

## SQA SCHOOL EXAMINATION RESULTS 2019

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### 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) 2019 examination diet.
- 1.2 Following the release of the initial examination results by SQA examination results for pupils in academic year 2018/19 are updated by the SQA in December 2019 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:
- a) Considers and notes the outcome of the initial SQA examination results for pupils in academic year 2018/19 i.e.
    - i. National 4 results are above the national outcome by 11.50% in 2019.
    - ii. National 5 results are above the national outcome by 1.2% in 2019.
    - iii. Higher results are below the national outcome by -1.6% in 2019. There is a national dip in the 2019 higher results.
    - iv. Advanced Higher results are below the national outcome by -3.7% in 2019.
  - b) Requests the Executive Director to provide a further report to the Community Services Committee in December 2019 to allow the consideration of further statistical school and national information, released by Insight (school data analysis tool) in September 2019.
  - c) Agrees that in session 2019/20 attainment and achievement outcomes will be presented to Community Services Committee only following the release of Insight data which affords full access to statistical school and national information in relation to attainment and achievement outcomes of the young people of Argyll and Bute.

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### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

**2.1** The Council received SQA examination results for all pupils entered for formal qualifications in session 2018/2019 in August 2019. 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) 2019 examination diet (Appendix A). 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:

- a) Considers and notes the outcome of the initial SQA examination results for pupils in academic year 2018/19 as detailed in Appendix A ie
  - i. National 4 results are above the national outcome by 11.50% in 2019.
  - ii. National 5 results are above the national outcome by 1.2% in 2019.
  - iii. Higher results are below the national outcome by -1.6% in 2019. There is a national dip in the 2019 higher results.
  - iv. Advanced Higher results are below the national outcome by -3.7% in 2019.
- b) Requests the Executive Director to provide a further report to the Community Services Committee in December 2019 to allow the consideration of further statistical school and national information, released by Insight (school data analysis tool) in September 2019.
- c) Agrees that in session 2019/20 attanment and achievement outcomes will be presented to Community Services Committee only following the release of Insight data which affords full access to statistical school and national information in relation to attanment and achievement outcomes of the young people of Argyll and Bute.

## 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 2019. 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 2019 is above the current national performance in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations in two of the four national measures; National 4 and National 5. Performance at Higher and Advanced Higher is below the national average.

4.4 Table 1 presents the overall performance of Argyll and Bute for the last three academic years (2017-2019) at National 4 (Pass only), National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher levels (grades A-C).

**Table 1:**

Course	A&B	National Average	A&B Versus National Average	A&B	National Average	A&B Versus National Average	A&B	National Average	A&B Versus National Average
Year	2016/2017			2017/2018			2018/2019		
National 4	100%	92.80%	+7.20%	100%	92.8%	+7.20%	100%	88.50%	+11.5%
National 5	81.10%	79.50%	+1.60%	79.86%	77.40%	+2.46%	79.43%	78.20%	+1.2%
Higher	75.89%	77.00%	-1.11%	78.79%	76.80%	+1.99%	73.19%	74.80%	-1.6%
Advanced Higher	76.98%	80.00%	-3.02%	81.90%	80.50%	+1.40%	75.68%	79.40%	-3.7%

### Summary:

- National 4 results are above the national by 11.50% in 2019.
- National 5 results are above the national by 1.2% in 2019. In comparison with 2018 results have dipped by -0.43%.
- Higher results are below the national by -1.6% in 2019. There is a national dip in the 2019 higher results. In comparison with 2018 results have dipped by -5.60%.
- Advanced Higher results are below the national by -3.7%. In comparison with 2018 results have dipped by -6.22%.

**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:**

Diet Year	Course	CGS	DGS	HA	IHS	LJC	A&B	National
2017	NAT 4	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	92.80%
2018	NAT 4	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	91.10%
2019	NAT 4	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	88.5%
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%
2019	NAT 5	72.58%	83.83%	83.79%	85.45%	79.19%	79.43%	78.2%
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%
2019	Higher	67.36%	75.86%	78.25%	73.33%	70.08%	73.19%	74.8%
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%
2019	Adv H	80.00%	69.57%	79.56%	81.82%	94.44%	75.68%	79.4%

Diet Year	Course	OHS	RA	Tar A	Ti HS	To HS	A&B	National
2017	NAT 4	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	92.80%
2018	NAT 4	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	91.10%
2019	NAT 4	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	88.5%
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%
2019	NAT 5	73.82%	65.69%	88.28%	67.65%	80.58%	79.43%	78.2%
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%
2019	Higher	70.65%	53.91%	66.67%	50.00%	77.42%	73.19%	74.8%
2017	Adv H	79.07%	57.14%	100.00%	100.00%	72.73%	76.98%	80.00%
2018	Adv H	84.85%	100.00%	90.00%	NP*	77.78%	81.90%	80.50%
2019	Adv H	51.72%	76.47%	66.67%	33.33%	76.92%	75.68%	79.4%

\*NP – Nil Presentations

Key to School abbreviations

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

#### 4.6 Summary: In 2019:

- All 10 secondary schools maintained their 100% pass rate for National 4 outperforming the national average.
- Six of our secondary schools were above the national average with 5 outperforming the authority average for National 5.
- Three of our secondary schools outperformed both the national and authority average for Higher.
- Four of our secondary schools were above the national average with 6 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 2019 SQA external examination outcomes for Argyll and Bute pupils at authority level and in each of the ten secondary schools.

5.2 In 2019 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 2019 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).  
OCTF: Key Objective 1  
NIF: Priority 1
- 6.2 Financial: None.
- 6.3 Legal: None.
- 6.4 HR: None.
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: None.
- 6.5.1 Equalities None.
- 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty None.
- 6.5.3 Islands 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.

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**12<sup>th</sup> August 2019**

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