**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL** **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**EDUCATION SERVICE** **23 AUGUST 2018**

# SQA SCHOOL EXAMINATION RESULTS 2018

## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to elected members on the initial outcome of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) 2018 examination diet.

1.2 Following the release of the initial examination results by SQA examination results for pupils in academic year 2017/18 are updated by the SQA in December 2018 following the submission and consideration of any Clerical Check and Marking Review requests submitted by schools on behalf of individual pupils. As a consequence of the decisions associated with these requests minor changes to the statistical data contained within this report may occur.

1.3 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

I. Notes the outcome of the initial SQA examination results for pupils in academic year 2017/18 and that the performance of Argyll and Bute Schools in 2018 is above the current national performance in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations in all four of the national measures; National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher.

II. Requests the Executive Director to provide further reports to the Community Services Committee to allow the consideration of further statistical school and national information, scheduled for release by Insight (school data analysis tool introduced in 2015) in September 2018 and February 2019.

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# SQA SCHOOL EXAMINATION RESULTS 2018

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Council received SQA examination results for all pupils entered for formal qualifications in session 2017/2018 in August 2018. This provided comprehensive information on the outcome of examination performance and wider achievement courses for all pupils in each of the ten Argyll and Bute secondary schools.

2.2 This paper presents an update to elected members on the initial outcome of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) 2018 examination diet. A range of statistical information is provided illustrating performance of pupils across the range of national measures including:

National 4;
National 5;
Higher, and
Advanced Higher.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

I. Notes the outcome of the initial SQA examination results for pupils in academic year 2017/18 and that the performance of Argyll and Bute Schools in 2018 is above the current national performance in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations in all four of the national measures; National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher.

II. Requests the Executive Director to provide further reports to the Community Services Committee to allow the consideration of further statistical school and national information, scheduled for release by Insight (school date analysis tool introduced in 2015) in September 2018 and February 2019.

## 4.0 DETAIL

4.1 Pupils in each of the ten secondary schools in Argyll and Bute in S4 –S6 were presented for a range of SQA external examination qualifications in May and June of 2018. Following the release of the results Education Services conducted an initial analysis of the results to support the preparation of a summary report for presentation to and consideration by Elected members.

4.2 This paper presents a summary overview of the examination outcomes and draws comparisons of the overall attainment of pupils in Argyll and Bute with pupils nationally.

4.3 The performance of Argyll and Bute schools in 2018 is **above** the current National performance in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations in **all four of the national measures**: National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. Table 1 illustrates the overall authority performance against each of the four measures for the last 3 academic years ie

***Table 1: presents the overall performance of Argyll and Bute across all course levels across the three academic years 2016 - 2018.***

| Course | A and B Average % A-C Awards | National Average % A-C Awards | Difference between A and B/ National Average | A and B Average % A-C Awards | National Average % A-C Awards | Difference between A and B/ National Average | A and B Average % A-C Awards | National Average % A-C Awards | Difference between A and B/ National Average |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Year** | **2015/2016** | | | **2016/2017** | | | **2017/2018** | | |
| **National 4** | **96.17%** | **93.20%** | **+2.97%** | **100%** | **92.80%** | **+7.20%** | **100%** | **100%** | **0.00%** |
| **National 5** | **76.23%** | **79.40%** | **-3.17%** | **81.10%** | **79.50%** | **+1.60%** | **79.86%** | **77.40%** | **+2.46%** |
| **Higher** | **78.29%** | **77.20%** | **+1.09%** | **75.89%** | **77.00%** | **-1.11%** | **78.79%** | **76.80%** | **+1.99%** |
| **Advanced Higher** | **75.60%** | **81.70%** | **-6.10%** | **76.98%** | **80.00%** | **-3.02%** | **81.90%** | **80.50%** | **+1.40%** |

4.4 **Summary:**

I. Overall, the 2018 results for pupils across National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher are higher than the National average, with improvement in Higher and Advanced Higher over the last 2 years.

II. The authority results for pupils across National 5 are slightly lower than 2017 (-1.24%) but are higher than the national average (+2.46%).

4.5 Table 2 illustrates the overall performance of Argyll and Bute Secondary Schools across all course levels against each of the four measures for the last 3 academic years ie

*Table 2: presents the overall performance of Argyll and Bute Secondary Schools across all course levels across the 3 academic years 2016 - 2018.*

| Year | Level | *CGS | *DGS | *HA | *IHS | *LJC | A&B | National |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2016 | NAT 4 | 91.15% | 93.83% | 100% | 100% | 98.82% | 96.17% | 93.20% |
| 2017 | NAT 4 | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 92.80% |
| 2018 | NAT 4 | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 91.10% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 2016 | NAT 5 | 76.23% | 82.85% | 69.65% | 81.86% | 78.43% | 76.23% | 79.40% |
| 2017 | NAT 5 | 81.27% | 83.70% | 86.36% | 82.20% | 83.08% | 81.10% | 79.50% |
| 2018 | NAT 5 | 78.28% | 83.41% | 83.00% | 87.26% | 79.91% | 79.86% | 77.40% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 2016 | Higher | 78.51% | 80.91% | 79.80% | 76.88% | 70.08% | 78.29% | 77.20% |
| 2017 | Higher | 74.10% | 75.00% | 79.50% | 73.55% | 80.00% | 75.89% | 77.00% |
| 2018 | Higher | 74.21% | 80.80% | 82.67% | 75.74% | 72.63% | 78.79% | 76.80% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 2016 | Adv H | 61.90% | 76.19% | 78.63% | 40.00% | 75.47% | 75.22% | 81.70% |
| 2017 | Adv H | 93.75% | 56.67% | 78.63% | 60.00% | 96.30% | 76.98% | 80.00% |
| 2018 | Adv H | 66.67% | 82.14% | 83.44% | 81.82% | 75.56% | 81.90% | 80.50% |

| Year | Level | *OHS | *RJC | *TAR A | *TI HS | *TO HS | A&B | National |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2016 | NAT 4 | 93.03% | 93.01% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 96.17% | 93.20% |
| 2017 | NAT 4 | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 92.80% |
| 2018 | NAT 4 | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 91.10% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 2016 | NAT 5 | 71.75% | 66.36% | 85.71% | 100.00% | 85.92% | 76.23% | 79.40% |
| 2017 | NAT 5 | 68.98% | 72.46% | 89.16% | 91.67% | 91.55% | 81.10% | 79.50% |
| 2018 | NAT 5 | 72.78% | 70.47% | 83.46% | 81.82% | 83.93% | 79.86% | 77.40% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 2016 | Higher | 77.62% | 71.61% | 81.67% | 78.57% | 87.91% | 78.29% | 77.20% |
| 2017 | Higher | 67.70% | 72.52% | 83.10% | 50.00% | 77.68% | 75.89% | 77.00% |
| 2018 | Higher | 75.94% | 69.62% | 80.00% | 83.33% | 83.67% | 78.79% | 76.80% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 2016 | Adv H | 80.77% | 50.00% | 100% | 87.50% | 42.86% | 75.22% | 81.70% |
| 2017 | Adv H | 79.07% | 57.14% | 100% | 100% | 72.73% | 76.98% | 80.00% |
| 2018 | Adv H | 84.85% | 100% | 90.00% | 0 presented | 77.78% | 81.90% | 80.50% |

*Key to School abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| CGS | Campbeltown Grammar School |
| DGS | Dunoon Grammar School |
| HA | Hermitage Academy |
| IHS | Islay High School |
| LJC | Lochgilphead Joint Campus |
| OHS | Oban High School |
| RJC | Rothesay Joint Campus |
| TAR A | Tarbert Academy |
| TI HS | Tiree High School |
| TO HS | Tobermory High School |

4.6 **Summary: In 2018**

I. All 10 secondary schools maintained their 100% pass rate for National 4 outperforming the national average.
II. Eight of our secondary schools were above the national average with 7 outperforming the authority average for National 5.
III. Five of our secondary schools outperformed both the national and authority average for Higher.
IV. Six of our secondary schools were above the national average with 5 outperforming the authority average for Advanced Higher. It should be noted that statistical variance at Advanced Higher level must be carefully interpreted. For example, 100% pass rate can be as a result of one subject presentation resulting in a pass.

4.7 Overall, percentage pass rate data should be interpreted very carefully as schools have presentation policies that are designed to encourage pupils to achieve success at the highest level of qualification that they can: **positive presentation policy**. In some instances, and for some pupils this may mean that they receive a D grade within a qualification level, which is an award. It is also the policy in Argyll and Bute, as with other local authorities, that full discussion and consideration of both pupil and parents views are reflected in the final decision to continue with a course or whether to sit an external exam.

4.8 This policy may result in circumstances where pupils are given the opportunity to attempt a level that they may find challenging to pass as it may be their last opportunity to do so eg in S6. Schools will again offer these pupils the opportunity to sit the exam to improve their positive destination chances. For example, access to Higher or Further Education.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 This report presents a summary of the initial analysis of the 2018 SQA external examination outcomes for Argyll and Bute pupils at authority level and in each of the ten secondary schools.

5.2 In 2018 the performance of Argyll and Bute schools varied across National qualification measures.

5.3 The Education Service are taking forward a programme of support and challenge with schools across the authority involving a range of actions and measures to support schools to secure further improvement in examination outcomes for pupils.

5.4 A further report on Educational Attainment and Wider Achievement will be presented to Community Services Committee in December 2018 following the publication of updated national performance information on Insight released in September of each year.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6.1 | **Policy:** | This report links directly to Outcome 3 in the Argyll and Bute Single Outcome Agreement (Education Skills and Training Maximises Opportunities for All) |
| 6.2 | **Financial:** | None. |
| 6.3 | **Personnel:** | None. |
| 6.4 | **Equal Opportunities:** | None. |
| 6.5 | **Legal:** | None. |
| 6.6 | **Risk:** | The performance of Argyll and Bute schools in national examinations can significantly enhance or detract from the Council's reputation and attractiveness as an area to work and live in. |
| 6.7 | **Customer Services:** | This report provides Elected Members with an overview of Service Performance. |

**Douglas Hendry**
**Executive Director of Customer Services**

**Cllr Yvonne McNeilly,**
**Policy Lead for Education and Lifelong Learning**

**13th August 2018**

For further information contact:

**Louise Connor, Head of Service:  Education (Learning and Teaching)**
Oban Education Office, Oban
Email:  louise.connor@argyll-bute.gov.uk
Telephone:  01631 569192

**Alison MacDonald, Education Manager (Performance and Improvement)**
Oban Education Office, Oban
Email:  alison.macdonald@argyll-bute.gov.uk
Telephone:  01631 569192