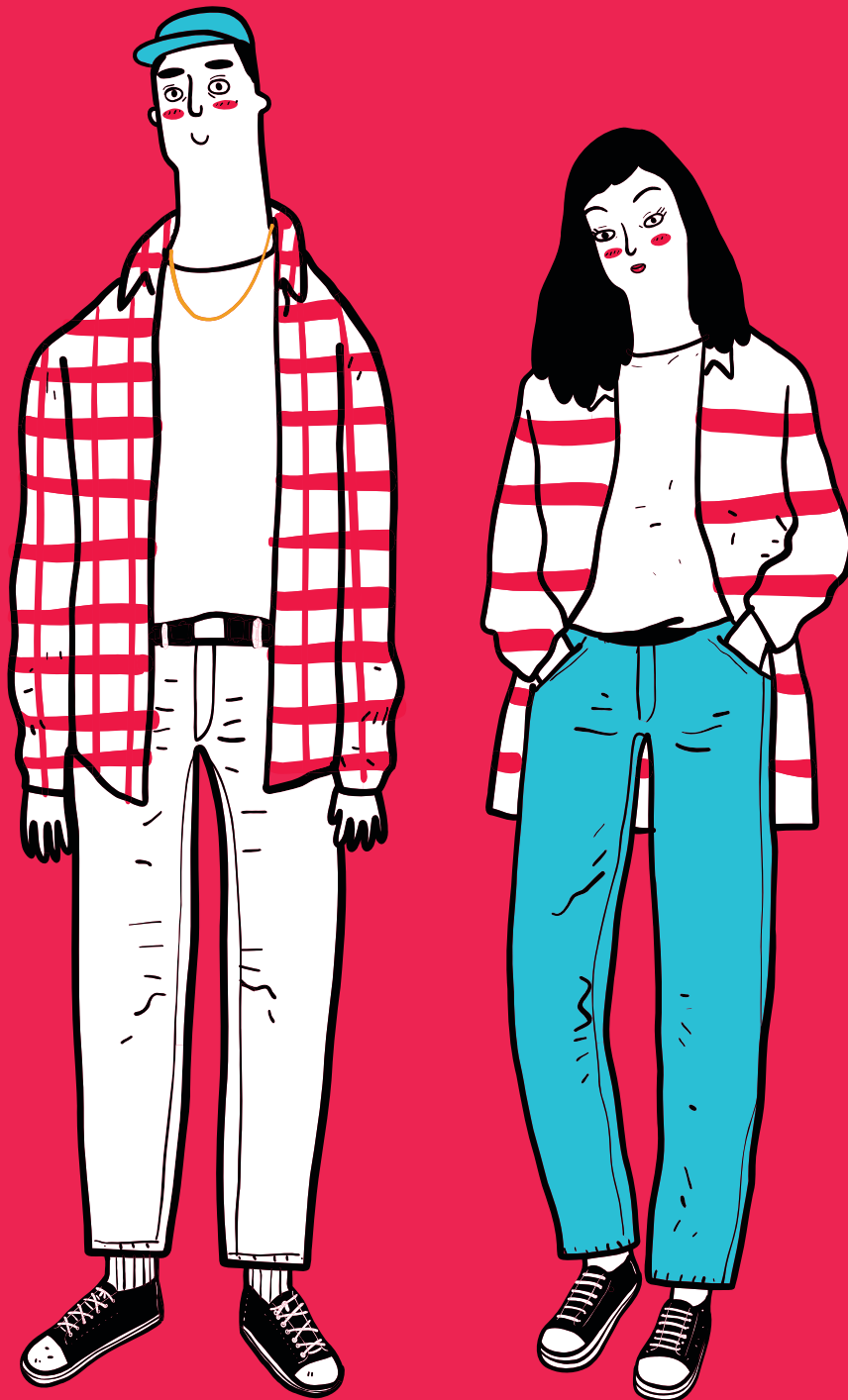


Your Exams 2023

What you need to know about National 5,
Higher and Advanced Higher exams

School edition



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Your Exams

Exams are designed to let you demonstrate what you have learned in your course. We understand that you may be nervous or worried about sitting them later this year.

This booklet tells you what you need to know and gives helpful information and advice so that you can do your very best on the day of exams. It also contains rules, which are there to make sure that exams are fair for everyone. It is important that you read and understand these before your exams start.

If you are not sure about the rules, speak to your teacher. They will be able to help you and also tell you what could happen if you break the rules. You might also find it useful to share and discuss this information with your parent or carer.

Remember to prepare, stay calm and do your best.

You'll find lots more helpful information at www.sqa.org.uk/learners.

What is happening with exams in 2023?

Exams are planned to take place as normal in 2023, as they did in 2022.

Some changes to the way each course is assessed have been put in place for this year because of the ongoing disruption to learning. The exact changes depend on the course and may include reducing parts of an exam or providing more choice or time.

Speak to your teachers for a full explanation of changes for your courses or visit www.sqa.org.uk/nqmodifications.

Important things you need to know about exams in 2023

- Exams will start on Monday 24 April and finish on Thursday 1 June.
- An Examination Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service is available if you cannot attend your exam, or your performance on the day of your exam is disrupted or affected, because of specific circumstances. Please see page 14 for further information.
- Your school will provide an estimated grade for each of your courses before the exams start. You can talk to your teachers about your progress and estimated grades before they send them to us. This will help you understand how your estimated grade relates to your performance in the assessments you have completed this year.
- You will get your results by post on Tuesday 8 August. You can also get your results by text or email if you sign up to MySQA at www.mysqa.org.uk.
- There's a free appeals service. You can appeal your exam results directly or through your school. See page 16 for more information.

Support during exams

If you need additional support while sitting your exams, arrangements can be made to give you an equal chance to show what you know and what you can do. Speak to your school if you have questions about these assessment arrangements – they will make the arrangements for you.

‘Assessment arrangements’ allow learners who are disabled or need additional support to use different ways to complete an exam. Assessment arrangements in exams will usually be similar to the support you receive during normal teaching and assessments in school.

If you would like to know more about these arrangements, speak to your teacher or read our guide for learners at www.sqa.org.uk/aaguide.



Preparing for your exams

Timetable

You can see the current version of the exam timetable at www.sqa.org.uk/timetable. This shows the dates and times of your exams. Please note there is an extra public holiday on Monday 8 May to mark the King's coronation and no exams will take place on this date.

Always double-check the times of your exams with your teachers because schools can change the start times slightly.

Make sure you know what exams you're taking, when they are, and where they are.

Ask your school which teacher will be in charge of SQA exams on the day. You need to know who this is so you can report to them if you arrive late.

SQA apps

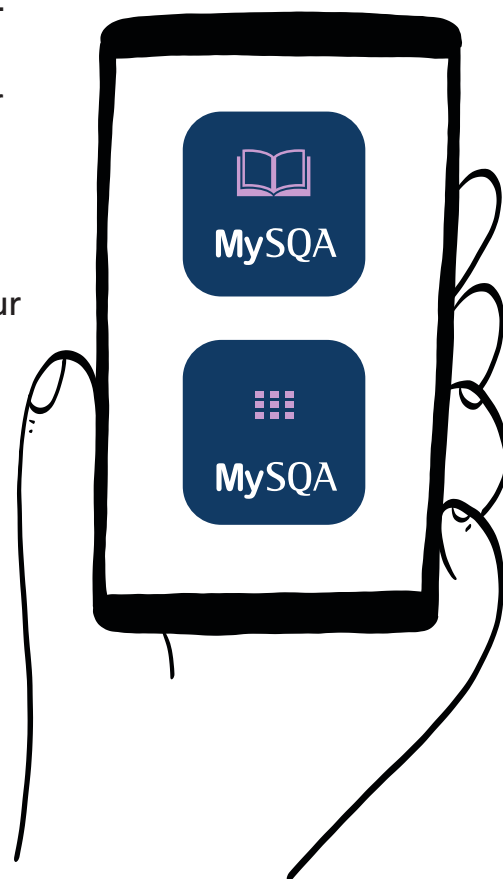
There are free apps to support you at exam time.

The **MyExams** app lets you create and view your personal timetable, add notes, and add your personal timetable to other calendars.

The **MyStudyPlan** app helps you to organise your revision by creating a personal study plan.

You can also create your own personal exam timetable using the online **Personal Timetable Builder**

Find out more at www.sqa.org.uk/studyplan



Past papers

Practising with previous exam papers can help you prepare for exams. You can download these, together with instructions for marking them, from www.sqa.org.uk/pastpapers.

Your Scottish Candidate Number

Your Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) is your personal identification number. We use your SCN to record and track all of your achievements.

Your school will be able to tell you what your SCN is. Make sure you know it as you will need to write it clearly on your exam answer booklets.

To help you, you can cut out the card at the back of this guide (or a printed copy of the card) and fill in your details. You can take this card into the exam room as long as you don't write anything else on it.

If you write anything else on the card, your exam entry could be cancelled. This may mean that you do not receive any results.

Make sure your details are correct

One of the most common reasons a learner doesn't receive their results certificate is that we have not been told about a change of address.

To make sure you receive your certificate on results day, check that your school has the correct details for you, including your correct name and address.

You can check your personal details by logging in to your MySQA account. You can sign up for one at www.mysqa.org.uk.

If any of your personal details change, or are going to change over the summer, you must tell your school before you finish for the summer holidays.



On exam day

Being ready and prepared for the day of an exam is important. Here is some important information to keep in mind.

Arriving for your exam

You should be outside the exam room at least 10 minutes before the exam is due to start. If you are late, you must report to the teacher in charge of SQA exams on the day. They will let you know if you can sit the exam.



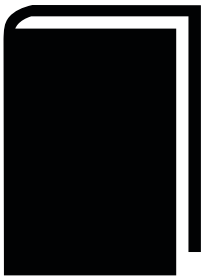
Desks

In most schools, you will be given a desk or seat number for each exam. Make sure you know this number before each exam.

Prohibited items

Prohibited items are things that you must not have with you at your allocated seat or desk in the exam room, unless they have been approved by us as part of an assessment arrangement for the exam you are sitting.

Prohibited items include the following:



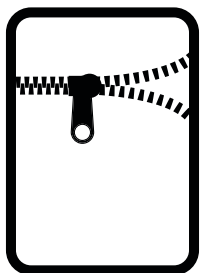
Dictionaries, except for exam papers where dictionaries are allowed



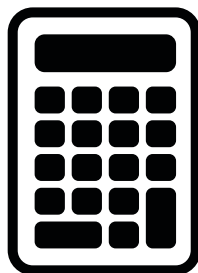
Electronic devices such as iPods, tablets, earpods, smartwatches or any other device that stores information or can connect to the internet



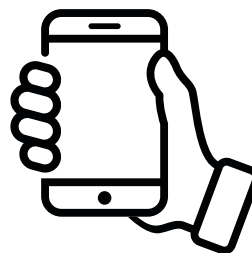
Extra information – notes, except for exams where notes are allowed



Pencil cases or calculator cases



Calculators, except for exam papers where calculators are allowed



Mobile phones



Extra information – books, sketches or paper, and anything written on your clothes or body

Before you go to your seat in the exam room, check your bags and pockets carefully to make sure you do not have any of these things with you. You must not take any prohibited item to your seat – plan ahead and leave them in a safe place. If you take a prohibited item to your seat in the exam hall, your award for the subject could be cancelled.

When specific items are allowed in an exam, you must make sure that they meet SQA regulations. Your teacher will be able to give you more information. You must make sure that the items do not give you access to information that you are not allowed to have in the exam.

You are not allowed to share any equipment during an exam.

Invigilators

The people who supervise exams are called 'invigilators'. Their job is to make sure your exams take place according to the rules and that the rules are applied fairly. You must listen to and follow any instructions the invigilators give you.

If anything unexpected happens to you during an exam, such as feeling unwell, you should tell the invigilator immediately.

Question papers and answer booklets

It is important that you read the instructions on the front of your question paper and check the subject and level are correct.

You will get **either**:

- -a combined question paper and answer booklet – you must fill in your details clearly on the front page of the booklet, in the boxes provided

or

- -a separate question paper and answer booklet – you must fill in your details clearly on the front page of the answer booklet, in the boxes provided

If you use extra sheets of paper, you must write your name, Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) and school name on each sheet and put these inside your answer booklet.

If you need extra paper, raise your hand and ask the invigilator. In some subjects, you will find extra pages or graph paper at the end of the answer booklet.

Work through your question paper until you see the statement END OF QUESTION PAPER. There will be nothing else you need to answer after this.

In a question paper, pages that don't have any questions or instructions will say BLANK PAGE on them. No page should be completely blank. If you find a completely blank page before the END OF QUESTION PAPER statement, tell the invigilator.

Writing your answers

You must use a pen with black or blue ink.

Your paper may be scanned and it is important that markers can read your writing. They will do their best to read your work, but they might not be able to award marks if your writing is difficult to read. Do not use gel pens or pencils as these can fade.

When writing on unlined pages, try to leave a space of about one centimetre between lines.

In some subjects, poor spelling and punctuation could also result in marks not being awarded. If you have any concerns about this, or about your handwriting, speak to your teacher.

Remember to cross out any rough work, or any unwanted answers if you make more than one attempt at a question. Please don't use correction fluid to cover up any rough work or unwanted answers.



Remember to

- Take your time.
- Read the question carefully.
- Answer the question being asked.
- Double-check your answers if you finish early.
- Stay calm and do your best.



Leaving the exam room

If you finish early, or you have done as much of the exam as you can, and you want to leave the exam room, raise your hand and ask the invigilator for permission to leave. If the exam is longer than one hour, the invigilator may allow you to leave after 30 minutes. If the exam is less than one hour, you must stay in the exam room until the end of the exam.

Before you leave, you must give the invigilator all your exam papers, including any answer booklets, extra sheets, question papers and data booklets. You could lose all marks for the paper concerned if you don't give your exam papers to the invigilator before leaving the exam room.

Fairness

Everyone should have a fair chance to do their best during exams. Cheating and causing a disturbance during an exam are unfair to other candidates. Examples of cheating and unfair behaviour (candidate malpractice) include the following.

- Having prohibited items with you at your seat in the exam room.
- Pretending to be someone else or getting someone else to take an exam for you.
- Disruptive behaviour in the exam room.
- Using rude, abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or images in your answers.
- Copying from another person.
- Collusion – working with other candidates on an individual task that must be your own work.
- Plagiarism – failing to reference sources properly or presenting someone else's work as your own, which includes using artificial intelligence programmes such as ChatGPT to draft responses.

Any cheating or unfair behaviour can have serious consequences for your results. This could include losing marks, getting a lower grade or having your qualification cancelled. Your school can explain more about this.

What if I cannot sit the exam or there is a serious disruption during the exam?

You or your parent or carer should contact your school as soon as possible, explaining what has happened.

They will be able to discuss your options and whether or not you would be entitled to use the Examination Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service. If you are eligible for the service, your school would need to contact us. They must do this within 10 days after the exam, so it's really important that you speak to them as soon as possible, giving them all the information about what happened.



Exceptional Circumstances

The Examination Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (EECCS) will support you if:

- you have been unable to attend the exam, or prevented from completing the exam, due to a personal circumstance beyond your control (such as a medical issue);
- you have been affected during the exam by a disruption, or other exam circumstance, reported by the chief invigilator; or
- your performance in the exam was affected by a personal circumstance, or an unplanned incident on the day, which was beyond your control.

Exam nerves, distraction or loss of concentration during an exam are not valid reasons to use this service.

Your school must request the service for you within 10 days after the exam, so it's really important that you speak to them as soon as possible after the exam, giving them all the information about what happened to you. You must give your school permission to request the service. Your school will then need to provide alternative evidence based on the assessments you completed throughout the year. This could be prelims, class tests, class work, records of performances (in some subjects). SQA examiners will review this, and any exam materials that you completed, to decide your grade.

If you have used the EECCS, you will not be able to appeal against your grade through the Appeals 2023 service, as your grade will have been awarded based on your alternative assessment evidence. Please see page 16 for more information on Appeals 2023.

Full information on the EECCS is available at www.sqa.org.uk/exceptionalcircumstances



Your results

Getting your results

You will receive your exam results by post on Tuesday 8 August.

Your school will also receive your results. If you have applied to a university or college through UCAS, they will also receive your results.

If you don't receive your certificate on results day, contact your school immediately. They will be able to tell you your results and will work with us to find out what has happened to your certificate.

If you think there's a mistake on your certificate, or something looks wrong, contact your school.

MySQA

To get your results by text message or email, you'll need to sign up at www.mysqa.org.uk. You will still receive your certificate by post.

It's important to keep your details up to date. If you change your mobile number or email address after signing up for MySQA, you'll need to update your details to receive your text message or email.

On results day, if you cannot find your results email in your inbox, please check your spam or junk folder.



Get Results Ready.

Sign up to  MySQA

Appeals 2023

Appeals 2023 is a free service that you can use if you have genuine concerns about a grade (or grades) on your results certificate. You can appeal directly to us or ask your school to do this for you.

Your appeal will be prioritised if you have a conditional place at university or college, or in training or employment that depends on your grade.

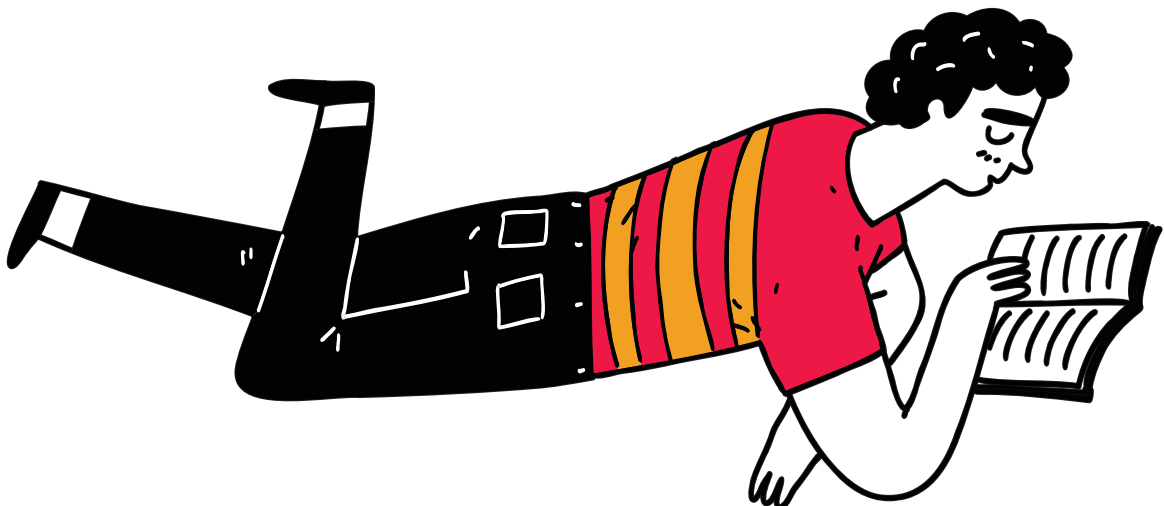
This year's appeal service will have a different process to the one used last year as alternative assessment evidence will not be looked at. This year if you appeal against your grade, a senior marker will carry out a marking review of your SQA-marked assessments. This is not a re-mark. A marking review checks that:

- all parts of your assessments have been marked;
- the marking is in line with national standards;
- the marks given for each answer have been totalled correctly; and
- the correct result has been entered on our system.

You should discuss your decision to appeal with your school as soon as possible after getting your results. Please note that after being reviewed, your result could stay the same, go up or go down.

You have the final decision on whether to appeal.

Visit www.sqa.org.uk/appeals for the latest updates on Appeals 2023.



Remember



- Do arrive in good time – at least 10 minutes before the exam starts.
- Do bring the right equipment – black or blue ink pens and so on.
- Do check that you don't have any prohibited items with you at your seat.
- Do check you have been given the correct exam paper.
- Do put your name, SCN and the name of your school on every piece of work you hand in (including separate answer booklets and answer sheets).
- Do write legibly so that the markers can read your answers.
- Do read all instructions and listen carefully for any announcements from the invigilator.
- Do cross out any rough work that is not part of your answer.
- Do stay in the room until the exam is finished. You can only leave early with permission from the invigilator.
- Do give the invigilator all your exam papers, including any answer booklets, extra sheets, question papers and data booklets, before you leave the exam room.



- Don't get someone else to sit your exam for you or pretend to be someone else.
- Don't take any prohibited items to your seat.
- Don't behave in a disruptive way or cause a disturbance.
- Don't copy from anyone else.
- Don't share your work with anyone else.
- Don't share equipment with anyone else.
- Don't use any rude, abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or images in your answers.



Support

Find out more about your certificate at www.sqa.org.uk/certificate.

You can find answers to the most common questions at www.sqa.org.uk/faqs

You can contact us by filling in a candidate enquiry form online at www.sqa.org.uk/candidateenquiryform

If you have any other questions about your certificate, please contact our Candidate Advice Line. You can call **0345 279 1000** or email customer@sqa.org.uk



Got a question?

0345 279 1000

www.sqa.org.uk/learners



Remember to

- Take your time.
- Read the question carefully.
- Answer the question being asked.
- Double-check your answers if you finish early.
- Stay calm and do your best.

Important notes:

- Write your school name, your name, date of birth and SCN on the card.
- If there is any unauthorised information found on the card it could result in your exam entry being cancelled.
- Immediately tell your school about any change to your permanent home address.
- You cannot get a replacement card if this one is lost or damaged.

