5   | <b>Email RE: RE: SQA Priority Appeals &amp; Conditional Offers</b>  | 05 August 2022 13:12 | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)  |
| 5.1 | Attachment: Word document   |                      | Information out of scope   |            |
| 6   | <b>Email RE: SQA Priority Appeals &amp; Conditional Offers</b>  | 08 August 2022 10:50 | Personal Information<br><br>Information out of scope             | s38(1)(b)  |
| 7   | <b>Email RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE - Exam Results Day Briefing. Restricted statistics until 9:30am Tuesday 9 August</b>  | 08 August 2022 19:25 | Personal Information<br><br>Information out of scope             | s38(1)(b)  |
| 7.1 | <b>Attachment: Word document</b>  |                      | Free and Frank Exchange of Views<br><br>Information out of scope | s30(b)(ii) |
| 8   | <b>Email RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE - Exam Results Day Briefing. Restricted statistics until 9:30am Tuesday 9 August</b>  | 09 August 2022 17:11 | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)  |
| 8.1 | <b>Attachment: Word document</b>  |                      | Information out of scope   |            |
| 9   | <b>Email RE: Letter for Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to send to all University Principals encouraging them to hold conditional places for students appealing results - Priority: High</b> | 11 August 2022 14:21 | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)  |

|    |   |                                   |  |                             |
|----|---|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
|    |   |                                   |  |                             |
| 10 | <b>Email RE: Letter for Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to send to all University Principals encouraging them to hold conditional places for students appealing results - Priority: High</b> | 12 August 2022 13:22              | Personal Information<br><br>Free and Frank Exchange of Views | s38(1)(b)<br><br>s30(b)(ii) |
| 11 | <b>Email RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals</b>   | 15 August 2022 17:28              | Personal Information<br><br>Free and Frank Exchange of Views | s38(1)(b)<br><br>s30(b)(ii) |
| 12 | <b>Email RE: FW: Statement of reassurance to candidates</b>   | 16 August 2022 08:51              | Personal Information<br><br>Information out of scope         | s38(1)(b)                   |
| 13 | <b>Email RE: FW: CORRESPONDENCE FROM SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE, CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION &amp; SKILLS</b>  | 16 August 2022 09:39              | Personal Information<br><br>Free and Frank Exchange of Views | s38(1)(b)<br><br>s30(b)(ii) |
| 14 | <b>Email RE: FW: CORRESPONDENCE FROM SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE, CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION &amp; SKILLS</b>  | <b>Sent:</b> 16 August 2022 19:51 | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)                   |
| 15 | <b>Email RE: FW: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals</b>   | 25 August 2022 12:43              | Personal Information<br><br>Free and Frank Exchange of Views | s38(1)(b)<br><br>s30(b)(ii) |
| 16 | <b>Email RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals</b>   | 25 August 2022 17:32              | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)                   |

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| 17   | <b>Email RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals</b>  | 30 August 2022 17:31    | Personal Information                                 | s38(1)(b) |
| 18   | <b>Email RE: FW: SWA priority appeals 5 September</b>                                | 31 August 2022 09:15    | Personal Information<br><br>Information out of scope | s38(1)(b) |
| 19   | <b>Email RE: Cabinet Secretary Meeting with Fiona Robertson - 5 Sep 2022 - draft</b> | 01 September 2022 20:32 | Personal Information<br><br>Information out of scope | s38(1)(b) |
| 19.1 | <b>Attachment: Word document</b>   |                         | Information out of scope                             |           |
| 20   | <b>Emails RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE: 080922 – Concurrent Risk Ministerial Briefing</b>  | 08 September 2022 16:01 | Personal Information<br><br>Information out of scope | s38(1)(b) |
| 20.1 | <b>Attachment: Word document</b>   |                         | Information out of scope                             |           |
| 21   | <b>Email RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE: 130922 - Concurrent Risk Ministerial Briefing</b>   | 13 September 2022 16:00 | Personal Information<br><br>Information out of scope | s38(1)(b) |
| 21.1 | <b>Attachment: Word document</b>   |                         | Information out of scope                             |           |
| 22   | <b>Email RE: FMQ Briefs- Education - w/c 24th October</b>                            | 24 October 2022 11:47   | Personal Information<br><br>Information out of scope | s38(1)(b) |
| 22.1 | <b>Attachment: Word document</b>   |                         | Information out of scope                             |           |
| 23   | <b>Email RE: Cab Sec Meeting with SQA Briefing 27 October 2022</b>                   | 25 October 2022 18:40   | Personal Information                                 | s38(1)(b) |

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|      |  |                       |  |                             |
| 23.1 | <b>Attachment: Word document</b>                                     |                       | Personal Information<br><br>Free and Frank Exchange of Views<br><br>Information out of scope | s38(1)(b)<br><br>s30(b)(ii) |
| 24   | <b>Email RE: Cab Sec Meeting with SQA Briefing 27 October 2022</b>   | 26 October 2022 17:39 | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)                   |
| 24.1 | <b>Attachment: Word document</b>                                     |                       | Personal Information<br><br>Free and Frank Exchange of Views<br><br>Information out of scope | s38(1)(b)<br><br>s30(b)(ii) |
| 25   | <b>Email RE: : SQA Appeals</b>                                       | 28 October 2022 10:47 | Personal Information<br><br>Information out of scope   | s38(1)(b)                   |
| 25.1 | <b>Attachment: Email</b>   |                       | Information out of scope   |                             |
| 26   | <b>Email RE: 2022 National Qualifications: Estimates and Appeals</b> | 28 October 2022 16:32 | Personal Information<br><br>Information out of scope   | s38(1)(b)                   |
| 26.1 | <b>Attachment: PDF</b>   |                       | Information out of scope   |                             |
| 26.2 | <b>Attachment: PDF</b>   |                       | Information already published – link provided  | s25(1)                      |

|        |   |                        |  |   |
|--------|---|------------------------|--|---|
| 26.3   | <b>Attachment: Word document</b>  |                        |  |   |
| 27     | <b>Email RE: FW: Appeals Correspondence</b>   | 01 November 2022 14:56 | Personal Information<br><br>Free and Frank Exchange of Views<br><br>Information out of scope<br><br>Legal Advice | s38(1)(b)<br><br>s30(b)(ii)<br><br>s36(1) |
| 27.1   | <b>Attachment: PDF</b>  |                        | Information already published – link provided  | S25(1)                                    |
| 27.2   | <b>Attachment: PDF</b>  |                        | Information already published – link provided  | S25(1)                                    |
| 28     | <b>Email RE: Appeals Correspondence</b>   | 01 November 2022 17:21 | Personal Information<br><br>Legal Advice   | s38(1)(b)<br><br>s36(1)                   |
| 28.1   | <b>Attachment: Email</b>  |                        | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)                                 |
| 28.1.1 | <b>Email attachment to Encl. 29.1</b>   |                        | Information out of Scope   |   |
| 28.1.2 | <b>Email attachment to Encl. 29.1</b>   |                        | Information out of Scope   |   |
| 28.1.3 | <b>Email attachment to Encl. 29.1</b>   |                        | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)                                 |
| 29     | <b>Email RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE: Embargoed until 1pm Thursday 3 November - SQA appeals report</b> | 02 November 2022 09:57 | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)                                 |
| 29.1   | <b>Attachment: Word document</b>  |                        | Information already  | s25(1)                                    |

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|------|---|------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
|      |   |                        | published – link provided  |                                 |
| 30   | <b>Email RE: 2022 National Qualifications: Estimates and Appeals</b>                                      | 02 November 2022 14:31 | Personal Information<br><br>Information out of scope<br><br>Free and Frank Exchange of Views | s38(1)(b)<br><br><br>s30(b)(ii) |
| 31   | <b>Attachment: Word document</b>  |                        | Information already published – link provided  | s25(1)                          |
| 32   | <b>Email RE: Readout of SQA Qualifications Committee 2 November 2022</b>                                  | 02 November 2022 15:05 | Personal Information<br><br>Free and Frank Exchange of Views<br><br>Information out of scope | s38(1)(b)<br><br>s30(b)(ii)     |
| 33   | <b>Email RE: news articles</b>  | 04 November 2022 10:51 | Personal Information   | s38(1)(b)                       |
| 33.1 | <b>Attachment: PDF</b>  |                        |  |                                 |
| 33.2 | <b>Attachment: PDF</b>  |                        |  |                                 |
| 34   | <b>Email RE: Meeting with SQA and Universities Scotland about priority appeals and conditional offers</b> | 04 November 2022 16:16 | Personal Information<br><br>Information out of scope   | s38(1)(b)                       |
| 35   | <b>Email RE: FMQ Briefs – Education – w/c 7<sup>th</sup> November</b>                                     | 07 November 2022 11:53 | Personal Information<br><br>Information out of scope   | s38(1)(b)                       |
| 35.1 | <b>Attachment: Word document</b>  |                        | Information out of scope   |                                 |

|    |   |                              |                         |           |
|----|---|------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| 36 | <b><i>Email RE: Urgent action required regarding SQA applicant exam appeals</i></b> | 06<br>November<br>2022 11:45 | Personal<br>Information | s38(1)(b) |
|----|---|------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|





From: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Curriculum and Qualifications Division  
24 May 2022

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

## **EIS INSET DAY REQUEST**

### **Purpose**

1. To provide advice to inform a decision in relation to a formal request received from the EIS seeking an additional inset day at the start of the new academic session for both primary and secondary teachers.

### **Timing**

2. Routine.

### **Background**

3. The EIS initially raised the prospect of an additional inset day for secondary teachers during discussions around the potential numbers of appeals associated with the 2022 appeals service at the National Qualifications Working Group meeting. The Group has not formally discussed the requirement for an inset day.

4. [Redacted s30(b)(ii)] Given that there was no consensus around the necessity of this additional day, and it was not an agreed position of the National Qualifications Working Group, we identified that EIS would need to submit a formal request if they wished this to be considered.

5. The formal request that has now been received with the EIS seeking an additional inset day for both primary and secondary teachers this year (see separate attachment).

6. The EIS has set out the rationale for the request for secondary teachers as being to create additional time in order that a potential greater number of SQA Appeals can be managed appropriately. They have outlined that this will require relevant discussions with individual young people, and the compilation and sending of both digital and physical assessment evidence to the SQA, much of this activity within very tight timescales.

7. EIS has suggested that granting an additional inset day at the beginning of the new academic session to allow time for appeals in Secondary and for recovery priorities for the Primary sector, would go some way to acknowledging teacher workload and wellbeing issues which were highlighted in their recent survey.

## Decision Process

8. The EIS submitted a motion to the SNCT last year to increase inset days in general by two days permanently from five to seven days. Their motion to SNCT currently has been rejected by both Scottish Government and COSLA on the grounds that this would require legislation changes to the 190 pupil days' requirement unless teachers are willing to realign their terms and conditions so that any additional days don't affect the 190 days. So far this has been dropped by EIS but may be raised again following their June AGM.

9. The Cabinet Secretary may also recall that there was a discussion at the Teacher Panel recently where the prospect of an additional half-day for teachers to engage with the National Conversation was raised. This has not been fully explored but, if the Cabinet Secretary was minded to consider this, it would be an additional request.

10. Given we are still in the initial process of scoping and planning the National Conversation, we would still require to discuss the idea of additional inset time with stakeholders for this different purpose, and timing of any decision would be over a longer timeframe than this request. If it were to be agreed, we would wish to align any such announcement with the launch of the National Conversation which is currently planned to coincide with the Scottish Learning Festival in September.

11. Requests for additional inset days do not require SNCT approval unless they impact on teachers terms and conditions. It is a Ministerial decision as to whether to allow a reduction in the statutory 190 days per school year to allow additional inset days to be taken (see Legal Considerations below).

## Key Considerations

### SQA Appeals

12. The key initial rationale for the EIS request was to support any additional workload associated with a potential increase number of appeals this year.

[Redacted s30(b)(ii)], the number of appeals is not yet known and may not be significantly different from a typical exam year - where gathering of evidence, and discussions with learners are a normal part of the annual assessment process.

13. SQA have indicated that the main burden of work for appeals is in the review of evidence by appointees, rather than the administration and submission. As such, they have emphasised the need for local authorities and schools to be supportive in releasing appointees to take forward such work.

14. [Redacted s30(b)(ii)] Since then, SQA has indicated that the numbers of Exceptional Circumstances requests are not currently breaching the thresholds they had indicated would threaten delivery, and we understand that the pattern of estimates submitted is more in line with 2019. Given that a more generous grading approach will be adopted this year, with SQA aiming to reach an intermediary

position between 2021 and 2019 outcomes, this may indicate that the risk around an excessive number of appeals has lessened.

### Impact on Learners

15. [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

### Timing

16. While local authorities and schools have flexibility in the timing of any inset days, the EIS request suggests that an additional day should take place at the beginning of the new academic session. [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

17. All schools already have at least one, and in most cases two, inset days planned for the first couple of days at the start of the new academic session (see Annex A), after the summer break and before learners start back. They have flexibility as to how these days are used.

### Teachers

18. EIS have set out that an additional inset day would acknowledge the challenges teachers have faced and minimise further workload and wellbeing strain on teachers.

[Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

### **Stakeholder Views**

19. Following receipt of the formal request, officials have engaged further with stakeholders and a summary of their views is outlined below with a full overview of their relative positions included at Annex B.

[Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

### **Legal Considerations**

20. [Redacted s36(1)]

21. [Redacted s36(1)]

### **Summary and Recommendation**

22.

[Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

### **Conclusion**

23. The Cabinet Secretary is invited to:

- note the EIS request, key considerations and stakeholder views; and

- **indicate whether she is content with the recommendation that the request for an additional inset day is not approved at this time.**

24. If the Cabinet Secretary is content, officials will prepare a response to EIS confirming the position.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]  
Curriculum and Qualifications division

24 May 2022

| Copy List:   | For Action | For Comments | For Information    |                  |                   |
|--|------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|  |            |              | Portfolio Interest | Constit Interest | General Awareness |
| Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, Youth Employment and Training  |            |              | X                  |                  |                   |
| DG Education and Justice<br>Director for Education Reform<br>Director of Learning<br>Gayle Gorman, Education Scotland<br>Ollie Bray, Education Scotland<br>Laura Murdoch, Directorate for Education Reform<br>Sam Anson, Learning Directorate<br>Liza McLean, Directorate for Education Reform<br>Alison Taylor, Learning Directorate<br>Head SFIO, Learning Directorate<br>[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Education Workforce<br>[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Education Workforce<br>[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Learner Pathways and National Qualifications<br>[Redacted s38(1)(b)], National Qualifications<br>[Redacted s38(1)(b)], National Qualifications<br>[Redacted s38(1)(b)], SGLD Comms Education<br>[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Comms Education<br>[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Comms Education<br>David Livey, Special Adviser |            |              |                    |                  |                   |

## Annex A – Local Authority Return to School and Inset Days

| Local Authority                              | Schools close | Inset Days | learners back |
|--|---------------|------------|---------------|
| Aberdeen City Council                        | 01-Jul        | 22-Aug     | 23-Aug        |
| Aberdeenshire Council                        | 01-Jul        | 22-Aug     | 23-Aug        |
| Angus Council                                | 29-Jun        | 10-Aug     | 11-Aug        |
| Argyll & Bute Council                        | 01-Jul        | 11/12 Aug  | 15-Aug        |
| City of Edinburgh Council                    | 01-Jul        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| Clackmannanshire Council                     | 24-Jun        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| Comhairle nan Eilean Siar<br>(Western Isles) | 28-Jun        | 15-17 Aug  | 18-Aug        |
| Dumfries & Galloway<br>Council               | 01-Jul        | 18/19      | 22-Aug        |
| Dundee City Council                          | 30-Jun        | 15-Aug     | 16-Aug        |
| East Ayrshire Council                        | 29-Jun        | 17-Aug     | 18-Aug        |
| East Dunbartonshire<br>Council               | 23-Jun        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| East Lothian Council                         | 01-Jul        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| East Renfrewshire Council                    | 28-Jun        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| Falkirk Council                              | 27-Jun        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| Fife Council                                 | 01-Jul        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| Glasgow City Council                         | 24-Jun        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| Highland Council                             | 30-Jun        | 15-Aug     | 16-Aug        |
| Inverclyde Council                           | 28-Jun        | 16/17 Aug  | 18-Aug        |
| Midlothian Council                           | 30-Jun        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| Moray Council                                | 01-Jul        | 15-Aug     | 16-Aug        |
| North Ayrshire Council                       | 29-Jun        | 17-Aug     | 18-Aug        |
| North Lanarkshire Council                    | 28-Jun        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| Orkney Islands Council                       | 30-Jun        | 15-Aug     | 16-Aug        |
| Perth & Kinross Council                      | 30-Jun        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| East Renfrewshire Council                    | 28-Jun        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| Scottish Borders Council                     | 30-Jun        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| Shetland Islands Council                     | 01-Jul        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| South Ayrshire Council                       | 29-Jun        | 18/19 Aug  | 22-Aug        |
| South Lanarkshire Council                    | 24-Jun        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| Stirling Council                             | 24-Jun        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| West Dunbartonshire                          | 28-Jun        | 15/16 Aug  | 17-Aug        |
| West Lothian Council                         | 24-Jun        | 15-Aug     | 16-Aug        |

## **Annex B – Stakeholder Views**

[Redacted s30(b)(ii)]



**Enclosure 1.2 – Attachment: word document**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@eis.org.uk>

**Sent:** 04 May 2022 15:39

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <[CabSecES@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecES@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Larry Flanagan <[lflanagan@eis.org.uk](mailto:lflanagan@eis.org.uk)>

**Subject:** EIS Correspondence

Dear Ms Somerville

Please find attached correspondence sent on behalf of Larry Flanagan, EIS General Secretary.

Best wishes

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**Administrative Assistant**

**Education and Equality Dept**

Ref:

LF/AB/LM

04 May

2022

Shirley Anne Somerville

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

Via email only

[CabSecES@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecES@gov.scot)

Dear Shirley-Anne

As I expect you'll be aware from updates from civil servants representing Scottish Government on the NQ22 Working and Steering Groups, the EIS has been raising since well before the New Year, the matter of additional inset time to accommodate the likely increase in the volume of SQA Appeals this year.

We anticipate that as a result of Covid-related disruption and anxiety over the course of this session, and due to the fact that none of the young people in S4-S6 currently sitting exams have prior experience of sitting formal examinations, there are likely to be more young people whose exam grades fall short of their estimated grades and who will wish to seek upgrades to their awards through the Appeals Service.

Whilst the EIS is supportive of the Appeals Service in principle and can see the benefits that it might offer to young people who have been under significant pressure as a result of Covid disruption and associated anxiety, we have been clear from the outset that its delivery will require additional time resource for teachers, and have shared our thinking in relation to this with colleagues, including Scottish Government and ADES colleagues, on both the NQ22 Working and Steering Groups. We specifically requested that Scottish Government colleagues convey the EIS position to the relevant ministers.

At a meeting of the NQ22 Working Group early last month, disappointingly, the Scottish Government colleague on the Group stated that this had not been progressed because an EIS press comment that had been seen had suggested that a

formal written request from the EIS would be made. After a careful check, I can confirm that no such press comment was issued by the EIS. The EIS Education Committee at its meeting of 29<sup>th</sup> March decided to write formally to you with the request for an additional inset day at the beginning of the new session, since there had been no movement on the matter by that stage, despite it having been raised several times over the past months.

The rationale for the request is to create the requisite additional time in order that the expected greater number of SQA Appeals can be managed appropriately. This will require relevant discussions with individual young people, and the compilation and sending of both digital and physical assessment evidence to the SQA, much of this activity within very tight timescales.

The EIS recently shared the very concerning survey data relative to teacher workload and wellbeing with you and we were appreciative of your understanding of the issues as discussed at the last bi-lateral meeting.

We hope you continue to appreciate the breadth and depth of the commitment that teachers have shown in supporting young people in their learning throughout the pandemic so far, and that this has been at some cost to teachers' own wellbeing.

The granting of an additional inset day at the beginning of the new academic session to allow time for Appeals in Secondary and for the many Recovery priorities that there are for the Primary sector, would go some way to acknowledging this, and towards minimising further workload and wellbeing strain upon a thoroughly exhausted workforce.

As always, I'd be happy to talk any of this over if that would be helpful, otherwise I look forward to your reply.

Best wishes

Larry Flanagan

General Secretary

## Enclosure 2 – Email RE: SQA Appeals Guidance

**From:** Redacted s38(1)(b)@gov.scot

**Sent:** 30 May 2022 17:32

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; <Redacted s38(1)(b)@gov.scot>; <Redacted s38(1)(b)@gov.scot>; <Redacted s38(1)(b)@gov.scot>; Communications Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>; <Redacted s38(1)(b)@gov.scot>;[Redacted s38(1)(b)] gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>

**Subject:** SQA Appeals Guidance

PS/Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

cc. as above

To make the Cabinet Secretary aware that SQA has confirmed that the attached documents will issue to Centres tomorrow setting out guidance for the 2022 Appeals service. This confirms that:

- Learners have a direct right of appeal – where their centre-submitted estimate is higher than their certificated grade
- Appeals will be free
- There are two ways that an appeal can be submitted:
  - ☐ Learners can submit an appeal (for eligible subjects) via the Direct Learner appeals service. This is accessed via SQA's website.
  - ☐ Centres can submit an appeal via the Appeals 2022 service available on SQA Connect, on behalf of their learners.
- Learners will be awarded the higher of two grades, based on either:
  - ☐ a clerical check of their SQA assessments — exam script and/or coursework, or
  - ☐ a review by SQA senior appointees of the assessment evidence submitted by their centre, also taking into account their performance in any required coursework
- Grades can go up or stay the same. There is a very small chance that a grade could also go down, but this would only be in the event of a clerical check identifying an error that reduces the original certificated grade, and the centre evidence not supporting the original certificated grade.
- A priority appeals service will operate for learners requiring the outcome of an appeal for immediate progression to university, college, training or employment.

A summary version of the Information for Centres document will be published on the SQA website tomorrow, along with an EQIA and CRWIA.

Public facing learner information is expected to follow in June with an online publication. This will be followed up with a print edition in the summer, to land around a week prior to results day.

Best regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

☐ email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot ☐ mobile: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ☐ url: www.gov.scot

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

## **Guidance for Appeals 2022 – Update for schools, colleges and training providers**

**Tuesday 31 May 2022**

Appeals are an important part of the awarding process and, as we reach the end of exams and move towards grading and certification, we want to make sure that everyone understands how appeals will work this year.

Further to our message on [30 March](#), we have now published *Appeals 2022: Information for Centres* on [SQA Connect](#) in the NQ Information section. Information for learners on the appeals service will be published in June.

The *Information for Centres* document provides an overview of the appeals service including:

- key dates for Appeals 2022
- what to consider before submitting an appeal
- eligibility criteria
- priority appeals for those requiring the outcome of an appeal for immediate progression to university, college, training provider or employment
- gathering and submitting academic evidence (please note that evidence for priority appeals must be submitted digitally)
- potential outcomes of appeals
- withdrawing appeals

Appeals 2022 is a free service and provides learners with the opportunity to appeal directly to SQA or through their school, college or training provider. Information on the roles and responsibilities of SQA, centres and learners, both pre- and post-certification, is available on the [SQA website](#).

Schools, colleges and training providers know their learners best. As in previous years, learners will be advised to speak to their teacher or lecturer in the first instance if they have questions about their results or want to ask about appeals. In addition to the *Information for Centres* document, we will also be hosting webinars in June to support centres in their understanding of Appeals 2022. Last week, we sent information to SQA co-ordinators on how to book their place at a webinar.

We are currently developing detailed guidance on how to use the centre appeals system, which will be published before the service goes live in August. This will include information on how to submit appeals evidence on behalf of learners.

SQA has undertaken an Equalities Impact Assessment and a Child Rights and Wellbeing Assessment which cover the rationale for our approach to appeals and the exam diet for 2022. These can be found at [<include link to website>](#). We will also publish a summary version of the *Information for Centres* document on our website later today.

# **Appeals 2022:**

## **Information for centres**

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# Contents

**What is the Appeals 2022 service? 1**

**Key dates 2**

**Who is eligible for the Appeals 2022 service? 3**

**Priority appeals 4**

**Which qualifications are eligible for appeals? 4**

**What needs to be considered before submitting a request? 4**

**How does the Appeals 2022 service work? 5**

Academic evidence 6

Submitting academic evidence 7

**Subject-specific evidence submission guidance 8**

Administration and IT: National 5 and Higher 8

Art and Design: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher 9

Dance: National 5 and Higher 9

Design and Manufacture: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher 9

Drama: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher 10

Fashion and Textile Technology: National 5 and Higher 10

Gàidhlig: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher 10

Geography: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher 11

Graphic Communication: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher 11

History: Advanced Higher 11

Modern Languages: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher 11

Music: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher 11

Music — Portfolio: Advanced Higher 12

Music Technology: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher 13

Physical Education: National 5 and Advanced Higher 13

Photography: Higher 13

Practical Cake Craft: National 5 13

**Withdrawing an appeal 14**

**Retention and return of coursework and other evidence 14**

**How results are issued 14**

**Estimate amendment requests 15**

Administrative errors regarding estimates 15

Centre acknowledges discrimination or failure to provide an assessment arrangement, which affected an estimate 15

**Contact us and further information 17**

## Notes

We use the term 'centre' throughout this document. Please understand 'centre' in this document as referring to schools, colleges and training providers.

We use the term 'head of centre' throughout this document, though in some centres it may be more appropriate for a senior member of staff to undertake the actions required. Please understand 'head of centre' in this document as meaning 'the head of centre or their delegate'. Any delegate acting on the head of centre's behalf must have explicit permission from the head of centre to do so.

We use the term 'working day' throughout this document. Understand 'working day' in this document as referring to Monday to Friday (excluding local or national bank holidays).

This document should be read in conjunction with Roles and Responsibilities for Appeals 2022 and the Appeals 2022 System User Guide which will be available at the beginning of August.

## What is the Appeals 2022 service?

The purpose of Appeals 2022 is to provide learners and centres with the opportunity to review an SQA National Course grade whenever a learner has not achieved the expected result for the externally-assessed components of their course. Appeals must be based on valid and reliable evidence of demonstrated attainment against national standards. This evidence will be reviewed by SQA senior appointees. The evidence must have been authentically generated through planned assessment and will have been used to inform the estimates submitted to SQA. Appeals 2022 is free of charge and will be open for learners or their representatives to appeal directly to SQA, or through their school, college or training provider (centre) on Tuesday 9 August.

Learners will be awarded the higher of two grades, based on either:

- ☐ a clerical check of their SQA assessments — exam script and/or coursework, or
- ☐ a review by SQA senior appointees of the assessment evidence submitted by their centre, also taking into account their performance in any required coursework

Grades can go up or stay the same. There is a very small chance that a grade could also go down, but this would only be in the event of a clerical check identifying an error that reduces the original certificated grade, **and** the centre evidence not supporting the original certificated grade.

2

| <b>Key dates</b>   | <b>Priority appeals</b> | <b>Dates</b>       |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Appeals 2022 Learner Direct service opens to learners.   |                         | 9 August 2022      |
| Appeals 2022 service opens to centres on SQA Connect. All evidence for priority appeals must be digital.             |                         | 9 August 2022      |
| Deadline for submitting priority appeals via Learner Direct.   |                         | 16 August 2022     |
| Centre deadline for submitting priority appeals via SQA Connect. Evidence upload window for priority appeals closes. |                         | 19 August 2022     |
| SQA issues results for priority appeals to centres.  |                         | 5 September 2022   |
| SQA confirms outcomes to UCAS.   |                         | 6 September 2022   |
| Replacement certificates issued to learners.   |                         | mid-November 2022† |

| <b>Non-priority appeals</b>  | <b>Dates</b>            |
|--|-------------------------|
| Appeals 2022 Learner Direct service opens to learners.   | 9 August 2022           |
| Appeals 2022 service opens to centres on SQA Connect (including ability to upload digital evidence).                             | 9 August 2022           |
| Stationery distribution to centres.  | 23 August 2022          |
| Deadline for submitting non-priority appeals via Learner Direct.   | 30 August 2022          |
| Centre deadline for submitting non-priority appeals via SQA Connect (and digital upload window for non-priority appeals closes). | 2 September 2022        |
| Higher/Advanced Higher uplift from centres.  | 7 September 2022        |
| National 5 uplift from centres.  | 12 September 2022       |
| SQA issues results for non-priority appeals.   | By end of October 2022† |
| Replacement certificates issued to learners.   | mid-November 2022†      |

†It may be necessary to change these dates, depending on the volume of appeals we receive. We will keep you informed if this happens.

### **Who is eligible for the Appeals 2022 service?**

To be eligible for the Appeals 2022 service for a subject/level, learners must meet the following criteria:

- ☐ The learner's estimate is higher than their certificated grade — for example, the learner's exam result is a grade C, but their estimate was a grade B.
  - ☐ The learner's centre has submitted an estimate to SQA for that subject and level.
- Estimated bands of zero or blank will not be eligible.



- ☐ The learner must have taken and/or submitted all coursework and formal assessments, including exams.
- ☐ At least one component of the course assessment must be marked by SQA. Courses that are wholly internally assessed are not eligible for appeals.

Learners who have been through the Examination Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (EECCS) are excluded from the Appeals 2022 service for the same qualification.

This is because the EECCS includes a review, by SQA senior appointees, of the assessment evidence submitted by their centre, and also takes into account the learner's performance in any required coursework.

For more information on the EECCS, see the guidance document on SQA

### **Priority appeals**

A priority appeals service will operate for learners requiring the outcome of an appeal for immediate progression to university, college, training or employment. The outcomes of these appeals will be released in time for the UCAS deadline.

Note the dates for this service — the deadline for learners to submit a priority appeal directly is 16 August, and the centre deadline is 19 August. SQA will confirm outcomes to centres by 5 September, and will notify UCAS by 6 September.

All priority appeals must be validated by a learner's centre.

All evidence must be submitted digitally using SQA Connect. Instructions on how to do this will be given in the *Appeals 2022 System User Guide*, which will be available at the beginning of August. The subject-specific evidence section of this guide will include information about the arrangements for certain subjects. Bespoke arrangements can be put in place to submit physical evidence for practical subjects (eg Art and Design). If this is required, please contact the Appeals Helpdesk.

When submitting a priority appeal request, you must also be able to provide contact details for the university, college, or place of employment that requires the grade information. The UCAS Adviser Portal provides real-time applicant status data and can help you identify learners with conditional places before August certification. You should not submit a priority appeal until you have ensured it meets the required criteria.

### **Which qualifications are eligible for appeals?**

All National Courses at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher are eligible, with the exception of the following (which are wholly internally assessed):

- ☐ National 5 Practical Electronics
- ☐ National 5 Practical Metalworking
- ☐ National 5 Practical Woodworking

### **What needs to be considered before submitting a request?**

For those learners who have not performed to the standard expected, centres should ensure that there is convincing assessment evidence of a higher level of demonstrated attainment. Please bear in mind aspects such as a high volume of variation between estimates and course awards in a subject — this may indicate issues around the accuracy of the original estimates. There is also the possibility that a discrepancy between an estimate and performance in the course assessment may be evidence of a learner's lesser ability to retain

and integrate knowledge and skills independently or under exam conditions, particularly if the evidence has been gathered over time from class work. 5

Before submitting an appeal, you should also:

- ☐ Consider the evidence base for estimates for learners identified by SQA as having not met their estimated grade, and check that it reflects the learners' completion of all parts of the course subject to modifications to assessment in place for session 2021–22.
- ☐ Speak with those learners expressing a desire to appeal or who have concerns with their certificated outcomes, ensuring there is clarity between the learner and centre on whether an appeal is being progressed.
- ☐ For those considering submitting an appeal, ensure learners have all the information required to make an informed choice as to whether to proceed with the appeal. For priority appeals, ensure that you have validated the reason for the priority.
- ☐ Remember that the learner has the final say as to whether an appeal should be submitted to SQA. Should a learner choose to not take part in an advisory conversation, or be unable to for any reason, the appeal must still be progressed if they have indicated that is their intention.
- ☐ Finalise the list of learners to present for review.

### **How does the Appeals 2022 service work?**

There are two ways that an appeal can be submitted:

- ☐ Learners can submit an appeal (for eligible subjects) via the Direct Learner appeals service. This is accessed via SQA's website.
- ☐ Centres can submit an appeal via the Appeals 2022 service available on SQA Connect, on behalf of their learners.

Details of how to submit and progress the appeal on SQA Connect will be available to centres in the Appeals 2022 System User Guide, which will be available at the beginning of August.

Appeals must be submitted and progressed, and digital evidence provided, to the timescales set out in the key dates section.

The Appeals 2022 service deals with potential grade changes, not band point movements within a grade. If an upgrade is awarded based on the review by SQA appointees of alternative learner evidence, then the grade awarded will be at the lowest band point available; for example A2, B4 or C6.

Centres should inform SQA ([appeals.enquiries@sqa.org.uk](mailto:appeals.enquiries@sqa.org.uk)) of any learners with a conditional offer from university that requires an A1 band. In these cases, by exception, should the learner's alternative evidence justify an A grade, the appointee will also determine the appropriate band.

### **Academic evidence**

For each request, you must provide alternative learner evidence for the course. SQA will consider a wide range of learner evidence. Evidence is most convincing where the assessment that generated it mirrors key aspects of the specific skills, knowledge and understanding requirements of the course. For further information, please see 'National Courses: guidance on evidence for estimates in session 2021–22'.

It is not necessary to provide assessment evidence for every aspect of the course content. However, it is a requirement to provide alternative evidence for the skills, knowledge and understanding assessed in the question paper component.

Any externally-assessed coursework will be presented to SQA appointees for review. Coursework gathered over time is likely to be the learner's best work, and centres are not expected to provide alternative coursework evidence. There is more detail about this in the Subject-specific evidence submission guidance on page 8.

Evidence for internally assessed course components does not need to be presented for review.

## **Types of evidence**

Prelims or mock exams are likely to be the most reliable indicator of performance in a question paper component. The most convincing examples of these will accurately predict attainment in the skills, knowledge, and understanding assessed by the question paper.

They will be clearly aligned to the course specification, content, level of demand, and assessment conditions as exemplified in the specimen question papers and past papers.

The way in which prelim or mock question papers are produced can vary. They tend to fall into three main categories: centre produced papers; papers generated co-operatively by a group of centres; and commercially produced question papers. All of those have the potential to generate robust evidence for appeals. In all cases, the validity, reliability and security of the evidence should be checked before being submitted to SQA.

Centres generating their own prelims sometimes incorporate elements of SQA past papers. This can be a valid approach. Please note, though, that an SQA past paper or specimen question paper in its entirety will not be accepted if it is the only evidence submitted. These papers and their marking instructions are in the public domain and can be accessed by learners. The subject-specific ACM 2021 Assessment Resources available on the SQA secure site cannot be used in their entirety as the only evidence to support appeal requests.

These resources are not secure and should be treated in the same way as SQA past papers or specimen question papers.

The following types of evidence might also be relevant for consideration:

- ☐ Unit assessments or end of topic tests: These are valuable assessments to check progress and inform next steps in teaching and learning. However, on their own they may lack sufficient integration, challenge, or application to be a robust academic evidence base, although you could use them as supplementary evidence. For some National Courses, an integrative class test that samples skills, knowledge and understanding that are not covered in an early prelim can provide a useful formative exercise for learners, as well as additional evidence to support an appeal.
- ☐ Classwork: This may consist of a variety of naturally-occurring evidence types, produced under conditions that are different from those required for course assessment. Evidence of this kind is unlikely to form a strong evidence base on its own, but may supplement other evidence.
- ☐ Performance: In Dance, Drama, and Music, you may enclose recorded centre evidence of a learner's practical performances with your evidence. Recording of candidate performances is not mandatory. Please refer to subject-specific evidence submission guidance below.

Please note that, for session 2021–22, the assessment requirements for National Courses have been modified in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please read the National

Course modification summary on our website, which outlines the changes and final requirements for this session, in conjunction with the course specification. You can find these for each National Course on the subject pages of our website, under 'Course Information 2021–22'.

Evidence must have been authentically generated through planned assessment and will have been used to inform the estimates submitted to SQA. All academic evidence submitted in support of a request must have been generated before the date of the timetabled examination.

Evidence for internally assessed course components does not need to be presented for review.

It is essential that you are confident in the authenticity of the learner's evidence you are providing for an appeal.

### **Submitting academic evidence**

For each type of evidence, centres must submit the instrument of assessment and marking instructions, clearly showing how these have been applied, in line with national standards.

- ☐ Instrument of assessment — this is the mechanism by which the assessment has been conducted to demonstrate a learner's knowledge and/or skills.
- ☐ Marking instructions or marking scheme — for each type of evidence submitted, it is important that the marking scheme or marking instructions are provided to exemplify the standard for achievement within the centre, and to show how the learner evidence has been marked or measured. Marking instructions or a marking scheme normally indicate the number of marks each question or component of the task attracts and should also indicate acceptable answers or criteria for awarding marks.

### **Submitting physical evidence**

It is not possible to submit physical evidence for a priority appeal except by bespoke arrangement for practical subjects, which has been agreed with the Appeals Helpdesk. If submitting physical evidence (for a non-priority appeal), please refer to the guidance in your stationery distribution package.

If any evidence submitted is in the medium of Gaelic, this should be indicated on the flyleaf. If learner evidence has already been submitted to SQA for verification, this should be indicated on the flyleaf.

All components submitted for assessment will form part of the overall evidence that examiners review.

### **Submitting digital evidence**

Please note that all evidence for priority appeals must be submitted digitally except by bespoke arrangement for practical subjects, which has been agreed with the Appeals Helpdesk.

It is recommended that evidence for non-priority appeals is digitised and submitted directly to SQA via SQA Connect. This will involve creating a scanned version of any paper-based evidence. However, centres may choose to submit evidence physically via uplift.

There are subject-specific instructions for certain subjects in the next section. Centres should also refer to the NQ 2022 Appeals System User Guide available at the beginning of August for information about uploading digital evidence.

The file types that can be uploaded to the Appeals 2022 service on SQA Connect are:

- ☐ Word Processing: .doc, .docx, .rtf, .txt
- ☐ PDF documents: .pdf
- ☐ Presentations: .ppt, .pptx, .ppsx
- ☐ Spreadsheets: .xls, .xlsx
- ☐ Image: .bmp, .gif, .jpg, .tiff, .png
- ☐ Multimedia/Audio-visual: .avi, .mp3, .mp4, .mpeg, .mpg, .mid, .midi, H.264, .wav, .wmv, .wma, .ogg, .ogm, .flv, .mov
- ☐ Databases: .accdb, .mdb
- ☐ Publishing: .pub

### **Subject-specific evidence submission guidance**

Please read this additional subject-specific guidance before preparing learner evidence submissions for any of the subjects listed in this section.

#### **Administration and IT: National 5 and Higher**

The externally-assessed 2022 assignments will be presented to SQA appointees as part of the appeals review. Therefore, there is no requirement to submit alternative evidence for the assignment unless the centre believes that their alternative evidence is more indicative of the learner's performance than the 2022 assignment. Centres are encouraged to submit alternative evidence — for the question paper (and assignment, if required) — digitally, via SQA Connect. 9

If a submitted assessment has e-files, they must show all notes and/or comments. If your learners used unchanged e-files published by SQA, there is no need to submit these. You should include a note to that effect on the assessment instrument.

#### **Art and Design: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher**

It is recommended that evidence is submitted physically to SQA. You may also submit evidence digitally via SQA Connect. This will involve creating an electronic (scanned) version of any paper-based evidence.

The externally-assessed portfolios for Art and Design will be presented to SQA appointees as part of the appeal review. Since the portfolios are produced over time, it is likely to be learners' best work. Therefore, centres are not expected to provide alternative portfolio evidence.

#### **Dance: National 5 and Higher**

It is recommended that evidence is digitised and submitted directly to SQA via SQA Connect. This will involve creating an electronic (scanned) version of any paper-based evidence.

For the performance and practical activity components, performances from visiting assessment are likely to be the learner's best work and therefore, centres are not expected to provide evidence of a learner performing on another occasion.

However, for any other centre-based assessment events, for example candidates who were not in the sample of 12 for the visiting assessment, recordings can be submitted for the performance and practical activity components along with the choreography review. SQA appointees reviewing evidence will be provided with the candidate mark sheets completed by the designated centre assessor for these candidates.

Recordings can be submitted for the performance and practical activity components that were made during the visiting assessor's visit along with the choreography review. As detailed in the information for teachers and lecturers document for Dance, recording was not mandatory during visiting assessment. SQA appointees will have access to the candidate mark sheets completed by the visiting assessor for these candidates.

All recordings should clearly highlight the candidate for whom the appeal is being submitted for.

### **Design and Manufacture: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher**

It is recommended that evidence is digitised and submitted directly to SQA via SQA Connect. This will involve creating an electronic (scanned) version of any paper-based evidence.

The externally-assessed assignments for Design and Manufacture will be presented to SQA appointees as part of the appeal review. Since the assignments are produced over time, it is likely to be learners' best work. Therefore, centres are not expected to provide alternative assignment evidence.

### **Drama: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher**

It is recommended that evidence is digitised and submitted directly to SQA via SQA Connect. This will involve creating an electronic (scanned) version of any paper-based evidence.

For the performance component, performances from visiting assessment are likely to be the learner's best work and, therefore, centres are not expected to provide evidence of a learner performing on another occasion.

However, for any other centre-based assessment events, for example candidates that were not in the sample of 12 for the visiting assessment at National 5, recordings can be submitted. SQA appointees reviewing evidence will be provided with the candidate mark sheets completed by the designated centre assessor for these candidates.

Recordings can be submitted for the performance component that were made during the visiting assessor's visit. As detailed in the information for teachers and lecturers document for Drama, recording was not mandatory during visiting assessment. SQA appointees will have access to the candidate mark sheets completed by the visiting assessor for these candidates.

All recordings should clearly highlight the candidate who is being assessed/for whom the appeal is being submitted.

At Advanced Higher, the externally-assessed project-dissertation and assignment will be presented to SQA appointees as part of the appeal review. Since the dissertation is produced over time and the assignment is a controlled write up where candidates use a

resource sheet to assist them, it is likely to be candidates' best work. Therefore, centres are not expected to provide alternative evidence for these components.

### **Fashion and Textile Technology: National 5 and Higher**

The externally-assessed assignment, along with the practical component mark, will be presented to SQA appointees as part of the appeal review. As the assignment is completed after all course content has been delivered, it is likely to be the learner's best work, and centres are not expected to provide alternative assignment evidence.

If centres do have alternative evidence, it should be digitised and submitted directly to SQA via SQA Connect. This will involve creating an electronic (scanned) version of any paper-based evidence.

### **Gàidhlig: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher**

Centres are not required to submit alternative evidence for the Performance — Talking component at National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher level.

At National 5 and Higher, the mark for Performance — Talking will be available to appointees and taken into account during the appeals review. At Advanced Higher level, this component is conducted by SQA visiting assessors and will be considered as part of the appeals review.

### **Geography: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher**

For all levels, you should submit any Ordnance Survey maps used with assessment tasks. For Advanced Higher Geography, tracing overlays and any supplementary items should also be included.

The externally-assessed Advanced Higher project-portfolio will be presented to SQA appointees as part of the appeal review. Since the project-portfolio is produced over time, it is likely to be the learner's best work, so centres are not expected to provide alternative project-portfolio evidence.

### **Graphic Communication: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher**

The externally-assessed National 5 and Higher assignment, and the Advanced Higher project, will be presented to SQA appointees as part of the appeal review. The assignment is completed after all course content has been delivered, and the project is produced over a long period of time, so it is likely to be the learner's best work. Therefore, centres are not expected to provide alternative evidence. If centres do have alternative evidence, it should be digitised and submitted directly to SQA via SQA Connect. This will involve creating an electronic (scanned) version of any paper-based evidence.

### **History: Advanced Higher**

If submitting any appeals for Advanced Higher History, please complete the short online form at <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/98483.html> to inform SQA of the chosen field of study for each appeal.

You only need to identify candidates when an appeal has been submitted. Candidates for whom an appeal is not being submitted do not need to be noted on the form.

### **Modern Languages: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher**

Centres are not required to submit alternative evidence for the Performance — Talking component at National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher level.

At National 5 and Higher, the mark for Performance — Talking will be available to appointees and taken into account during the appeals review. At Advanced Higher level, this component is conducted by SQA visiting assessors and will be considered as part of the appeals review.

Centres are not required to submit alternative evidence for Advanced Higher Portfolio component. The portfolio submitted by centres to SQA will be considered as part of the appeals review.

### **Music: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher**

It is recommended that evidence is digitised and submitted directly to SQA via SQA Connect. This will involve creating an electronic (scanned) version of any paper-based evidence.

For the question paper component, audio files and marking instructions should also be provided for any centre-devised questions. You should also indicate where SQA past paper questions have been used in your assessments — the audio files do not need to be provided for SQA past paper questions.

For the performance component, performances from visiting assessment it is likely to be the learner's best work, so centres are not expected to provide evidence for a learner performing on another occasion. However, for any other centre-based assessment events, recordings can be submitted for the performance components in the form of audio or video files for the learner's complete programme. You must also include sheet music and completed learner assessment records that show the assessment judgements.

Recordings can be submitted for the performance component that were made during the visiting assessor's visit alongside all sheet music. As detailed in the information for teachers and lecturers document for Music Performance, recording was not mandatory during visiting assessment. SQA appointees will have access to the candidate mark sheets completed by the VA.

### **Music — Portfolio: Advanced Higher**

It is recommended that evidence is digitised and submitted directly to SQA via SQA Connect. This will involve creating an electronic (scanned) version of any paper-based evidence.

For the question paper component, audio files and marking instructions should also be provided for any centre-devised questions. You should also indicate where SQA past paper questions have been used in your assessments. The audio files should not be provided for SQA past paper questions.

The externally-assessed portfolio will be presented to SQA appointees as part of the appeal review. The portfolio is produced over a period of time, so it is likely to be the learner's best work. Therefore, centres are not expected to provide alternative evidence.

However, alternative evidence for the portfolio component could include audio recordings, scores or performance plans, and a review for each composition or arrangement.

For the performance component, performances from visiting assessment are likely to be the learner's best work, so centres are not expected to provide evidence for a learner performing on another occasion. However, for any other centre-based assessment events, recordings can be submitted for the performance components in the form of audio or video files for the learner's complete programme. You must also include sheet music and for any centre-based



assessments, completed learner assessment records that show the assessment judgements.

Recordings can be submitted for the performance component that were made during the visiting assessor's visit alongside all sheet music. As detailed in the information for teachers and lecturers document for Music Performance, recording was not mandatory during visiting assessment. SQA appointees will have access to the candidate mark sheets completed by the VA.

### **Music Technology: National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher**

The externally-assessed National 5 and Higher assignment, and the Advanced Higher project, will be presented to SQA appointees as part of the appeal review. The assignments and project are produced over a period of time, so it is likely to be the learner's best work. Therefore, centres are not expected to provide alternative evidence.

It is recommended that all evidence is digitised and submitted directly to SQA via SQA Connect. This will involve creating an electronic (scanned) version of any paper-based evidence.

Evidence for the assignment and project components may include learner logs and evaluations, media files and any other supporting materials.

For National 5 and Higher, audio files and marking instructions should be provided for any centre-devised questions. You should also indicate where SQA past paper questions have been used in your assessments — the audio files do not need to be provided for SQA past paper questions.

### **Physical Education: National 5 and Advanced Higher**

The externally-assessed portfolio for National 5 will be presented to SQA appointees as part of the appeal review. Since the Portfolio is produced over time, it is likely to be candidates' best work. Therefore, centres are not expected to provide alternative evidence.

The externally-assessed project for Advanced Higher will be presented to SQA appointees as part of the appeal review. Since the project is produced over time, it is likely to be candidates' best work. Therefore, centres are not expected to provide alternative evidence.

### **Photography: Higher**

It is recommended that evidence is digitised and submitted directly to SQA via SQA Connect. This will involve creating an electronic (scanned) version of any paper-based evidence.

The externally-assessed project for Photography will be presented to SQA appointees as part of the appeal review. Since the project is produced over time, it is likely to be learners' best work, so centres are not expected to provide alternative project evidence.

### **Practical Cake Craft: National 5**

The externally-assessed assignment, along with the practical component mark, will be presented to SQA appointees as part of the appeal review. As the assignment is completed after all course content has been delivered, it is likely to be the learner's best work, and centres are not expected to provide alternative assignment evidence.

If centres do have alternative evidence, it must be digitised and submitted directly to SQA via SQA Connect. This will involve creating an electronic (scanned) version of any paper-based evidence.

### **Withdrawing an appeal**

Learners can withdraw via the Learner Direct service, as long as their centre has **not** progressed their appeal to SQA, until:

- ☐ Priority appeals: Tuesday (11.59 pm) 16 August
- ☐ All other appeals: Tuesday (11.59 pm) 30 August

Appeals can be withdrawn by centres following consultation with learners via the Appeals 2022 service on SQA Connect until:

- ☐ Priority appeals: Friday (5 pm) 19 August
- ☐ All other appeals: Friday (5 pm) 2 September

Appeals cannot be withdrawn after the relevant submission window has passed.

### **Retention and return of coursework and other evidence**

SQA must retain coursework and other evidence that has been used as part of an appeal for at least 12 months from the date of certification. This is in case these materials are subject to any complaints. Centres and learners can request that coursework is returned, on payment of a charge and by completing a request form. All details can be found on the Return of

External Assessment Materials webpage: <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/41345.html>. Applicable charges should be paid using the WorldPay facility. All requests and payments should be made by 30 September 2022.

Centres can request the return of other alternative evidence submitted in support of an appeal by emailing [return.materials@sqa.org.uk](mailto:return.materials@sqa.org.uk) and on payment of a charge. You can find details of applicable charges at <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/41345.html>. Payments should be made by invoice. All requests and payment should be made by 30 September 2022. This evidence will be returned to the centre.

### **How results are issued**

See the key dates section for information on when outcomes will be released.

All outcomes will be released to centres, using SQA Connect. Centres will then inform learners. UCAS will be informed of the outcome of priority appeals.

Please note that component marks reports will not be updated/reissued following an appeal change of grade. No feedback on the appeal result will be provided.

**By mid-November 2022**, revised results will be updated on MySQA and certificates will be posted to candidates. It may be necessary to change this date, depending on the volume of requests we receive. We will keep you informed if this happens.

The grade awarded following the completion of appeals will be final, and there will be no further means to appeal the result.

### **Estimate amendment requests**

Learners are not able to appeal their estimates with SQA. If a learner, or their representative, has concerns about their estimate, they should discuss these with their centre.

Centres are expected to have informed learners of their estimates and addressed any learner concerns. We would expect that any centre errors regarding estimates would have been corrected before the end of term in June 2022.

### **Administrative errors regarding estimates**

Exceptionally, if you identify an administrative error affecting an estimate after Results Day, you should contact [estimates@sqa.org.uk](mailto:estimates@sqa.org.uk).

The head of centre should provide the following details:

- ☐ Candidate name, SCN, date of birth
- ☐ Course title, course code and level
- ☐ Confirmation of the correct estimate
- ☐ Confirmation that the centre holds evidence to support the estimate
- ☐ An explanation of how the error occurred and confirmation that it is unlikely to recur.

### **Centre acknowledges discrimination or failure to provide an assessment arrangement, which affected an estimate**

If, after certification and following an internal investigation process, the centre or local authority acknowledges discrimination or a failure to provide assessment arrangements in line with SQA requirements, for assessments that contributed to the estimate, the head of centre should write to [bc.appeals@sqa.org.uk](mailto:bc.appeals@sqa.org.uk). SQA expects such cases to be exceptionally rare.

The head of centre should provide the following details:

- ☐ Candidate name, SCN, date of birth
- ☐ Course title, course code and level
- ☐ Confirmation of one of the following:
  - the centre, or local authority, acknowledges discrimination or other unlawful conduct contrary to the Equality Act (2010)
  - discrimination or other unlawful conduct contrary to the Equality Act (2010) has been established by a court or other relevant body\*
  - a centre, or local authority, acknowledges the centre was informed of a learner's disability prior to assessments taking place and failed to determine or verify the learner's need for assessment arrangements, as required by SQA guidance
- or
- the centre, or local authority, acknowledges a failure to provide a pre-agreed assessment arrangement

☐ Confirmation that the estimate was affected by the issue acknowledged/established — if this is the case, a revised estimate should be provided where possible

☐ Confirmation that the learner consents to have evidence reviewed through the appeals process

☐ Provide information about the candidate's alternative evidence and whether it was affected by the issue acknowledged/established.

\*For local authority schools and colleges overseen by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), a complaint about discrimination that is upheld by the SPSO may be regarded as established.

The centre must inform SQA if the learner has a conditional offer at a college, university, or employment. All priority requests must be sent by 19 August 2022, and all non-priority requests by 2 September 2022.

SQA will endeavour to resolve priority requests by the UCAS deadline. However, as these are complex matters, it may not be possible to resolve all cases in this timeframe.

Requests to amend estimates on this basis will only be accepted if all the required information is provided. An SQA panel will review approved requests. The panel will confirm the appropriate action after this point:

- a) A review of learner evidence via normal academic appeals process is arranged.
- b) A review of learner evidence, specified by the panel to only include evidence not affected by the acknowledged/established issue, is arranged.

Exceptionally, if neither a) nor b) provide sufficient basis or evidence to fairly determine a grade, SQA may advise a centre to re-assess a candidate to produce new alternative academic evidence.

Where these actions are completed and do not lead to a grade change, or a re-assessment opportunity is refused by the learner, the process is concluded. SQA cannot decide a new result for the candidate unless there is sufficient evidence to justify the grade.

### **Contact us and further information**

For support, and to answer questions regarding appeals or the information provided in this document, please visit the SQA website, contact the SQA Appeals Helpdesk, or contact your local liaison manager (details can be found at [www.sqa.org.uk/liaisonsteam](http://www.sqa.org.uk/liaisonsteam)).

For enquiries from centres, the SQA Appeals Helpdesk is available from 8.30 am to 4.30 pm Monday to Thursday; and 8.30 am to 3.30 pm on Fridays (with the exception of local and bank holidays).

Phone: 0345 213 6612 (option 4) Email: [appeals.enquiries@sqa.org.uk](mailto:appeals.enquiries@sqa.org.uk)  
Information about appeals can be found on SQA's website: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/appeals>.

### **Please note**

SQA Connect is a secure online portal. The SQA Appeals Helpdesk operators do not have the ability to view or access the portal through which centres submit requests.

All questions about access to SQA Connect should be emailed to [sqaconnect@sqa.org.uk](mailto:sqaconnect@sqa.org.uk).

### Enclosure 3 – Email RE: SQA Appeals Guidance

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot  
**Sent:** 15 June 2022 10:49  
**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot;  
**Subject:** RE: SQA Appeals Guidance

PS/Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

cc. as above

To make the Cabinet Secretary aware that the attached information for learners on the SQA Appeals Service is expected to be published on the SQA website mid-morning tomorrow (Thursday 16 June), along with some social media. A printed version is expected to follow later in the summer, nearer Results Day, with more social media activity at that point.

This information aligns with the guidance issued to centres at the end of May to which there was no stakeholder or media reaction. We will monitor any reaction to the more public facing learner guidance and refine any lines as necessary.

Kind regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

📧 email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot 📱 mobile: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] 🌐 url: www.gov.scot

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills  
**Sent:** 06 June 2022 09:08  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; <[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: SQA Appeals Guidance

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)],

Ms Somerville has noted.

Thanks

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**

Deputy Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills | T: [redacted s.38(1)(b)] | M: |  
[Redacted s38(1)(b)] | E: | The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH  
EH1 3DG

Remainder of enclosure removed as duplicate of email chain at Enclosure 2

**Enclosure 3.1 – Attachment: PDF**

[Redacted s25(1)]

[https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files\\_ccc/SQA-Appeals-2022-guidance-for-learners.pdf](https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/SQA-Appeals-2022-guidance-for-learners.pdf)

**Enclosure 4 – Email RE: EIS Request for an additional Inset Day**

**From:**

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot

**Sent:** 01 July 2022 11:37

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; Gorman G (Gayle) <Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Bray O (Ollie) <Ollie.Bray@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Anson S (Sam) <Sam.Anon@gov.scot>; McLean L (Liza) <Liza.McLean@gov.scot>; Taylor A (Alison) <Alison.Taylor@gov.scot>; Head SFIO <HeadSFIO@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: EIS Request for an additional Inset Day

Hi

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Please find attached a draft response to the EIS letter.

Best regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

✉ email:

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] ✉ mobile:

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] ✉ url: [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

**From:**

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

**Sent:** 20 June 2022 16:16

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; Gorman G (Gayle) <Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Bray O (Ollie) <Ollie.Bray@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Anson S (Sam) <Sam.Anon@gov.scot>; McLean L (Liza)



<Liza.McLean@gov.scot>; Taylor A (Alison) <Alison.Taylor@gov.scot>; Head SFIO <HeadSFIO@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: EIS Request for an additional Inset Day

Hi

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Please see further letter from Mr Flanagan on this. Grateful for advice/draft reply as appropriate.

Many thanks.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills

T: 0131

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] | M:

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] | E: cabsecES@gov.scot

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All e-mails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to any other official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the recipient. Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments.

Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

**From:** [Redacted s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

**Sent:** 15 June 2022 10:53

**To:** [Redacted s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

<CabSecES@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice

<dgej@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>;

Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; Gorman G (Gayle)

<Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Bray O (Ollie)

<Ollie.Bray@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ)

<Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Anson S (Sam) <Sam.Ansen@gov.scot>; McLean L (Liza)

<Liza.McLean@gov.scot>; Taylor A (Alison) <Alison.Taylor@gov.scot>; Head SFIO

<HeadSFIO@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Education & Skills

<CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Livey D (David)  
<David.Livey@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: EIS Request for an additional Inset Day

Hi  
[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Just to confirm that this response has now issued (via email and MiCase). A copy is attached.

Thanks.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]  
Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills  
T:  
[Redacted s38(1)(b)] | M: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]  
[Redacted s38(1)(b)] | E: cabsecES@gov.scot  
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Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 01 June 2022 16:13  
**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; Gorman G (Gayle) <Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Bray O (Ollie) <Ollie.Bray@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Anson S (Sam) <Sam.Anson@gov.scot>; McLean L (Liza) <Liza.McLean@gov.scot>; Taylor A (Alison) <Alison.Taylor@gov.scot>; Head SFIO <HeadSFIO@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: EIS Request for an additional Inset Day

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Further to the email below I have just sent through the below suggested response on the MiCase system to the original correspondence from the EIS (Case Ref. 202200298640). If the Cabinet Secretary is content, grateful if you could let me know when this has issued, at which point we will

share the decision with the stakeholders who provided views from on this request {Redacted s30(b)(ii)}

Thank you for your correspondence, dated 4 May 2022, seeking an additional inset day in the new academic session to allow time for appeals in Secondary and for recovery priorities in the Primary sector.

I take the wellbeing of teachers very seriously, and recognise the increased pressures and challenges that all education staff have faced over the last two years. I am immensely appreciative of the work that teachers have undertaken to ensure that our young people have been supported during these difficult times. Since October 2020, the Scottish Government has invested more than £2m specifically in supporting the wellbeing of the education workforce, with a package of support for teachers, developed in conjunction with the Education Recovery Group. Officials are currently working with Education Scotland and other partners to implement the continuation of wellbeing support into the new school session.

Considering the potential impacts of an additional inset day, officials engaged with wider stakeholders (including local government, head teachers, parent and learner representatives) to gather their views on this proposal. I have now had the opportunity to review the position, taking into account the range of views expressed.

Given the significant disruption that learners have already faced over the last two years, that local authorities/schools have flexibility as to how they use their existing inset provision days, and that the number of appeals is currently an unknown, I have determined that an additional inset day for the purposes set out would not be appropriate at this time.

Schools already receive five inset days a year and have flexibility as to how these days are used. I understand that all schools already have at least one, and in most cases two, inset days planned for the first couple of days after the summer break, and before learners start back. As such, there is already flexibility for recovery priorities to be factored in to the existing provision.

I appreciate that teachers have concerns about the number of appeals this year, and the implications for this on workload. However, the general view from the exam diet is that the majority of learners have been attending their exams. As such, and taking into consideration the grading approach this year, the level of potential appeals is not yet known and may not be significantly different to previous years. Further, not all secondary teachers would be involved in any appeals, and local authorities will be mindful of the need for flexibility in deploying teacher resource once the number of appeals is known at a local level.

In addition, any additional in-service day would be a day of lost learning that would impact all learners, particularly vulnerable children.

I realise that this decision will be disappointing but hope that you will recognise that this is a carefully balanced judgement, and that the needs of learners are paramount. I will continue to consider any requests for support that teachers may need to address any wellbeing and workload concerns.

Best regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

📧 email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot 📱 mobile: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] 🌐 url: www.gov.scot

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

**Sent:** 25 May 2022 12:28

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

<CabSecES@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; Gorman G (Gayle)

<Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Bray O (Ollie)

<Ollie.Bray@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ)

<Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Anson S (Sam) <Sam.Anson@gov.scot>; McLean L (Liza)

<Liza.McLean@gov.scot>; Taylor A (Alison) <Alison.Taylor@gov.scot>; Head SFIO

<HeadSFIO@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: EIS Request for an additional Inset Day

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Ms Somerville has seen your note and agrees with the recommendation not to approve the additional Inset day.

Many thanks.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills

T: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] | M: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] | E: cabsecES@gov.scot

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**Enclosure 4.1 – Attachment: Word document**

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills  
Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP

T: 0300 244 4000  
E: [scottish.ministers@gov.scot](mailto:scottish.ministers@gov.scot)



vernment

Scottish Go  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
[gov.scot](http://gov.scot)

Larry Flanagan  
General Secretary  
EIS

via email

---

Your ref: LF/AB/LM  
July 2022

Thank you for letter dated 20 June in response to my decision that an additional inset day would not be appropriate at this time.

As I set out in my previous response, I take the wellbeing of teachers very seriously, and recognise the increased pressures and challenges that all education staff have faced over the last two years. I recognise that workload is a significant factor in teachers' stress. That is one of the reasons why we have committed to reduce teachers' class contact time by one and half hours. Reducing class contact time will also create over 2,000 permanent teaching posts, and I hope an implementation date will be agreed soon.

Similarly, working with partners, we have put in place new resources specifically to support mental health and wellbeing, coaching and mentoring, while also introducing a new programme of professional learning for early career teachers. We are currently working with Education Scotland and other partners to implement the continuation of wellbeing support into the new school session.

While I agree that many learners have experienced disruption, the level of appeals continues to be an unknown and we will not know until the results are available on 9 August whether the levels will be significantly different from previous years. In addition, following this extended period of disrupted learning, a careful balance is needed between taking the time to plan for and implement recovery priorities whilst

ensuring that learning, particularly for our most vulnerable learners, is not further disrupted without significant justification. My reference to the existing five inset day provision was not to imply these days were a luxury, but to set out that there is local discretion and flexibility within this provision to address and prioritise some of the issues you have raised – particularly during the inset days already scheduled across schools at the start of the new academic session after the summer break.

Should circumstances change in the new academic session that shift the balance of that judgement, I would be happy to revisit this decision or consider any further requests for support that teachers may need to address any wellbeing and workload concerns.

**SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE**

***Enclosure 4.2 – Attachment: Email***

This attachment is a duplicate of enclosure 1.1



**Enclosure 5 – Email RE: RE: SQA Priority Appeals & Conditional Offers**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 05 August 2022 13:12  
**To:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: SQA Priority Appeals & Conditional Offers

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Please find attached revised lines which should help.

I've highlighted the additions made.

Roddy is also talking to the SFC about this, and will share anything that they provide that may be useful later.

I hope this helps.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 05 August 2022 12:19  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FW: SQA Priority Appeals & Conditional Offers

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

I think you were providing

The lines Mr Hepburn tweeted earlier in the week ([Redacted s38(1)(b)] has these) would be good

Plus "We are pleased to see that Universities Scotland has issued a statement to candidates highlighting sources of advice if they don't get the grades they need for their offer"

I am going to check with SFC re places line

Roddy

Dr Roddy Macdonald  
Head of Higher Education and Science Division  
Scottish Government Advanced Learning and Science Directorate  
5 Atlantic Quay  
Glasgow G2 8LU

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

PA/Divisonal Admin: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]



**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 05 August 2022 11:44

**To:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Hicks C (Clare) <Clare.Hicks@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: SQA Priority Appeals & Conditional Offers

Hi Roddy

I had been engaging with [Redacted s38(1)(b)] but conscious she is on leave today. It would be helpful to have some expanded lines on the HE position this year for the draft version of the briefing that will go up to the Cabinet Secretary later today.

Attached is a copy of the current version of the Annex that includes university and colleges lines, alongside YPG and employer lines.

In particular, it would be helpful to expand the university section to cover any general lines e.g. any current lines around the fact that there won't be additional places available this year as was the case in the last couple of years would be helpful, or any other core lines that you feel may be helpful. Appreciate there will be more specific information/intelligence available on Monday from UCAS pre-briefs and we can include placeholders for that as well as flagging that actual figures relating to university places will be provided separately when they're available on Tuesday.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] provided the current college lines that are included in the attachment.

Many thanks,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 05 August 2022 10:45

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Hicks C (Clare)

<Clare.Hicks@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: SQA Priority Appeals & Conditional Offers

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Happy to work with you on this

US have put this out already, which has some reassurance about appeals, I can sound them out on keeping the conditional offer open until the appeal, in most cases they would want to do that I would hope

Is there other info required from us for briefing (Clare had mentioned this to our Director I think)

Roddy

Dr Roddy Macdonald  
Head of Higher Education and Science Division  
Scottish Government Advanced Learning and Science Directorate  
5 Atlantic Quay  
Glasgow G2 8LU

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

PA/Divisonal Admin: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]



**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 04 August 2022 15:29

**To:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Hicks C (Clare) <Clare.Hicks@gov.scot>

**Subject:** SQA Priority Appeals & Conditional Offers

Good Afternoon Roddy & Colleagues,

We have had a meeting today with SQA around issues relating to next week's results. As you'll know, some students will make appeals if their results are lower than teacher estimates. Where the results impact on the student taking up a conditional offer at university these will be dealt with as a priority. SQA have committed to having these appeals concluded by 5<sup>th</sup> September so that students whose grades are adjusted positively can take up their conditional offers.

For this system to work perfectly, this requires the University to keep the conditional offer open until the student has the result of their appeal. We understand from SQA that, in previous years, this has not always been the case and young people have found themselves having the required grades on appeal but no course to go to.

We would be grateful if a letter from Scottish Government could go to Universities Scotland next week to encourage them to keep an offer available for any young person undergoing a priority appeal until the process is complete on the 5<sup>th</sup> September in line with UCAS deadlines. SQA suggested that something similar has been issued in previous years. Is that something you could help with?

Many thanks,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] | Senior Phase Learner Pathways Team Leader | Curriculum & Qualifications Division | Education Reform Directorate | DG Learning and Justice | Scottish Government | Area 2B North | Victoria Quay | Edinburgh | EH6 6QQ

I am currently working mainly from home and can be contacted by email or Teams

***Enclosure 5.1 – Attachment: Word document***

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**Enclosure 6 – Email RE: SQA Priority Appeals & Conditional Offers**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 08 August 2022 10:50  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: SQA Priority Appeals & Conditional Offers

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

If you can start a draft in erdm then [Redacted s38(1)(b)] may be able to help with it, though it doesn't sound like she was involved last year.

At least we now know what did happen last year from [Redacted s38(1)(b)] message.

You may be able to crib lines from the note [Redacted s38(1)(b)] attached?

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 08 August 2022 10:39  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: SQA Priority Appeals & Conditional Offers

Thanks [Redacted s38(1)(b)]. Should I draft the letter to the University Principals for Roddy to send?

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]  
Senior Policy Officer,  
The Scottish Government | Advanced Learning and Science Directorate | HES : University  
Governance and Equalities | 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, 5 Atlantic Quay | 150 Broomielaw | Glasgow G2 8LU

I am currently working from home.



Check out the new Scottish Government resource <https://www.studentinformation.gov.scot/>.  
Everything you need to know about student finance, including help for parents, carers and education professionals.

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 08 August 2022 10:32  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FW: SQA Priority Appeals & Conditional Offers

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

We should hold on to these in case we need them.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 08 August 2022 10:16  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: SQA Priority Appeals & Conditional Offers

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)],

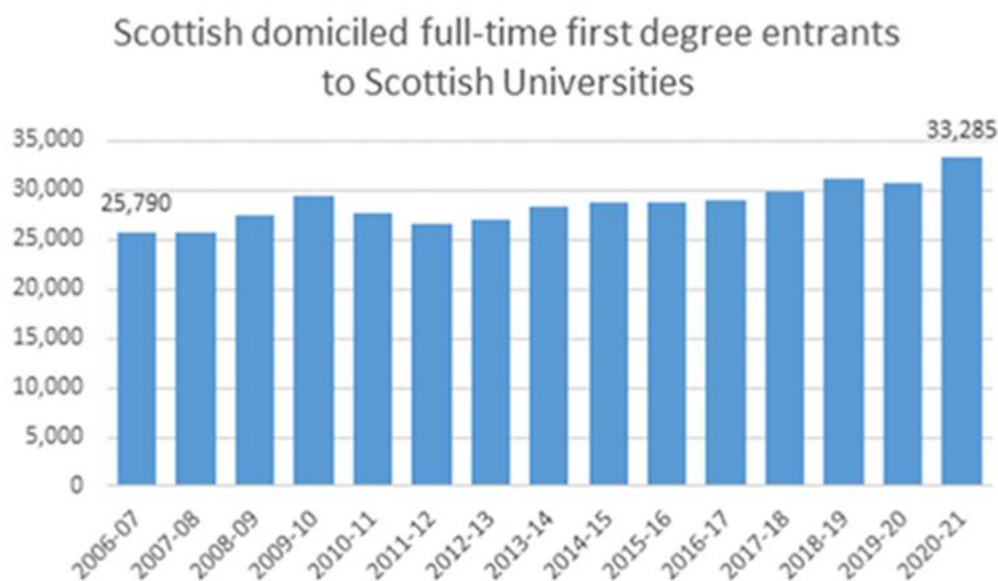
[Redacted – information not in scope]

Not sure if these are still relevant but please see lines below which were tweeted by Mr Hepburn in regards to University places:

#### **TWEET 1**

*With university fees back in the news, @ScotGov remains committed to free tuition - and that investment is paying off.*

*There were 33,285 Scottish domiciled full-time first degree entrants to Scottish providers in 2020-21 – a RECORD and an increase of 29.1% since 2006-07.*



#### **TWEET 2**

*Latest OECD stats show the percentage of 25-64 year olds in Scotland with tertiary education is 55.7% - the highest in the UK.*

*The latest data shows that Scottish students leave university with the lowest debt in the UK.*

Thanks,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**Student Financial Support Team Leader** | Higher Education & Science Division | Directorate for Advanced Learning & Science | The Scottish Government - 5 Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw, Glasgow G2 8LU

Check out the new Scottish Government resource <https://www.studentinformation.gov.scot/>. Everything you need to know about student finance, including help for parents, carers and education professionals.

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 05 August 2022 13:12

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: SQA Priority Appeals & Conditional Offers

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Please find attached revised lines which should help.

I've highlighted the additions made.

Roddy is also talking to the SFC about this, and will share anything that they provide that may be useful later.

I hope this helps.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**Remainder of Enclosure removed as duplicate of email chain at Enclosure 5**



**Enclosure 7 – Email RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE - Exam Results Day Briefing. Restricted statistics until 9:30am Tuesday 9 August**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 08 August 2022 19:25

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>

**Cc:** DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform

<DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>;

Lively D (David) <David.Lively@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Bray O (Ollie) <Ollie.Bray@educationscotland.gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Bradley J (Jennifer) <Jennifer.Bradley@gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; First Minister

<firstminister@gov.scot>; Lloyd E (Elizabeth) <Elizabeth.Lloyd@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and

Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery <DFMCSR@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary

<PermanentSecretary@gov.scot> [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;

Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@educationscotland.gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Minister for HE, FE, Youth

Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Pooley L (Linda) Dr <Linda.Pooley@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; Minister for Children &

Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; Taylor A (Alison) <Alison.Taylor@gov.scot>; Murdoch L

(Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Lively D (David) <David.Lively@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE - Exam Results Day Briefing. Restricted statistics until 9:30am

Tuesday 9 August

Ps/Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

cc. as above

Please find attached an updated briefing pack relating to the SQA Results 2022.

Main changes are to update the attainment gap lines, defensive lines, education recovery Annex updated, Subject Specific Annexes updated along with a new Annex with a summary of notable subject specific results. A tracked version change is included for ease of reference if needed.

Kind regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

✉ email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot ✉ mobile: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ✉ url: [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.



[Redacted – information not in scope]

### Help and advice

- **Learners will have free, direct access to appeals for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher where their awarded grade is less than their teacher submitted estimate – a key element of the modified process to support learners this year.**
- **As learners consider their next steps, there is help available, whether it is practical information and careers advice or support for wellbeing, including the Careers Helpline hosted by Skills Development Scotland and through the Young Person's Guarantee.**

[Redacted – information not in scope]

### Appeals

#### **How many learners are eligible to appeal?**

- The SQA appeals process is a key element of the modified process to support learners this year - it is free of charge and open now.
- [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

[Redacted – information not in scope]

- **Annex C – Appeals**

#### **2022 Appeals service**

- Unlike the rest of the UK, all learners have free, direct access to the appeals service where their final grade is lower than the estimate submitted by the relevant centre.
- A priority service is available for learners where they have a conditional offer of a place in university, college, training or employment that depends on their grade.
- This year's appeals service will involve SQA appointees – experienced course teachers and lecturers – reviewing alternative assessment evidence completed by learners through the year (and supplied by the relevant centre to SQA).
- If, following this review of evidence, SQA assesses that a higher grade has been achieved, then this will be awarded.
- If the review of evidence results in a lower grade than that achieved in the exam, then the exam grade will stand.
- The appeals service opens at 9am on 9 August. Priority appeals must be submitted by 19 August and results will be issued on 5 September – priority appeals must be validated by a learner's school, college or training provider.
- Non-priority appeals must be submitted by 2 September with the intention being to issue results by the end October.
- If a school, college or training provider has submitted an Examination Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (EECCS) request that has been accepted and

reviewed, and an award has been made, learners are not eligible to use the appeals service. This is because the EECCS already includes a review of alternative evidence. A separate appeals process will apply for the EECCS.

### **Symmetry Approach to Appeals/No Detriment**

- In most cases grades will go up or stay the same, however, there is a very small chance that a grade could also go down. This would only be in the event of a clerical check identifying an error that reduces the original certificated grade, and the centre evidence not supporting the original certificated grade.
- The symmetry approach to appeals (the ability for grades to go down as well as up or stay the same) is consistent with SQA's approach in previous years and comparable with other appeals services in the rest of the UK and internationally.
- The National Qualifications Group has been clear that demonstrated attainment is a key principle in ensuring credibility and fairness of the qualifications.
- To move to a position of 'no detriment' would bring a question of fairness if the evidence indicated the candidate's performance did not support the awarded grade but they were not downgraded.
- Conversations between learners and their teacher should make clear where a learner has been assessed within their grade, particularly in borderline decisions, and provide advice on the merits and risks of an appeal.
- In previous years, the number of downgrades has been low (8 out of 13,898 in 2017; 7 out of 13,063 in 2018; 2 out of 11,138 in 2019; 26 out of 664 in 2020 and 13 out of 3,483 in 2021).

[Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

### **SQA Industrial Action**

Key Lines:

- Aware that the Unite ballot for industrial action closes on 22<sup>nd</sup> August but do not anticipate this affecting priority appeals.
- Officials are continuing to monitor the potential implications of any strike action by SQA staff in relation to ongoing pay negotiations.
- Staff pay is a matter for SQA as the employer, however very conscious of the wider public sector pay landscape and are working closely with SQA to seek a resolution.

### **Additional Inset-day Request**

EIS issued advice on 8 August for Secondary and FE Members in relation to appeals which referenced their previous request for an additional inset day.

Line to take:

As I made clear in my response to EIS, I take the wellbeing of teachers very seriously, and recognise the increased pressures and challenges that all education staff have faced over the last two years. However it is still too early to know the number of appeals that are going to be made at this early stage. If the numbers are very significant then, as I have made clear previously, I am open to reconsidering the

request for an additional INSET day albeit that request needs to be balanced with the need to ensure that learning is not disrupted further without significant justification.

[Redacted – information not in scope]

### **What to do if you don't get your grades or your first choice place at university**

[Redacted – information not in scope]

- If you don't think your grades reflect your ability, you do have the option of appeal. Appeals are free and your appeal will be treated as a priority if your grades are required for immediate entry to university. They will be processed and the result shared with UCAS by 6 September. If you intend to appeal, you should contact your first choice institution to let them know. You can find further information on the appeals service and all deadlines for priority appeals from the SQA with their Appeals 2022: What you need to know.

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**Enclosure 8 - Email RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE - Exam Results Day Briefing. Restricted statistics until 9:30am Tuesday 9 August**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 09 August 2022 17:11

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>

**Cc:** DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform

<DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>;

Lively D (David) <David.Lively@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Bray O (Ollie) <Ollie.Bray@educationscotland.gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Bradley J (Jennifer) <Jennifer.Bradley@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; First Minister

<firstminister@gov.scot>; Lloyd E (Elizabeth) <Elizabeth.Lloyd@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and

Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery <DFMCSR@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary

<PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science

<DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @educationscotland.gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

<MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>;

Pooley L (Linda) Dr <Linda.Pooley@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>;

Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; Minister for Children & Young People

<MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; Taylor A (Alison) <Alison.Taylor@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ)

<Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Lively D (David) <David.Lively@gov.scot>; McLean L (Liza)

<Liza.McLean@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE - Exam Results Day Briefing. Restricted statistics until 9:30am

Tuesday 9 August

PS/Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

cc. as above

In advance of any media interviews this evening on the SQA Attainment Results, please find attached a summary of media and stakeholder reaction from today with updated lines to take on any points not already covered in the core briefing.

Kind regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate,  
Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

✉ email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] 📱 mobile: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] 🌐 url: www.gov.scot

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday

**Remainder of enclosure removed as duplicate of email chain at Enclosure 7**

## **SQA Attainment Results 2022 - Summary of Media and Stakeholder Reaction**

[Redacted – information not in scope]

[Redacted – information not in scope]

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**The decision to proceed with exams this year was taken to return to as close to the pre-Covid position as possible in delivering qualifications, while recognising the ongoing impact of disruption.**

- It was based on the latest public health position at the time, while building in contingencies for further disruption and learning lessons from 2020 and 2021.
- Partners on the National Qualifications 2021 Group, including the EIS, were clear that the 2021 Alternative Certification Model was not a sustainable approach in terms of additional workload for teachers,
- The approach taken offered a stable, coherent position for teachers and learners, prioritising a return to more familiar teaching, learning and assessment approaches, with flexibility to respond to any changing situation.
- Proceeding with exams provided certainty and ensures greater fairness and consistency, to support the credibility of qualifications.
- While there was a return to exams this year, it was not a return to normal. The approach taken to the qualifications this year reflected the significant disruption that our young people have experienced - with modifications to courses and assessments, revision support, boosted funding for Easter study support, an exam exceptional circumstances consideration service, a generous grading approach, and a modified appeals service.
- Despite another challenging year, learners have achieved a strong set of results that are consistent, credible, and fairly reflect learners' knowledge, understanding and skills.

[Redacted – information not in scope]



**Enclosure 9 – Email RE: Letter for Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to send to all University Principals encouraging them to hold conditional places for students appealing results - Priority: High**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**Sent:** 11 August 2022 14:21

**To:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Letter for Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to send to all University Principals encouraging them to hold conditional places for students appealing results - Priority: High

Hi all

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] and I had a call earlier on the NQ priority appeals and HE entry concerns raised by SQA, and a summary of the discussion and the latest position is outlined below.

- The letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to University Principals asking for assistance in holding places for students who are appealing their exam results was issued on 9 August.
- There has been one formal response from Prof Dame Sally Mapstone on behalf of St Andrews to state that they can hold places to 31 August but not beyond that time. Please note that Prof Mapstone is also the convenor for Universities Scotland.
- We are aware from SQA reports that Glasgow and Edinburgh universities are taking a similar approach.

Conversations with SQA have confirmed that:

- Their priority appeals deadlines are 16 August and 19 August for individual students and learning centres respectively. This means that their timeframe is very tight already in terms of making decisions.
- Their deadline for providing priority appeals outcomes to centres by 5 September was arrived at in line with the UCAS clearing deadlines.
- They are receiving communications from students raising concerns around universities setting an earlier deadline of 31 August for confirming offers.

Next steps:

- Number of priority appeals is not yet known, and unclear whether SQA will have information on which universities learners are applying to – NQ policy officials to investigate what information will be available and when.
- HE policy officials to consider whether the university funding model would allow for flex in their number of acceptances to allow students who successfully appeal to start their studies this year.
- HE policy officials to consider whether individual contact with institutions would be helpful.

Possible lines for students:



- Any concerns regarding entry to your university course should be discussed with your preferred institution or UCAS.
- If your appeal is successful, but your preferred institution has an earlier closing date, then you may have other options such as a deferred placement for study of the subject you have chosen at your preferred institution next year.
- UCAS can assist if you wish to explore your options, including whether to study for a different subject, for a different qualification or at a different institution.

Best regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

✉ email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot ✉ mobile: 07[Redacted s38(1)(b)] ✉ url: www.gov.scot

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

**From:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 11 August 2022 10:58

**To:** Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Letter for Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to send to all University Principals encouraging them to hold conditional places for students appealing results - Priority: High

Clare that is what St Andrews for one are suggesting, which is what has happened to some applicants in previous years

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

– do you want to get a half hour this afternoon so we can review where things are?

Roddy

**From:** Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 11 August 2022 10:54

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Cc:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Letter for Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to send to all University Principals encouraging them to hold conditional places for students appealing results - Priority: High

Can they offer deferred places if appeals come after 31 Aug?

Clare

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

>

**Sent:** 11 August 2022 10:43

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; >; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Letter for Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to send to all University Principals encouraging them to hold conditional places for students appealing results - Priority: High

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

,

Yes the letter was issued on Tuesday. So far we've had one response from SAU I'll forward a copy of the response on to you. It is the same as Glasgow and Edinburgh they are also saying they can't hold places beyond 31<sup>st</sup> Aug.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

I am currently working from home, so please contact my mobile if you need to speak to me

Check out the new Scottish Government resource <https://www.studentinformation.gov.scot/>.

Everything you need to know about student finance, including help for parents, carers and education professionals.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

| Senior Policy Officer | Equalities and Student Wellbeing | Higher Education and Science Division

| t: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

| e [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

:

Advanced Learning and Science Directorate, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, 5 Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw, Glasgow G2 8LU

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

>

**Sent:** 11 August 2022 09:44

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform  
<DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ)  
<Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science  
<DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Letter for Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to send to all University Principals encouraging them to hold conditional places for students appealing results - Priority: High

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Are you aware whether the letter to universities from the Cabinet Secretary has issued? SQA flagged this morning that they are getting calls from young people with priority appeals who are being told by Glasgow and Edinburgh universities that they cannot hold their places beyond 31 August.

Best regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate,  
Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ  
✉ email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot ✉ mobile: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ✉ url: www.gov.scot

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

>

**Sent:** 09 August 2022 11:01

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform

<DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ)

<Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>

**Subject:** Letter for Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to send to all University Principals encouraging them to hold conditional places for students appealing results – Priority: High

PS,

**Priority: high. It would be useful if the letter could be sent out today given that SQA exam results have been issued today.**

Please find attached a draft letter for Ms Somerville to send to all University Principals and Universities Scotland encouraging them to keep an offer available for any young person undergoing a priority appeal until the process is complete on the 5<sup>th</sup> September in line with UCAS deadlines.

The letter has been drafted following a meeting with SQA around issues relating to today's results. Some students will make appeals if their results are lower than teacher estimates. Where the results impact on the student taking up a conditional offer at university these will be dealt with as a priority. SQA have committed to having these appeals concluded by 5<sup>th</sup> September so that students whose grades are adjusted positively can take up their conditional offers.

For this system to work perfectly, this requires the University to keep the conditional offer open until the student has the result of their appeal. We understand from SQA that, in previous years, this has not always been the case and young people have found themselves having the required grades on appeal but no course to go to.

SQA asked if a letter from Scottish Government could go to Universities Scotland to encourage universities to keep an offer available for any young person undergoing a priority appeal until the process is complete on the 5<sup>th</sup> September in line with UCAS deadlines.

Please let me know if you require any further assistance or email addresses for all University Principals.

Kind regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

I am currently working from home, so please contact my mobile if you need to speak to me

Check out the new Scottish Government resource <https://www.studentinformation.gov.scot/>.

Everything you need to know about student finance, including help for parents, carers and education professionals.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**| Senior Policy Officer | Equalities and Student Wellbeing | Higher Education and Science Division**

**| t: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]**

**| e: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]**

Advanced Learning and Science Directorate, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, 5 Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw, Glasgow G2 8LU

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**Enclosure 10 – Email RE: Letter for Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to send to all University Principals encouraging them to hold conditional places for students appealing results – Priority: High**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**Sent:** 12 August 2022 13:22

**To:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Letter for Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to send to all University Principals encouraging them to hold conditional places for students appealing results – Priority: High

Hi Roddy/Claire

To confirm that I have spoken with Jean Blair in SQA this morning. She indicated that she has raised with Fiona Robertson [Redacted s30(b)(ii)].

I confirmed that a letter had been issued on Tuesday, and that we'd had one reply setting out the 31 August rationale. I advised that we were in discussion, and were exploring whether we could approach the relevant institutions informally to discuss the position.

Key points from SQA perspective:

- [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]
- [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]
- [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]
- [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

A couple of queries were raised during the call:

- [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]
- [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

We agreed to keep in touch on the matter and I suggested that, in the meantime, SQA advise any learners that approach them that the position is being explored but that they should discuss their options with the relevant university and/or UCAS.

Best regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] , Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

✉ email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]\_@gov.scot ✉ mobile: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ✉ url: www.gov.scot

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

**Remainder of enclosure removed as duplicate of email chain at Enclosure 9**

**Enclosure 11 – Email RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals**

**From:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 15 August 2022 17:28  
**To:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] >  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Thanks Roddy – useful update. As you say, small numbers and universities looking to accommodate where they can

SQA has confirmed:

- This year, like any other year, they process priority appeals based on UCAS clearing deadlines
- The deadline for appeals is the same across the rest of the UK this year and SQA managed to negotiate an extra day with UCAS, the only means by which they share results with institutions.
- SQA is dependent on centres to advise on conditional offers when it comes to priority appeals. SQA does not have sight of these ahead of the requests which centres have to validate at the same time as they submit their learners' evidence digitally.
- They are unable to identify and process any 'urgent' appeals earlier than the agreed date (5 September).

So universities being accommodating where they can be, is indeed the only way forward.

{Redacted s30(b)(ii)}

Laura

**From:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 15 August 2022 16:58  
**To:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Laura

From SFC, seems small numbers and the universities seem to be accommodating where they can, have SQA said how many people have actually contacted them with this concern, it may be enough for us to stress to US and universities the contents of Cab Secs letter, ie please be as flexible as you can over 5 Sept recognising not always possible

Roddy

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>University of St Andrews</b> | <p>Although St Andrews are keen to work with their admissions cut-off date (31 Aug) they have made decisions which minimise rejections and which provide options for as many conditional offer holders not achieving results as possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 near misses for Medicine are still in consideration (which will happen in conjunction with A Level results being released)</li> <li>• 3 conditional offer holders rejected on SQA results and could appeal (at least one unlikely to be successful)</li> </ul> <p>In addition, 12 conditional offer holders who didn't achieve the grades have been offered the St Andrews Gateway programme to enable them to take up their place</p> <p>Based on this, the working estimate from St Andrews for <b>potential appeals is 15 maximum</b></p>  |
| <b>University of Edinburgh</b>  | <p>Edinburgh will be as flexible as possible to accommodate anyone whose grades are subsequently revised upwards on appeal and are <b>committed to accepting applicants who successfully appeal their SQA grades by 6th September</b>, with very limited exceptions. Unfortunately, given capacity constraints Edinburgh are unable to consider appealed grades from applicants to Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Law after 31 August for direct entry. In the case of Medicine this is a controlled subject. Any such applicants will be offered deferred entry.</p> <p>The University has a process in place for offer holders to let them know if they are appealing a grade required to secure their place, so it they can take this into account. <b>So far, 26 offer holders with SQA qualifications have done so.</b></p> <p>Based on previous years' experience, setting aside exceptional 2020 and 2021 Covid-related situations, Edinburgh reports very small numbers of SQA appeals having resulted in applicants meeting their conditions.</p> |
| <b>University of Glasgow</b>    | <p>Conditional offers will remain in place until the SQA appeals process closes on 5 Sept. Any applicant that meets conditions of offer following an SQA appeal adjustment on or before 5 Sept, will be given a place on their programme.</p> <p>In the rare circumstances where a programme cannot accommodate this this year, applicants will be offered a deferred place for 2023.</p> <p>Glasgow has 282 Scot Dom remaining as Conditional Firm - 96 for controlled subjects and 186 for non-controlled.</p> <p>This includes A Level results not yet released. It also includes other qualification that the University do not automatically receive – where the University is dependent on offer holders sending results directly (certification of Nat 5s, HNs, Access routes not tied to SQA results day). In some of these cases a deadline of 31 July was set. If the University did not</p>  |



|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | receive the required by this date, they will withdraw the offer. For anyone not set this deadline, their conditional offer will remain until the SQA appeals process closes on 5 September. |
|--|---|

Dr Roddy Macdonald  
Head of Higher Education and Science Division  
Scottish Government Advanced Learning and Science Directorate  
5 Atlantic Quay  
Glasgow G2 8LU

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

PA/Divisonal Admin: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]



**From:** Macdonald R (Roddy)  
**Sent:** 15 August 2022 16:32  
**To:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Laura not yet, US seemed surprised we were asking as they did not expect appeals to be huge issue this year (as expected to be much lower numbers), we have asked them to get back with their views and what they are hearing from sector

Roddy

Dr Roddy Macdonald  
Head of Higher Education and Science Division  
Scottish Government Advanced Learning and Science Directorate  
5 Atlantic Quay  
Glasgow G2 8LU

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

PA/Divisonal Admin: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]



**From:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 15 August 2022 16:23  
**To:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FW: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

To be aware. Will let you know what I get back. Any update from your side?

Laura

**From:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ)  
**Sent:** 15 August 2022 15:56  
**To:** 'Jean Blair' <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Hi Jean

Following your conversation with [Redacted s38(1)(b)] on Friday morning, is there any update on whether or not it would be operationally feasible for SQA to process and release the outcome of priority appeals relevant to conditional offers associated with St Andrew's, Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities earlier than others (i.e. by 31 August rather than 5 September)? Is there a way of SQA even identifying learners whose priority appeals relate to conditional offers at these universities?

ALS colleagues are in contact with Universities Scotland, the Scottish Funding Council and the individual institutions to try and ascertain the rationale behind the 31 August cut off. Ministers have been made aware of the issue.

Many thanks

Laura

**Enclosure 12 – Email RE: FW: Statement of reassurance to candidates**

**From:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 16 August 2022 08:51

**To:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

>

**Subject:** FW: Statement of reassurance to candidates

Laura helpful background from US Roddy

As I understand it:

- 31 Aug was the normal cut-off date for appeals until an exception was made for the years in which SQA were using Centre-Assessed Grades, which were expected to lead to an increased volume of appeals.
- When SQA said to US in May that they were intending this year to deal with priority appeals by a date in early September, US said that that could mean that some universities couldn't guarantee to hold places open for applicants who were appealing their SQA grades, given the early start of term for some subjects/ institutions (e.g. 5 September for pre-sessional orientation activities at St Andrews). SQA however explained that time already was already quite tight and processing, receiving and marking alternative evidence meant an earlier deadline wouldn't be possible.

As you'll have seen from the partial information that [Redacted s38(1)(b)] has already shared with you, institutions are doing their best to be accommodating but there are circumstances that impose some constraints on their flexibility e.g. with regard to courses that start particularly early and where there is professionally-accredited content that can't be missed. Ms Somerville's letter of 9 August to Principals recognised that there may be such circumstances.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted: Information not in scope]

**Enclosure 13 – Email RE: FW: CORRESPONDENCE FROM SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE, CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS**

**From:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 16 August 2022 09:39  
**To:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: CORRESPONDENCE FROM SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE, CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

It is a similar situation to the years before teacher assessment, in those years some additional flexibility was given and there were more appeals.

Our contact with Universities Scotland, SFC and institutions suggests that universities are being as accommodating as they can in line with Ms Somerville's letter but we continue to monitor the situation. Some universities start pre-sessional activities around 5 September hence the challenging timescales.

Students being successful at appeal and having to take a deferred place in the following academic year is not a new situation especially in high demand courses like medicine, although this will be low numbers.

Our intelligence suggests low numbers generally affected by the 31 August cut off being applied to some courses (against the 5 September SQA appeal deadline which SQA have confirmed they cant alter for individuals)

We will provide further updates.

Roddy

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training  
**Sent:** 15 August 2022 14:45  
**To:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: CORRESPONDENCE FROM SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE, CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS

Hi Roddy

Mr Hepburn has asked when this first emerged as an issue and if this timing is out of synch with previous years, and if so, why

It would be helpful to have a response, if possible, ahead of Cabinet tomorrow morning.

Thanks.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills

T: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] | M: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] | E: cabsecES@gov.scot

The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

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**From:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 12 August 2022 15:59

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>

**Subject:** FW: CORRESPONDENCE FROM SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE, CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Could you give the Cab Sec and Mr Hepburn this brief update and we will provide more information next week.

The Cab Sec wrote to University Principals on 9 August to ask them to keep conditional places open, where possible, until the SQA priority appeals process completed by 5 September. St Andrews said they could only keep places open to 31 August due to the logistics of getting places sorted for next session. We have picked up, including via student phone calls to SQA, that some other institutions are adopting a similar approach, with those getting successful appeal results later than 31 August being deferred to the following years intake.

In terms of actions to investigate this and determine if there are mitigations we can put in place we are doing the following

- SQA's standard approach is to release all the priority appeal outcomes to centres at the same time (on 5 September) [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]
- [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]
- SFC have been in contact with the institutions (St Andrews, Glasgow, Edinburgh) to get further information on what they are doing and we will have further contact direct with the institutions next week.

We will update next week when we have undertaken these actions.

Roddy

Dr Roddy Macdonald  
 Head of Higher Education and Science Division  
 Scottish Government Advanced Learning and Science Directorate  
 5 Atlantic Quay  
 Glasgow G2 8LU

PA/Divisonal Admin:



**Enclosure 14 – Email RE: FW: CORRESPONDENCE FROM SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE, CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills  
**Sent:** 16 August 2022 19:51  
**To:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: CORRESPONDENCE FROM SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE, CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS

Hi Roddy

Many thanks, Ms Somerville has noted.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]  
Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills  
T: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] | M: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] | E: cabsecES@gov.scot  
The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

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**Remainder of enclosure removed as duplicate of email at Enclosure 13.**

**Enclosure 15 – Email RE: FW: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 25 August 2022 12:43  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Cc:** F [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FW: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Can I leave this with you in [Redacted s38(1)(b)] and I's absence tomorrow please.

Once Clare's team advise us of the particular institutions, can you contact [Redacted s38(1)(b)] in SFC ( [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @sfc.ac.uk) (who Roddy has been engaging with on this matter) for contact details of who she spoke to in those institutions.

I will flag to Roddy Monday morning so he can prioritise contacting them on his return.

Thanks

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]  
**Sent:** 25 August 2022 12:36  
**To:** Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Thanks Clare

If you let us know what institutions, we'll take it from there.

Roddy is back on Monday.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 25 August 2022 12:15  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Thanks [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

I think we need senior colleagues who regularly interact with these institutions to follow up and again restate the request. We can confirm tomorrow which institutions in particular are causing concern.



Clare

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Sent:** 25 August 2022 12:12

**To:** Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Cc:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>

**Subject:** FW: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Hi Clare

Picking up in Roddy's absence.

Once we became aware of this issue, the Cab Sec wrote to all HEI University Principals on 9 August asking them to keep conditional places open, where possible, until SQA priority appeals process completed by 5 Sept.

We have also engaged closely with SFC and Universities Scotland.

Some institutions, such as Queen Margaret University flagged a difficulty as their term starts on 5 September. St Andrews also said they could only hold until 31 August due to term start date.

While each institution runs their admission process autonomously, they have advised they will be as flexible as possible, holding places until 31 August, and beyond, where possible. Where this isn't possible, and an applicant successfully appeals, they will be offered deferred entry

We also unpicked the reason behind the apparent disconnect between 31st August cut off dates set by institutions and SQA appeals results date of 5 September.

31st August was the normal cut-off date for appeals until an exception was made for the years in which SQA used Centre-Assessed Grades, which were expected to lead to an increased volume of appeals.

In previous exchanges between US and SQA in May this year, US flagged some universities wouldn't be able to hold places for appeal applicants, given the early start of term for some subjects/institutions.

SQA advised, given timing was already tight, that an earlier deadline wouldn't be possible.

Not sure what more we can do to assist in the matter at this time - happy to assist if you think there is? Have copied in [Redacted s38(1)(b)] in my team who leads on this matter for us.

Regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Director of Advanced Learning and Science  
**Sent:** 25 August 2022 10:43  
**To:** Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Hi Clare,

Copying in [Redacted s38(1)(b)] who should be able to discuss.

Thanks

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]  
Directorate of Advanced Learning and Science  
The Scottish Government, 5 Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw, Glasgow, G2 8LU  
Email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot



Check out the new Scottish Government resource <https://www.studentinformation.gov.scot/>.  
Everything you need to know about student finance, including help for parents, carers and education professionals.

**From:** Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 25 August 2022 10:27  
**To:** Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FW: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Stephen

[redacted s.30(b)(ii)]

Clare

**From:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 25 August 2022 10:13  
**To:** Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FW: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Clare

I can pick up later this afternoon with Roddy, but to be aware and in case you want to/have the opportunity to give Stephen a call on this.

Cheers

Laura

**From:** Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>

**Sent:** 25 August 2022 10:01

**To:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @sqa.org.uk>

**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Hi Laura,

Hope this email finds you well.

{Redacted s30(b)(ii)}

Your help with this would be much appreciated.

Jean

**Jean Blair**

Director of Operations

**t:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] | **e:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @sqa.org.uk | **w:** <http://www.sqa.org.uk>

Scottish Qualifications Authority

24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

**From:** Jean Blair

**Sent:** 23 August 2022 20:53

**To:** 'Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot' <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Hi Laura,

Thanks for your email.

There's some release required for the priority for those limited number of subjects which require face to face to look at physical evidence, such as Art & Design. [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

[Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

[Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

Regards

Jean

**Jean Blair**

Director of Operations

**t:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] | **e:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @sqa.org.uk | **w:** <http://www.sqa.org.uk>

Scottish Qualifications Authority  
24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

**From:** Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 23 August 2022 17:14  
**To:** Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Hi Jean,

Thanks for the update – as you say, significantly higher numbers than the planning assumption. Are there particular challenges you can foresee where we (SG) might be able to help? We are keen to do so if we can. For example, if there are any issues in getting sufficient appointees released within the necessary timescales etc

Happy to have a quick chat if helpful.

Cheers

Laura

**From:** Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>  
**Sent:** 23 August 2022 16:41  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@sqa.org.uk>; Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)],

The planned number was 600 and we would normally be sitting around 400. So yes, the number is more than we planned for, but we have been working carefully through the numbers and on paper, have sufficient experienced appointees to turnaround these appeals to meet the UCAS deadline.

However, it probably goes without saying that it will remain challenging.

Regards

Jean

**Jean Blair**  
Director of Operations

**t:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] | **e:** jean.blair@sqa.org.uk | **w:** <http://www.sqa.org.uk>  
Scottish Qualifications Authority  
24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 23 August 2022 16:16  
**To:** Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @sqa.org.uk>; Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Hi Jean

Thanks for confirming the numbers. I note that, understandably given the approach this year, they are substantially higher than in 'normal' exam years. Is this within the planned for numbers this year or do they cause any concern in terms of capacity to deliver within the current deadlines?

Best regards  
[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>  
**Sent:** 22 August 2022 16:49  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @sqa.org.uk>; Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Good afternoon [Redacted s38(1)(b)],

Apologies for the delay getting back to you today. I've been chairing meetings for most of the day.

1374 priority appeals were validated by centres by the deadline. 73 were still to progress and we have been chasing these today and I know making progress.

Please see below the contacts that have been made in relation to centres asking for early release of Priority Results before 5<sup>th</sup> Sept (6<sup>th</sup> sept via UCAS)

7 in total

| Date of release requested | Requests                   |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 31 <sup>st</sup> August   | 5 ( [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ) |
| 18 <sup>TH</sup> August   | 1 ( [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ) |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> September | 1 ( [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ) |

Kind regards

Jean

**Jean Blair**  
Director of Operations

**t:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] | **e:** jean.blair@sqa.org.uk | **w:** <http://www.sqa.org.uk>

Scottish Qualifications Authority  
24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 22 August 2022 12:05  
**To:** Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @sqa.org.uk>; Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Hi Jean

Further to our recent discussions, and now that the deadline for submitting priority appeals has passed, are you able to confirm what the final priority appeals numbers are, and whether you have managed to capture any intelligence on numbers of learners and their institutions where the timescales for issuing the outcomes may be an issue?

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Best regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

**From:** Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>  
**Sent:** 16 August 2022 10:22  
**To:** Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @sqa.org.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

That's correct, Fiona.

All awarding bodies negotiated an extra day with UCAS – it's a UCAS deadline.

Regards

Jean

**Jean Blair**  
Director of Operations

**t:** 0345 213 6799 [Redacted s38(1)(b)] | **e:** jean.blair@sqa.org.uk | **w:** <http://www.sqa.org.uk>

Scottish Qualifications Authority  
24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

**From:** Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>  
**Sent:** 16 August 2022 09:57  
**To:** Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot; Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @sqa.org.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Thanks for this Laura

This is set in the context of an SQA timeline when in fact it's the UCAS deadline that we are all working to. Jean or I would be happy to discuss further with you and ALS colleagues if helpful.

Fiona

Fiona Robertson  
Chief Executive  
Scottish Qualifications Authority

**w:** <http://www.sqa.org.uk>  
The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, GLASGOW G2 8DQ | 24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

**From:** Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 16 August 2022 09:19  
**To:** Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @sqa.org.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Morning Both,

Thanks for outlining the position. The letter that Cab Sec sent to Scottish universities last Tuesday is attached for info.

Best wishes

Laura

**From:** Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>  
**Sent:** 16 August 2022 08:56  
**To:** Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @sqa.org.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Laura

I agree with Jean. [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

Happy to be involved in any further conversations, if helpful.

In the meantime, could we see a copy of the letter that the Cab Sec sent on this issue (last week)? Would be helpful to see.

Many thanks.

Fiona

Fiona Robertson  
Chief Executive  
Scottish Qualifications Authority

w: <http://www.sqa.org.uk>  
The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, GLASGOW G2 8DQ | 24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden,  
Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

**Remainder of enclosure removed as duplicated in email chain at Enclosure 11.**



**Enclosure 16 – Email RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals**

**From:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 25 August 2022 17:32  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform  
<DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science  
<DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

To confirm, SQA has advised the Scottish HEIs asking them to turnaround some specific priority appeals ahead of the UCAS deadline are:

- Edinburgh University
- Edinburgh Napier University
- Queen Margaret University

I'd be very grateful if you could confirm when the calls have been made, and advise of any feedback/response.

Best wishes

Laura

**Remainder of enclosure removed as duplicated in email chain in Enclosure 15.**

**Enclosure 17 – Email RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals**

**From:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 30 August 2022 17:31  
**To:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]  
<[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] <[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform  
<DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Thanks for the update Roddy – much appreciated. A ‘wash up’ with key actors sounds like a very sensible idea. Given the deadline SQA is working to for priority appeals is a UK-wide UCAS one, rather than one SQA set, I would personally be interested in better understanding why these issues have arisen (albeit on a small scale).

Best wishes

Laura

**From:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 30 August 2022 17:24  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] <[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] <[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]  
/Laura

Have spoken to Universities Scotland, QMU and Edinburgh University today to reinforce Cab Sec letter and get updates

General message is universities are working hard to be as flexible as can on priority appeals. Applicants should be keeping in touch with admissions offices.

QMU term starts next week but they should be able to squeeze in any last people with appeal successes, they noted some of their popular health related/nursing courses are actually in clearing this year which is unusual following real high demand on such courses in previous years.

Edinburgh have said they can wait until after priority appeals decided in the case of most courses

The problem areas in Edinburgh are medicine, law and vet which may need a deferral place into next year as very high demand

Both these institutions said only small numbers relative to the overall number of applicants had contacted them to say they had appeal in with SQA (35 in Edinburgh's case)

Napier to call me back, will feed in any more if relevant from them.

Partners in the sector are doing what they can to manage this situation but we need to have a round-table with key actors (SQA, US, institutions) in the coming weeks to ascertain how this mismatch in dates can be avoided next year if at all possible.

Roddy

Dr Roddy Macdonald  
Head of Higher Education and Science Division  
Scottish Government Advanced Learning and Science Directorate  
5 Atlantic Quay  
Glasgow G2 8LU

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

PA/Divisonal Admin: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]



**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 29 August 2022 11:13  
**To:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Morning Laura

Roddy (copied) will be making the calls today and will be able to revert with an update later today.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 29 August 2022 09:29  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Morning [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

I was just wondering if there was any update re: the email below?

Thanks

Laura

**From:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ)

**Sent:** 25 August 2022 17:32

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform

<DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Advanced Learning and Science

<DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Cc:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: FOR RESPONSE: conditional places for students and priority appeals

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

To confirm, SQA has advised the Scottish HEIs asking them to turnaround some specific priority appeals ahead of the UCAS deadline are:

- Edinburgh University
- Edinburgh Napier University
- Queen Margaret University

I'd be very grateful if you could confirm when the calls have been made, and advise of any feedback/response.

Best wishes

Laura

**Remainder of enclosure removed as duplicate of email chain at Enclosure 15.**

**Enclosure 18 – Email RE: FW: SWA priority appeals 5 September**

**From:** Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 31 August 2022 09:15

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>;  
[Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Subject:** FW: SQA priority appeals 5 September

Seems OK at Napier   Roddy

[Redacted: Information out of scope]

**Enclosure 19 – Email RE: Cabinet Secretary Meeting with Fiona Robertson - 5 Sep 2022 - draft**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Sent:** 01 September 2022 20:32

**To:** Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Subject:** Cabinet Secretary Meeting with Fiona Robertson - 5 Sep 2022 - draft

Clare/Laura

Please find attached a draft briefing note for the meeting between Cabinet Secretary and Fiona Robertson on Monday.

[Redacted – information not in scope]

Kind regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] , Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

✉ email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot ✉ mobile: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ✉ url: www.gov.scot

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS  
MEETING WITH FIONA ROBERTSON, CEO, SQA

[Redacted – information not in scope]

2022 Appeals Update

- The SQA appeals process is currently underway for learners whose final grades were lower than their teacher estimates. Priority is given to those who appeals relate to a place at university or college, a training placement or employment. The closing date for priority appeals was 19 August.
- The review of priority appeals is underway and results are due to be reported to higher education institutions via UCAS on 6 September in line with all other UK awarding bodies.
- As of 26 August, following the deadline, SQA had received 1,412 priority appeals across a broad range of subjects. This is a significant increase in the number they have handled in previous years under the post-results service.

| Year                       | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Number of Priority Appeals | 341  | 571  | 595  | 550  | 421  | 348  |

- Officials are continuing to engage with SQA and HE on the issue of priority appeals for institutions where earlier deadlines for conditional offers have been set.
- Time critical appeals for entry to college, university or employment this year will have been completed by the date of any potential industrial action by SQA on 8, 15 and 16 September.
- The deadline for learners to submit a standard appeal was 30 August, or they can be submitted through the school up until 2 September.
- The outcomes of the standard appeals are expected to be made known to centres in October/November, with the outcomes published publicly in December. However, these timescales may be impacted by the volume of appeals and/or any strike action by SQA staff or by teachers.

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**Enclosure 20 – Emails RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE: 080922 - Concurrent Risk Ministerial Briefing**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** External Government Relations

**Sent:** 08 September 2022 16:01

**To:** [Redacted – information not in scope] Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <CabSecCEAC@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>; [Redacted – information not in scope] DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; [Redacted – information not in scope] Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; [Redacted – information not in scope]

**Subject:** OFFICIAL SENSITIVE: 080922 - Concurrent Risk Ministerial Briefing

PS/FM

PS/DFM

PS/Cab Secs

PS/DGs

Please find attached the Concurrent Risk Ministerial Briefing by Performance, Delivery and Resilience.

[Redacted – information not in scope]

Thanks,

[Redacted – information not in scope]



[Redacted – information not in scope]

## **24.1 1.1 SQA Industrial Action**

[Redacted – information not in scope]

### Key Considerations, Mitigating Actions Considered or Taken

- While time-critical appeals for entry to college, university or employment this year have already been finalised, a significantly higher number of appeals compared to previous years are likely to be affected by the action as well as other work including preparation for the 2023 exam diet and progressing education reform.

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**Enclosure 21 – Email RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE: 130922 - Concurrent Risk Ministerial Briefing**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** External Government Relations

**Sent:** 13 September 2022 16:00

**To:** [Redacted – information not in scope] Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

<CabSecES@gov.scot>; [Redacted – information not in scope] DG Education & Justice

<dgej@gov.scot>; [Redacted – information not in scope] Minister for Children & Young People

<MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; [Redacted – information not in scope] Minister for HE, FE, Youth

Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; [Redacted – information not in scope]

**Subject:** OFFICIAL SENSITIVE: 130922 - Concurrent Risk Ministerial Briefing

**PS/FM**

**PS/DFM**

**PS/Cab Secs**

**PS/DGs**

[Redacted – information not in scope]

Thanks,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**Enclosure 21.1 – Attachment: Word document**

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**24.2 1.1 SQA Industrial Action**

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**Key Considerations, Mitigating Actions Considered or Taken**

- While time-critical appeals for entry to college, university or employment this year have already been finalised, a significantly higher number of appeals compared to previous years are likely to be affected by the action as well as other work including preparation for the 2023 exam diet and progressing education reform.

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**Enclosure 22 – Email RE: FMQ Briefs- Education - w/c 24th October**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** ET FMQ/PQ Mailbox

**Sent:** 24 October 2022 11:47

**To:** [Redacted – information not in scope]**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

@gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>; Minister for Children

& Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

<MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>

**Subject:** FMQ Briefs- Education - w/c 24th October

Hi All

Please find the briefs returned this week.

|  |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
|  | [Redacted – information not in scope] | [Redacted – information not in scope]        |
|  | [Redacted – information not in scope] | SQA (Exams)<br>Contacts [Redacted s38(1)(b)] |
|  | [Redacted – information not in scope] |  |
|  |                                       | [Redacted – information not in scope]        |
|  |                                       | [Redacted – information not in scope]        |

[Redacted – information not in scope]

## APPEALS

**As part of the package of support, learners in Scotland were also able to access a more generous appeal process this year that was free of charge.**

- Unlike the rest of the UK, learners who received an award that was less than their teacher submitted estimate were given the opportunity to appeal and, where SQA judge that the evidence supports a higher grade, that will be awarded.
- It builds on the approach undertaken historically in Scotland, taking alternative learner evidence into account in the appeals process.
- Learners should have been informed of their estimate, with an opportunity to try to resolve any disagreements, before it was submitted.
- Priority appeals, on which college or university places or offers of training or employment this year depend, have already been completed by SQA staff.
- SQA is aiming to complete the remaining appeals by the end of October.

**In most cases grades will go up or stay the same as a result of an appeal.**

- A downgrade would only be in the event of a clerical check of the exam script identifying an error that reduced the original certificated grade, and the centre evidence not supporting the original certificated grade.
- The symmetry approach to appeals (the ability for grades to go down as well as up or stay the same) is consistent with SQA's approach in previous years and comparable with other appeals services in the rest of the UK & internationally.
- To move to a position of 'no detriment' would bring a question of fairness, if the evidence indicated the candidate's performance did not support the awarded grade, yet they were not downgraded.

[Redacted – information not in scope]

## Scottish Youth Parliament

*Cameron Garrett, Twitter (16 Jun): "Great to see that free and direct appeals look like they're here to stay. However, it's shame that @sqanews still hasn't adopted a policy of no detriment. Learners should be treated fairly and in a way that respects their rights and have this policy incorporated."*

**Enclosure 23 – Email RE: Cab Sec Meeting with SQA Briefing 27 October 2022**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 25 October 2022 18:40

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>

**Cc:** DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform

<DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; Bird

L (Lisa) <Lisa.Bird@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>

**Subject:** Cab Sec Meeting with SQA Briefing 27 October 2022

PS/Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

cc.as above

**CABINET SECRETARY MEETING WITH FIONA ROBERTSON – 27 OCTOBER 2022**

Please find attached a briefing note for the above meeting.

Best regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] , Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate,  
Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

✉ email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot ✉ mobile: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ✉ url: www.gov.scot

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

### **Enclosure 23.1 – Attachment: Word document**

#### **OFFICIAL SENSITIVE - CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS MEETING WITH FIONA ROBERTSON CEO, SQA**

**[REDACTED – INFORMATION NOT IN SCOPE]**

##### **KEY MESSAGES**

- THE EXAM DIET WENT WELL WITH APPEALS DUE TO BE CONCLUDED ON SCHEDULE AT THE END OF OCTOBER/EARLY NOVEMBER AND SQA HAS PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN MAKING THAT HAPPEN.

- **[REDACTED – INFORMATION NOT IN SCOPE]**

- **[REDACTED – INFORMATION NOT IN SCOPE]**

**[REDACTED – INFORMATION NOT IN SCOPE]**

##### **AGENDA**

1. **STANDARD APPEALS 2022**

2. **[REDACTED – INFORMATION NOT IN SCOPE]**

3. **[REDACTED – INFORMATION NOT IN SCOPE]**

4. **[REDACTED – INFORMATION NOT IN SCOPE]**

**[REDACTED – INFORMATION NOT IN SCOPE]**

##### **ITEM 1 Standard Appeals 2022**

###### **Appeals:**

- Since 2014, in a normal exam year, a post-results service operated – with centres able to request a clerical check or marking review.

- Alternative appeals approaches have operated in each of 2020, 2021 and 2022.

- While returning to exams last year, the 2022 appeals approach went further than in recent pre-pandemic years. Where a learner received a lower grade than the estimate submitted by their school, they could request an appeal.

- SQA provided centres with guidance for determining estimates for 2022. SQA also published roles and responsibilities for Appeals 2022 on their website. These documents outlined the evidence gathering approach with regards to estimates as well as what was expected of SQA, centres and learners during the Appeals 2022 process.

- A priority service operated for learners where the outcome of the was needed for progression on to further education, employment or training this year.

- Various correspondence has been received from individuals who were unhappy with their outcome from the priority appeals – either not eligible as award more than estimate, or unsuccessful and looking to understand why.

- Outcomes for non-priority appeals due to issue to centres/ learners on 31 October. SQA delivered some outcomes earlier for learners who required them for the UCAS early applicant process for 2023. (As at 20 Oct, appeals were 99.5% complete)

- Appeals outcome report will issue in December.

- [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

- [Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] Head of National Qualifications Team

[Redacted – information not in scope]



**Enclosure 24: Email RE: Cab Sec Meeting with SQA Briefing 27 October 2022**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Sent:** 26 October 2022 17:39

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>

**Cc:** DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; Bird L (Lisa) <Lisa.Bird@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Cab Sec Meeting with SQA Briefing 27 October 2022

Further to the briefing below, please find attached a copy of the draft note of the last meeting between the Cabinet Secretary and Fiona Robertson that took place on 5 September. Please note that, whilst this has been shared with Fiona, she has not yet had a chance to comment so there may be some amendments needed on points of accuracy before it is finalised.

Kind regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**Remainder of enclosure removed as duplicate of email at Enclosure 23.**

**NOTE OF MEETING BETWEEN THE CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS AND FIONA ROBERTSON CEO, SQA ON 5 SEPTEMBER 2022**

In attendance: Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Fiona Robertson (SQA), Clare Hicks (SG), [Redacted s38(1)(b)] (SG), [Redacted s38(1)(b)] (SG).

**1. [Redacted – information not in scope]**

Appeals

It was noted that, in introducing the 2022 appeals process, SQA had been clear that it was in place for that year only. The positive feedback it had received was recognised, as well as the similarities to the pre-2014 process, and the fact that it was more generous than any in place in the rest of the UK. Therefore, it was agreed that any change for the 2023 would require careful consideration.

However, it was highlighted that the decision to move away from the pre-2014 appeals process had been based on evidence of fairness of the process to all learners. Furthermore, it was noted that the 2022 appeals process resulted in an increased workload for both SQA and centres. In making any decision for the 2023 process, it would be important to consider the evidence of how the appeals process in 2022 performed.

Given that the 2022 appeals process is ongoing, it was indicated that it was too early to make a decision on the 2023 appeals process. {Redacted s30(b)(ii)}

[Redacted – information not in scope]

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**2. Industrial Action**

The Cabinet Secretary noted the strike action due to start. It was confirmed that priority appeal outcomes had been communicated to centres and learners where outcomes were needed for progression to further education, employment or training. {Redacted s30(b)(ii)}

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**Enclosure 25 – Email RE: : SQA Appeals**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 28 October 2022 10:47  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** SQA Appeals

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Not sure if you have been made aware by SQA directly, but just to flag that they are currently looking at bringing forward publication of the aggregate appeals outcomes to next week. I'm not currently clear if this is the full report that would usually issue in December or just elements of it. This is being looked at given likely interest following release of individual appeal outcomes to centres which will take place on Monday (31 Oct).

[Redacted – information not in scope]

Both of these will issue are currently expected to be published later next week but we're waiting on confirmation.

Best regards  
[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ  
✉ email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ✉ mobile: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ✉ url: [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

**Enclosure 25.1 – Attachment: Email**

*[Redacted – information not in scope]*

**Enclosure 26 - Email RE: 2022 National Qualifications: Estimates and Appeals**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 28 October 2022 16:32

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; DG

Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform

<DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>;

Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>;

Gorman G (Gayle) <Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Bird L (Lisa) <Lisa.Bird@gov.scot>;

Pooley L (Linda) Dr <Linda.Pooley@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ)

<Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Bray O (Ollie) <Ollie.Bray@educationscotland.gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@educationscotland.gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Livey D

(David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>; Communications Education & Skills

<CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** 2022 National Qualifications: [Redacted – information not in scope] Appeals

PS/Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

cc. as above

**2022 National Qualifications: [Redacted – information not in scope] Appeals**

For the Cabinet Secretary's awareness, and further to her meeting with Fiona Robertson yesterday (Thursday 27 October), SQA have indicated that they plan to issue the following reports next week (w/c 31 October):

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**2) 2022 Appeals Outcomes Report**

Outcomes for the priority appeals (where the outcomes were needed for progression to further education, employment or training this year) were issued to centres and learners on 5 September. Outcomes from the remaining 2022 Appeals process will be released to centres and learners on Monday 31 October – from 1pm (with some having been expedited to 15 October for those learners who were accessing the UCAS early applicant process for 2023 e.g. for medicine dentistry etc).

Various correspondence has been received from individuals who were unhappy with their outcome from the priority appeals – either not eligible as award more than estimate, or unsuccessful and looking to understand why. Given the relative proportions of priority and standard appeals, it is likely that we and SQA may receive sizable numbers of correspondence from unsuccessful applicants

once outcomes are shared. To try and mitigate this, SQA have developed an information sheet for learners and parents that is being shared with centres. A copy of the information sheet and the covering note for centres is attached for reference.

A key theme arising from correspondence was a request for individual feedback from SQA as to why appeals had been unsuccessful. SQA have advised that they cannot provide individual feedback on appeals due to the significant amount of work required to do so. Instead they plan to focus on providing information on best practice for determining estimates, applying the national standard, to support the validity and reliability of assessment evidence for the year ahead.

Usually, the national appeal outcomes report (SQA national statistics) is not published until December. However, as suggested by Fiona yesterday, SQA are looking to bring this forward to next week. Officials and analysts will engage with SQA to understand timescales, key themes and agree any necessary lines with communications colleagues.

Below is an overview of the planned SQA communications in relation to the appeals.

**Thursday 27 October**

- Appeals 2022 information sheet emailed to centres to share with learners / parents / carers with covering note

**Monday 31 October**

- Standard appeals outcomes shared with Centres
- Centres to share outcomes with learners from this date onwards
- SQA Parent/Carer blog to go live
- Social media posts to support learners' understanding of appeals outcomes ~~From~~

**4 November**

- Thank you message to all appointees

**Date TBC – expected to be later in week commencing 31 Oct but awaiting confirmation**

- NQ22 official statistics release: appeals outcomes, supported by centre comms, media briefing and social media

Best regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[redacted s.38(1)(b)], Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

✉ email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot ✉ mobile: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ✉ url: [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

**Enclosure 26.1 – Attachment: PDF**

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**Enclosure 26.2 – Attachment: PDF**

[Redacted s.25(1)] : [Appeals 2022 information for learners \(sqa.org.uk\)](https://www.sqa.org.uk/appeals)



**Appeals 2022 – Update October 2022**

**Issue: 27 October 2022**

**Schools, colleges, training providers, cc LA contacts**

**Subject: Appeals 2022 update**

Dear SQA Co-ordinator

Following publication of priority appeals outcomes in September, the remaining appeals outcomes will be issued to centres on **Monday 31 October** via SQA Connect.

We are aware that some learners may have questions about Appeals 2022, and we have created an information sheet to support your discussions with learners, parents and carers.

**[LEARNER INFORMATION SHEET]**

This covers key topics including how learners were assessed this year and how appeals outcomes were determined. While the publication of appeals outcomes will bring welcome news for some learners, we know others may be disappointed that their appeal has not been upheld, and they may have questions around why this is the case.

The information sheet highlights that the alternative assessment evidence provided by the learner's school, college or training provider has been reviewed against the national standard by a fully trained and experienced teacher or lecturer – appointed by us as a marker or assessor who is confident in applying the national standard to ensure consistent and fair outcomes. The review of assessment evidence has been done without sight of the learner's estimate and certificated grade.

Please remind your learners that:

- because this is a robust process that included an evaluation of their evidence, the outcome is final and there is no further means to appeal
- in line with the marking process for August results, SQA cannot provide individual feedback on appeals outcomes.

**Support for centres: applying the national standard**

In response to requests from schools and colleges, we will again be providing information on best practice for determining estimates, applying the national standard, and ensuring the validity and reliability of assessment evidence for the year ahead.

Our Understanding Standards programme offers subject-specific materials and events for teachers and lecturers to help strengthen understanding of applying the national standard.

We will write to you again in the coming weeks to signpost information based on some of the common themes that emerged through this year's appeals service.

**[UNDERSTANDING STANDARDS MATERIALS]**

**Upcoming Evaluation**

The Appeals 2022 service was introduced this year as one of a number of contingency measures to support learners. It provided eligible learners with the opportunity to appeal if they achieved a course result lower than their centre estimate. As the service comes to an end, it will be evaluated along with all other 2022 arrangements.

The outcome of the evaluation will play an important part in informing discussions with the National Qualifications group around what type of service we will take forward for 2023. We would therefore be grateful if you and your colleagues are able to take part.

Thank you for supporting Scotland's learners as they receive the outcome of their appeals.

**Enclosure 27 – Email RE: FW: Appeals Correspondence**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 01 November 2022 14:56  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; SGLD School Education <SGLDSE@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]>  
**Subject:** FW: Appeals Correspondence

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s36(1)]

Many thanks,  
[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]  
**Sent:** 01 November 2022 14:50  
**To:** 'Jean Blair' <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@sqa.org.uk>  
**Cc:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> ;  
 [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> ; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> ; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
 ; margaret.farragher@sqa.org.uk; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@sqa.org.uk>  
**Subject:** Appeals Correspondence

Hi Jean [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

We had previously responded to the parent on their general concerns and I attach a copy of this response for your reference.

Happy to set up a call to discuss if that would be helpful.

Kind regards  
[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ  
 ☎ email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot ☎ mobile: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ☎ url: www.gov.scot

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

**Enclosure 27.1 – Attachment: PDF**

[Redacted s25] – released under FOI 202200328835 at Enclosure 12.1

[FOI+202200328835+-+Information+Released+-+Annex.pdf \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

**Enclosure 27.2 – Attachment: PDF**

[Redacted s25] – released under FOI 202200328835 at Enclosure 12.2

[FOI+202200328835+-+Information+Released+-+Annex.pdf \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

**Enclosure 28 – Email RE: Appeals Correspondence**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 01 November 2022 17:21  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> ; SGLD School Education <SGLDSE@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: Appeals Correspondence

Thanks [Redacted s38(1)(b)].

[Redacted s36(1)]

Thanks [Redacted s38(1)(b)].

Best regards  
[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 01 November 2022 16:46  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; SGLD School Education <SGLDSE@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: Appeals Correspondence

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s36(1)]

Best,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] Solicitor | Branch Head | School Education Branch  
Children, Education, Rights Incorporation & Disclosure (CERID) Division | Scottish Government Legal Directorate

@gov.scot [Redacted s38(1)(b)] / SGLDSE@gov.scot | Tel: (0131) [Redacted s38(1)(b)] / 0  
[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Area 1-H (North) | Victoria Quay | Edinburgh | EH6 6QQ



**This correspondence is from the Scottish Government Legal Directorate. To the extent that it may contain legal advice, it is legally privileged and therefore may be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 or the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 01 November 2022 14:56  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; SGLD School Education <SGLDSE@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Subject:** FW: Appeals Correspondence

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s36(1)]

Many thanks,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**Remainder of enclosure removed as duplicate of email chain at Enclosure 27**

**Enclosure 28.1 – Attachment: Email**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 27 September 2022 16:30  
**To:** Public Engagement Unit <CorrespondenceUnit@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FW: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] - Unsuccessful appeal to SQA which sought to increase Grade Awarded in [Redacted s38(1)(b)] from a 'B' to an 'A' (Case Ref: SS6921)

please upload to MiCase as MR

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] Assistant Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills  
T: 0131 244 [Redacted s38(1)(b)] | E: [cabsecES@gov.scot](mailto:cabsecES@gov.scot)  
The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

**From:** Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP <shirley-anne.somerville.msp@parliament.scot>  
**Sent:** 23 September 2022 16:04  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FW: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] - Unsuccessful appeal to SQA which sought to increase Grade Awarded in [Redacted s38(1)(b)] from a 'B' to an 'A' (Case Ref: SS6921)

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)],

We have received the enquiry below in the constituency office which would be better looked at a ministerial level. Can you arrange for this to be looked at and responded to.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]  
**Caseworker**  
**On behalf of Shirley-Anne Somerville**  
**MSP for Dunfermline**

---

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]  
**Sent:** 22 September 2022 20:52  
**To:** Somerville S (Shirley-Anne), MSP <Shirley-Anne.Somerville.msp@parliament.scot>  
**Subject:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] - Unsuccessful appeal to SQA which sought to increase Grade Awarded in [Redacted s38(1)(b)] from a 'B' to an 'A'

**Importance:** High

Dear Shirley-Anne,

Please find attached for your attention copies of e-mail correspondence with [Redacted s38(1)(b)] (Deputy Rector in [Redacted s38(1)(b)]) in connection with our daughter's unsuccessful appeal to the

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) against the 'B' Grade awarded to her in [Redacted s38(1)(b)] in the 2022 SQA examinations.

It is our understanding from [Redacted s38(1)(b)] that the school had forwarded evidence in support of the appeal to the SQA which comprised [Redacted s38(1)(b)] Preliminary (FAB) Assessments in which she had obtained 89% in one paper and 91% in the second paper resulting in an average of 90%. In the actual exam, which [Redacted s38(1)(b)] sat on the 06<sup>th</sup> May 2022 she was awarded a 'B' grade falling 2% below the boundary for a Grade 'A.' The school, [Redacted s38(1)(b)] and I had all assumed, given the situation outlined, that the appeal would have been successful, and we are all greatly surprised that the anticipated situation has not materialised. As alluded to in the attached e-mail correspondence with [Redacted s38(1)(b)], the school have been in contact with the SQA to establish the reasons for the unsuccessful appeal, given the extenuating circumstances in this particular instance, but have been advised that *'there is no feedback able to be given regarding individual appeal cases, as per the centre guidance.'*

I am firmly and unequivocally of the view that the situation described is not only of specific interest and relevance to our daughter's circumstances but of strategic significance and importance to both [Redacted s38(1)(b)] School and possibly others in [Redacted s38(1)(b)]. As the SQA are refusing to issue reasons for any decisions made, neither the school nor the pupil concerned can establish where either or both parties have fallen short, and if need be to learn from their mistakes. [Redacted s38(1)(b)] is adamant that the school had followed the clear and detailed guidance given by the SQA in the evidence it submitted in support of all appeals. Whilst that might well be the case, the SQA may be of a different view. That scenario has very significant implications for many pupils and their futures, including those sitting exams next year where an appeals process will still, insofar as I am aware, be in existence.

Whilst I accept, as stated in [Redacted s38(1)(b)] email exchanges with me that there are no further steps available to the school itself to challenge the SQA's position on this matter, it must surely be incumbent upon the Council to investigate the possibility of pursuing this matter legally rather than me pursuing it, at great cost, as a private individual. As far as I am concerned my daughter has suffered greatly in the situation described through no fault of her own and may be one of many. These are not the experiences our young people should be having at this stage of their lives.

As our local MSP and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills I would appreciate it if you could investigate this matter on my behalf and look forward to hearing from you in response.

Kind Regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

\*\*\*\*\*

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**Enclosure 28.1.1 – Email attachment to Enclosure 29.1**

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**Enclosure 28.1.2 – Email attachment to Enclosure 29.1**

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**Enclosure 28.1.3 – Email attachment to Enclosure 29.1**

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**Enclosure 29 – Email RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE: Embargoed until 1pm Thursday 3 November - SQA appeals report**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 02 November 2022 09:57

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]>

**Subject:** OFFICIAL SENSITIVE: Embargoed until 1pm Thursday 3 November - SQA appeals report

Hi,

Please find attached the SQA appeals summary that is to be published tomorrow. Embargoed until 1pm although I've been told I can share as needed.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Statistician | Performance and Attainment Statistics Team  
Education Analysis | Scottish Government

e-mail: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**Enclosure 29.1 – Attachment: Word document**

*[redacted s.25(1)]*: [appeals-high-level-summary-2022.pdf \(sqa.org.uk\)](#)

**Enclosure 30 – Email RE: 2022 National Qualifications: Estimates and Appeals**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 02 November 2022 14:31

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]; Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>; DG

Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Director for Education Reform

<DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>;

Director of Advanced Learning and Science <DirectorofAdvancedLearningandScience@gov.scot>;

Gorman G (Gayle) <Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Bird L (Lisa) <Lisa.Bird@gov.scot>;

Pooley L (Linda) Dr <Linda.Pooley@gov.scot>; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ)

<Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; Bray O (Ollie) <Ollie.Bray@educationscotland.gov.scot>; Creamer A

(Andrew) >; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] >; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Macdonald R (Roddy)

<Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] >; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Livey D

(David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>; Communications Education & Skills

<CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted

s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: 2022 National Qualifications: Estimates and Appeals

PS/Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

Further to [Redacted s38(1)(b)] email below, SQA have confirmed that they will be publishing National Qualifications [Redacted – information not in scope] and appeals statistics at 1pm tomorrow (Thursday 3 November). Attached is the report on appeal statistics which is embargoed until 1pm tomorrow.

In summary:

- For National 5, 7,545 (27.5%) of the 27,385 appeal requests resulted in an upgrade, 0 (0.0%) resulted in a downgrade and 19,840 (72.5%) resulted in no change.
- For Higher, 8,680 (33.1%) of the 26,260 appeal requests resulted in an upgrade, fewer than five (less than 0.05%) resulted in a downgrade and 17,580 (66.9%) resulted in no change.
- For Advanced Higher, 1,075 (24.5%) of the 4,395 appeal requests resulted in an upgrade, 0 (0.0%) resulted in a downgrade and 3,315 (75.5%) resulted in no change.

As indicated previously, individual learners were informed of the outcome of the non-priority appeals from Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October onwards.

{Redacted s30(b)(ii)}

{Redacted s30(b)(ii)}

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] | Head of Senior Phase and OECD Curriculum Reform Unit | Curriculum and Qualifications | Education Reform Directorate | Scottish Government |

*Please note: my working hours are Tuesday – Friday. I am currently working from home but am contactable via email or Microsoft Teams.*

**Remainder of enclosure removed as duplicate of email chain at Enclosure 26**

**Enclosure 31 – Attachment: Word document**

[Redacted s.25(1)]: [appeals-high-level-summary-2022.pdf \(sqa.org.uk\)](#)



**Enclosure 32 – Email RE: Readout of SQA Qualifications Committee 2 November 2022**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 02 November 2022 15:05

**To:** Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Director for Education Reform <DirectorforEducationReform@gov.scot>

**Subject:** Readout of SQA Qualifications Committee 2 November 2022

Hi Laura, [Redacted s38(1)(b)] – quick readout from relevant parts of today's SQA Qualifications Committee:

[Redacted – information not in scope]

*Appeals*

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] SQA, provided a summary of the appeals data to be published at 1pm tomorrow but noting the information was embargoed until then. Other interesting information not contained in the report:

{Redacted s30(b)(ii)}

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] | Head of Senior Phase and OECD Curriculum Reform Unit | Curriculum and Qualifications | Education Reform Directorate | Scottish Government |

*Please note: my working hours are Tuesday – Friday. I am currently working from home but am contactable via email or Microsoft Teams.*

**Enclosure 33 – Email RE: news articles**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** LIBRARY

**Sent:** 04 November 2022 10:51

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** news articles

Hello [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Please find your articles attached.

**The articles are subject to Copyright. Please note the Copyright information below.**

Best wishes,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

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If you require any further information or if you would like a Literature Search on your subject area please do get back in touch.

Please take a moment to submit feedback on how we answered your enquiry. Thank you!

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] | Currently working from home | Scottish Government Library & Information Service | Digital Directorate | 1G South | Victoria Quay | Edinburgh | EH6 6QQ | Library | Topic Newsfeeds | Training | Blog

**Enclosure 33.1 – Attachment: PDF**

We do not hold copyright to release this article. - Exam appeal success - Daily Record, The / Sunday Mail (Glasgow, Scotland) - November 4, 2022 - page 6

**Enclosure 33.2 – Attachment: PDF**

**[Redacted s.25(1)]:**

Thirty per cent of Scots exam result appeals in 2022 were upgraded. SQA figures show -  
Daily Record

**Enclosure 34 – Email RE: Meeting with SQA and Universities Scotland about priority appeals and conditional offers**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 04 November 2022 16:16  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@sqa.org.uk; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@sqa.org.uk; Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@universities-scotland.ac.uk; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@universities-scotland.ac.uk; vpspp@st-andrews.ac.uk; Murdoch L (Laura) (Educ) <Laura.Murdoch2@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: Meeting with SQA and Universities Scotland about priority appeals and conditional offers

Dear all

Many thanks for coming along to the discussion yesterday on ensuring the choreography of the appeals process after Results Day works for everyone, particularly the learner, and how we can improve things for next year.

Here are the actions I took from the discussion, please let me know if you disagree with anything:

- [Redacted s38(1)(b)] team to set up a follow-up meeting at the start of December, also involving UCAS;
- [Redacted s38(1)(b)]/SQA to unpack the timing issue of the appeals process as part of their evaluation work with HE over the coming months and feedback at the next meeting;
- **Everyone** should work together to ensure clear and consistent communication to learners about the appeals process and their role in keeping universities up-to-date if they have appealed their results;
- **Everyone** to consider what information can be shared at what points in the appeals process to ensure the process is as streamlined as possible for the learner and to be discussed at the next meeting.

If I have missed anyone off this email who was at the meeting, please do forward on.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] | Head of Senior Phase and OECD Curriculum Reform Unit | Curriculum and Qualifications | Education Reform Directorate | Scottish Government |

*Please note: my working hours are Tuesday – Friday. I am currently working from home but am contactable via email or Microsoft Teams.*

-----Original Appointment-----

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 01 November 2022 15:14  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]; Jean Blair; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@sqa.org.uk; Macdonald R (Roddy); [Redacted s38(1)(b)]; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@universities-scotland.ac.uk; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@universities-scotland.ac.uk; vpspp@st-andrews.ac.uk

**Subject:** Meeting with SQA and Universities Scotland about priority appeals and conditional offers  
**When:** 03 November 2022 15:00-16:00 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.  
**Where:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

Please accept this diary request for an online meeting between Scottish Government officials, SQA and Universities Scotland to discuss timescales around priority appeals for the National Qualifications and HE deadlines for finalising conditional offers.

Outline agenda below and background paper attached.

#### Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Discussion of background (see paper)
3. Identification of potential solutions/mitigations
4. Any Other Business

Kind regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s38(1)(b)], Head of National Qualifications Team, Education Reform Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ

✉ email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot ✉ mobile: [Redacted s38(1)(b)] ✉ url: www.gov.scot

Please note my working pattern is 9.30am to 4.45pm Mon to Thursday and 9.30am to 3.30pm Friday.

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**Enclosure 35 – Email RE: FMQ Briefs – Education – w/c 7<sup>th</sup> November**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** ET FMQ/PQ Mailbox

**Sent:** 07 November 2022 11:53

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot> ; McAllister C (Colin) <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <John.McFarlane@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot> ; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot> ; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot> ; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot> ; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot> ; [Redacted s38(1)(b)] @gov.scot>

**Cc:** ET FMQ/PQ Mailbox <ETFMQPQ@gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>; @gov.scot> [Redacted – information not in scope]; Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>; Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>

**Subject:** FMQ Briefs- Education - w/c 7th November

Hi All

Please find the briefs returned this week.

|  |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
|  | [Redacted – information not in scope] | [Redacted – information not in scope]                |
|  |                                       | <b>SQA (Exams)<br/>Contacts</b> [Redacted s38(1)(b)] |
|  | [Redacted – information not in scope] |  |

[Redacted – information not in scope]

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**3 Nov:** SQA published National Qualification estimates and appeals statistics – 30% of appeals were successful. A change.org petition seeking that students be given their estimated grade appeals attracted 144 responses (at 7 Nov).

**31 Oct:** National qualifications standard appeals outcomes shared with Centres.

**27 Oct:** Appeals 2022 information sheet emailed to centres to share with learners / parents / carers with covering note

**9 Aug:** Results Day & appeals service opened. Media focus on outcomes being lower than 2021 & attainment gap widening. Stakeholder comments in **Annex A**

## **APPEALS**

**As part of the package of support, learners in Scotland were able to access a more generous appeal process this year that was free of charge.**

- Unlike the rest of the UK, learners who received an award that was less than their teacher submitted estimate were given the opportunity to appeal and, where SQA judge that the evidence supports a higher grade, that was awarded.
- It builds on the approach undertaken historically in Scotland, taking alternative learner evidence into account in the appeals process.
- Learners should have been informed of their estimate, with an opportunity to try to resolve any disagreements, before it was submitted.
- Outcomes for the priority appeals (where the outcomes were needed for progression to further education, employment or training this year) were issued to centres and learners on 5 September.
- Outcomes from the remaining 2022 Appeals process were released to centres and learners on Monday 31 October - with some having been expedited to 15 October for those learners who were accessing the UCAS early applicant process for 2023 e.g. for medicine dentistry etc.

**I understand the disappointment that learners face when an appeal is unsuccessful.**

- SQA markers who review appeals – experienced subject-specialist teachers and lecturers – took an expert judgement based on the evidence submitted by the learner's school or college. To ensure fairness, markers did not know the estimate or the certificated grade.
- In line with the results issued in August, SQA cannot provide feedback about individual appeals.
- SQA released a report containing the appeal statistics last week.



**In response to requests from schools and colleges, SQA will again be providing information on best practice for estimating grades, using the national standard, and ensuring the validity and reliability of assessment evidence for the year ahead.**

- Along with all other 2022 arrangements, SQA will carry out an evaluation of how the Appeals 2022 service performed.
- The results of this evaluation will play an important part in informing the decisions around what type of service will be taken forward for 2023.

**17,300 appeal requests (29.8%) resulted in an upgrade and fewer than five (less than 0.05%) resulted in a downgrade. The remainder of requests resulted in no change.**

- A downgrade only occurred in the event of a clerical check of the exam script identifying an error that reduced the original certificated grade, and the centre evidence not supporting the original certificated grade.
- The symmetry approach to appeals (the ability for grades to go down as well as up or stay the same) is consistent with SQA's approach in previous years and comparable with other appeals services in the rest of the UK & internationally.
- To move to a position of 'no detriment' would bring a question of fairness, if the evidence indicated the candidate's performance did not support the awarded grade, yet they were not downgraded.

[Redacted – information not in scope]

**Enclosure 36 – Email RE: Urgent action required regarding SQA applicant exam appeals**

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 06 September 2022 11:45  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: Urgent action required regarding SQA early applicant exam appeals

Many thanks [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

That is really helpful. Much appreciated.

Best regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]  
**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 06 September 2022 11:43  
**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Macdonald R (Roddy) <Roddy.Macdonald@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: Urgent action required regarding SQA early applicant exam appeals

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Response from SFC on this which hopefully assists with your query and provides some reassurance :-

Following your email below we reached out to the relevant institutions asking for clarity regarding their position regarding the timing of appeals. Their responses:

**24.3 University of Edinburgh**

- Edinburgh are flexible about considering applications for Medicine/Vet Medicine where students are waiting for SQA appeal outcomes at the end of October, providing they know that there is a pending appeal.
- They agreed to follow this up with their UG recruitment team to see if they can get a message out to teachers/advisors, and they also agreed to make sure their Enquiry Management colleagues are aware in case they receive any enquiries.
- They will be stressing the need for these applicants – or their referees – to tell the university that an appeal has been submitted.
- They are already aware from some widening participation prospective applicants, who have completed pre-application enquiries, that they are waiting for appeal outcomes.
- Regarding Oxbridge applicants, they will highlight this to UG recruitment teams in all Colleges (as could be to any subject/programme) and to their Enquiry Management team.

**24.4 University of Aberdeen**

- Aberdeen's Medicine and Dentistry Admission teams will be flexible when dealing with queries from early applicants who are appealing their SQA results.
- They have helped a number of applicants with these types of queries in the past.

- Applicants are advised to either email the university directly or get their school/college to email once their application to the SQA has been submitted, tell us what subjects are being appealed and let us know that they are awaiting the outcome of their appeal.

#### 24.5 University of Glasgow

- Schools of Medicine, Dentistry & Nursing and Veterinary Medicine are aware of the issue and have confirmed that they do not foresee any issues which will affect applicants should the SQA not return appealed grades until later in October.
- Late result applicants otherwise eligible for interview can be accommodated.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 01 September 2022 16:25

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Urgent action required regarding SQA early applicant exam appeals

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Thanks for this. Would be helpful to get back to the correspondent reasonably soon but if you think SFC would be able to get some clarity on this fairly quickly I can hold for now. Would early next week be reasonable to you think?

Best regards

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 01 September 2022 16:10

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Urgent action required regarding SQA early applicant exam appeals

Hi [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

[Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

What's your timing on this query? We can raise with SFC and ask them to check with the Scottish institutions what their approach is on this if helpful?

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**From:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 31 August 2022 18:00

**To:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted s38(1)(b)]gov.scot>

**Subject:** FW: Urgent action required regarding SQA early applicant exam appeals

Hi all

Please see below MiCase correspondence that I am currently drafting a response to.

[Redacted s30(b)(ii)]

Do you have any background or can you suggest any lines in relation to the UCAS deadline for early applicants and whether UCAS/universities can offer any flexibility in relation to this deadline if appeals outcomes are not available at that point?

Many thanks

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

----

Dear Mr Johnson, Mr Murray and Ms Somerville,

I am emailing to raise an issue that I am hoping you will deal with as a matter of urgency:

1. As you will be aware, the SQA are planning 3 days of strike action after the priority exam appeals are processed. Priority appeals are **only** for pupils who have **already received conditional offers** from university/college.
2. All other appeals (including those for early applicants) will be processed by "the end of October 2022". This date may be later if there are a large number of appeals and obviously may also be delayed further due to the strike action. This information can be found in the following SQA document: [https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files\\_ccc/SQA-Appeals-2022-guidance-for-learners.pdf](https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/SQA-Appeals-2022-guidance-for-learners.pdf)
3. Unfortunately, the SQA appears to be completely ignoring the fact that the **UCAS deadline for early applicants** (i.e. those applying to study Medicine, Veterinary Science, Dentistry or at Oxbridge) is **October 15th 2022**.
4. There does not appear to be any way for schools to flag early applicant appeals nor does there appear to be any SQA procedure/process for ensuring that early applicant appeals will be processed and updated results recorded **prior to the UCAS deadline of 15/10/22**.

As I am sure you will appreciate, this situation is causing immense stress both for my son but also for a number of my pupils who are intending to study Medicine and are therefore early applicants. It is a situation that due to the apparent lack of SQA procedures for early applicants, is having a hugely detrimental effect on their wellbeing (panic, stress, uncertainty, disbelief that an official body hasn't realised early applicants have a different UCAS submission date etc.).

Hopefully, you will be able to get an assurance from the SQA that all **early applicant appeals** will be processed and recorded **PRIOR to 15/10/22** as well as notification of the correct procedure that should be used for the **early applicants** (NOT priority applicants - as stated, as far as I know, priority applicants will have been processed prior to the strike).

\*\*\*\*\*