

Castlehead High School

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**Renfrewshire
Council**

Children's Services
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S4 February Parent/Carer Update

Dear Parent/Carer

During the next few weeks your child will be completing their SQA assignments which contribute to their final grades and internally assessed aspects of coursework.

The information below outlines key information from the SQA, dates and the supports that will be available for your child in the run up to the final assessments and SQA exam diet.

We want to ensure that your child is fully prepared for and achieves to their full potential in their qualifications, so I would ask that you encourage your child to make full use of the supports available to them.

Supported Study

To support pupils in preparing for their final SQA examinations we are offering a programme of supported study. The S4 supported study timetable can be found [here](#). A further programme of supported study will be offered during the Easter holidays. Further details to follow.

In addition to the supported study on offer in Castlehead, pupils can access a wide range of study supports through the National E- Learning Senior Phase offer. Pupils can use their Glow login details to access these supports, which can be found [here](#).

March Practice Exams

We will be running a further diet of practice exams for some National 5 subjects between the 7th and 24th March. This will provide a further opportunity for your child to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in exam conditions, receive detailed feedback on their performance for their teachers and provide evidence to support estimated grades.

The S4 March practice exam timetable can be found [here](#). Please note the timetable includes dates for final SQA N5 Hospitality practical exam, which falls out with the main exam diet.



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Study Skills

Good study skills and effective use of revision time are vital in ensuring your child is fully prepared for their upcoming assessments and exams. Not only can these help to build your child's confidence but can also help to reduce anxiety about exams.

Your child's teachers will continue to focus on developing effective study skills in classes. We have also produced a new study skills booklet, which can be found [here](#).

In addition, a presentation on effective revision for parents and carers can be found [here](#).

S5 Option Choices

Over the coming weeks your child will meet with their Pupil Support Teacher to discuss their subject choices for S5.

To ensure appropriate progression pathways are available for all pupils, we are introducing a range of new courses into senior phase curriculum for next session. Information regarding the senior options and courses on offer can be found [here](#).

SQA Examinations

It is still the clear intention for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher SQA exams to take place in April to June 2022. The SQA exam timetable can be found [here](#).

SQA Revision Support

Due to disruption to learning and teaching caused by Covid, the SQA have recently announced that they will be providing revision support for learners to help your child prepare and focus their revision, in the run up to the exams. This will be released during week beginning 7th March.

Revision support will be available for all National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses that have an exam. The type of revision support for each course will depend on the modifications to assessment that SQA already made at the start of the session to help reduce the workload of learners and their teachers and lecturers. It will also be tailored to reflect the types of questions that are in the exam and will therefore differ across courses. For some courses, this will include advice and guidance on what topics your child should focus their revision on.

When the study support is released by the SQA your child's teacher will provide full information on the format that this support will take for each of their courses.

A table showing the type of revision support that will be provided for each course is available on the [SQA website](#).

Exam Exceptional Circumstances Service

SQA's exam exceptional circumstances service is in place to support your child in the following scenarios:

- If they are unable to attend an exam due to unforeseen circumstances, such as a medical condition (including Covid-19 related absence) or bereavement. Should your child be unable to attend an exam on these grounds, you will have the opportunity to discuss it with us.
- If there has been disruption at Castlehead on the day of the exam, which means the exam can't take place.

It is normal for learners to feel nervous or anxious before an exam. However, SQA recognises that there has been a significant increase in the number of young people experiencing mental health issues because of the Covid-19 pandemic. If your child is experiencing mental health issues that go beyond pre-exam nerves or stress, and they feel unable to attend the exam, please discuss this with us.

SQA will publish more guidance on this service in the coming weeks, including guidance for schools, colleges and training providers. This guidance will explain, in more detail, how the service will work and who is eligible. Once this guidance is available you will be able to have a conversation with us about the criteria for this service.

Your child's teachers are already gathering examples of the assessments your child has been completing in each course. If your child needs to use the exam exceptional circumstances service, we will send evidence of their assessments to SQA. SQA appointees, who are practising teachers and lecturers, will judge this evidence against the national standard for that course to determine your child's grade.

SQA Appeals Service

This year, SQA is running a free appeals service for learners who want to question their results. This service will be available after results day and your child will be able to inform SQA directly that they want to appeal one or more of their results.

There will also be a priority appeals service for learners waiting on a result for a university or college place or for an employment or training programme.

The 2022 appeals service will involve SQA appointees – practising teachers and lecturers – reviewing evidence of the assessments that your child has completed through the year. They will judge this evidence against the national standard for that course. SQA will also conduct a clerical check on your child's exam script.

Through the appeals process, your child would be awarded the higher grade of the two types of evidence (their exam and/or coursework and the assessment evidence we have submitted in support of the appeal).

Regards,

M. Macdonald

Head Teacher