



Mintlaw Academy

Presentation Policy

May 2012

National Qualifications – PRESENTATION POLICY for S5/6

Basic Principles

Faculties and Subject Departments offer National Qualifications courses which allow students to experience both challenge and success.

Progression

National Qualification courses are offered at different levels. Progression can involve moving from one level to the one above in the same subject. Some pupils may wish to diversify by taking a new subject at the same level as qualifications they already hold. Reference should be made to the chart on the following page showing the points value of courses at different levels when considering the progression routes outlined.

The progression routes are, in general, as follows:

Access	>	provides a progression route for students who have not yet attained Foundation Level at Standard Grade
Intermediate 1	>	provides a progression route from Foundation Level at Standard Grade
Intermediate 2	>	provides a progression route from General Level at Standard Grade and in some courses a General grade 3 is required to cope with the demands of Intermediate 2. For some pupils with a Standard Grade Credit 2 Intermediate 2 is a more appropriate course than Higher
Higher	>	provides a progression route from Credit Level at Standard Grade and from Intermediate 2.
Advanced Higher	>	provides a progression route from Higher in the same subject

Information about courses is contained in the S5/6 Subject Choice Booklet along with recommended entry levels. In addition, students are given advice by both Guidance and Subject Staff to help them make appropriate choices: advice is given in interviews with Principal Teachers of Guidance, the Careers service, the individual S4 pupil report, and the choice of course booklet.

In the main, students who have reached Intermediate 2 or Credit Level in a Standard Grade subject are advised to move into a Higher Course. However Intermediate 2 is a more appropriate choice for some Standard Grade Credit pupils as outlined above. Students who have reached General Level in a Standard Grade subject are advised to move into an Intermediate 2 Course and so on. Guidance and advice about appropriate progression routes are, however, given on an individual basis by Departments/ Faculties.

Where courses of a suitable level are not available in school, students are advised of appropriate courses available at Banff & Buchan College and arrangements may be made for them to gain Exceptional Entry where this is possible.

Decisions regarding appropriate courses and levels for pupils are based on the professional judgement and experience of members of staff and the aim is to ensure that there is always the greatest possible chance of success for pupils.

<u>Course Award</u>					<u>Points</u>
AH	H	Int 2	Int 1	SG	
AH1					130
AH2					120
AH3					110
AH4					100
AH5					90
AH6					80
	H1				78
AH7	H2				72
	H3				66
AH8					64
	H4				60
AH9					56
	H5				54
	H6				48
		Int2 1			45
	H7	Int2 2			42
		Int2 3		SG 1	38
	H8				36
		Int2 4			35
		Int2 5			31
	H9				30
		Int2 6		SG 2	28
			Int1 1		26
		Int2 7	Int1 2		24
			Int1 3	SG 3	22
		Int2 8			21
			Int1 4		20
		Int2 9	Int1 5		18
			Int1 6	SG 4	16
			Int1 7		14
			Int1 8		12
				SG5	11
			Int1 9		10
		Access 3 pass		SG6	8
				SG7	3

Bands 1,2 –Grade A, Bands 3,4 – Grade B, Bands 5,6 – Grade C, Band 7 – D, Bands 8,9- no award.

Internal Assessments

Unit Assessments will take place once staff have covered the necessary content and skills needed with the class and when they feel the students are equipped to pass the assessment. Decisions about timing are therefore made on an individual basis by class teachers, but may be determined, on some occasions, by SQA demands. For all courses one unit assessment is required to have a March completion date. However, an extension can be sought for individual pupils if required.

Departments will consider very carefully the timing of re-assessment in order that no student is disadvantaged by being asked to sit a re-assessment before he/she has been given adequate time to acquire the knowledge or develop the skills required. Final decisions about re-assessments will be made after discussion between class teacher and principal teacher.

Arrangements for Re-assessment

Parents will be informed by standard letter from the Principal Teacher of the relevant Department/ Faculty if a unit assessment has been failed.(Alert 2) In addition this information will be passed to the pupil's Guidance Teacher via 'On the Button'.

Most re-assessment will happen during class time. Students will be given at least a week's notice of re-assessment, in line with current Homework Policy.

Re-assessment of units attempted prior to the Prelim may be scheduled during the Prelim exam period. Where difficulties arise in arranging times for re-assessment, subject Principal Teachers / Faculty Heads will liaise with SMT and parents will be informed as necessary.

Re-assessment

1. The school will follow the advice given by SQA and the Authority as regards re-assessment, namely that one re-assessment opportunity will be offered to students, except in exceptional circumstances. It is therefore essential that due care and attention is given to the decision about the timing of the reassessment. Under no circumstance should this be rushed for any reason. In some circumstances it may be appropriate for a reassessment to be given right at the end of the course.
2. If a student fails a unit assessment for a second time the subject Principal Teacher / Faculty Head will contact the PTG who will discuss the options available with the pupil. These will be clarified in Alert 3 which will inform parents.
3. Pupils who choose to continue with a course against recommendation, even though a full award is no longer possible, will be informed by of this by standard letter (Alert 1)
4. **The advice given by SQA regarding re assessment requires schools to define exceptional circumstances. The decision to allow a second re – assessment rests with the Rector as does the definition of what constitutes exceptional circumstances. Such decisions would be made on an individual basis.**

Entry to External Assessment

Students are told that they must pass all unit assessments and the final examination (course assessment) to achieve a course award. Students who pass all unit assessment are, therefore, normally entered for the external course assessment. Students are warned, however, that passing unit assessments does not automatically guarantee success in the external examination. Some NABs in some subjects contain 'headroom' to allow attainment beyond a pass at Grade C to be displayed. In most subjects the level of difficulty in the final exam is greater than that in NABs.

Students will also be eligible to sit the final exam(s) if they have passed 2 out of 3 unit assessments (or 3 out of 4) and have passed the prelim. However, they will not be eligible for a full course award until all units are passed.

Where a student has failed 2 (or more) unit assessments s/he will be advised not to sit the final examination.

See flow chart in Appendix 1.

Arrangements for Students to Change Level of Course

These will usually be triggered when a unit has been failed following a reassessment. One feature of the design of National Qualifications, is that if a student fails a unit assessment at one level and is obviously not going to experience success at that level, he/she may instead do the coursework and sit the unit assessments and final examination at the level below. In subjects where both Higher and Intermediate 2 courses are being offered, Principal Teachers/ Faculty Heads will decide if unit accreditation at a lower level is possible and make the necessary arrangements having first alerted PTG.

Discussion about next steps will take place between PT subject/Faculty Head, PTG, and pupil. Alert 3 will be used to inform parents/ carers of this situation and the options available including continuing to study the subject and sit other unit assessments only; retaking the course next session. A pupil might also continue with the subject, sit other unit assessments together with the final exam and then retake the course next session.

Change of level of course should take place as early as possible in the course and before the end of February at the latest.

Arrangements for Students to Carry Forward Unit Credits

Students who have achieved success in some, but not all, unit assessments, should have the opportunity to re-sit the units in which they failed without having to re-sit the entire course.

If a student passes the final course assessment but has failed one unit assessment he/she will be permitted to sit the unit assessment in S6, without joining a class as a full-time student, provided that the Principal Teacher is satisfied that s/he has all the necessary material, notes etc. to allow him/her to prepare adequately for assessment. Sometimes this assessment can be done very quickly after change of timetable if appropriate.

More usually, however, students who are not awarded a course pass because they have failed unit assessment(s) or the final examination will be advised to re-sit the whole course to allow them to consolidate what has already been achieved and develop the skills or acquire the knowledge needed to achieve success in the

remaining units and/or the final examination. Departments must consider offering such students alternative, internally devised assessments or opportunities for self study when assessments of units in which they have already gained a pass are taking place. However it would be considered good practice to sit all unit assessments again to improve exam technique.

Handling Disagreements

Where disagreements exist between pupils and staff regarding recommended entry levels pupils and parents/carers will be invited to discuss the issue with the subject department Principal Teacher / Faculty Head and the pupil's Guidance Teacher. If necessary the Year Head may also become involved. Students and their parents/carers will be informed by letter from the Department or Faculty should the course continue to be taken against recommendation. (Alert 1)

Disputes relating to re-assessments will be dealt with by the Year Heads responsible for S5 or S6 who will liaise with Subject Principal Teachers / Faculty Heads. A full history of a student's performance in the subject concerned will be prepared. This will include performance in class tests/ assignments, performance in homework, and general attitude. SEEMIS tracking reports may be used to show patterns of effort in courses.

NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS - SCHOOL PRESENTATION POLICY

PARENT/ CARER'S GUIDE

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Information about courses is contained in the S5/6 Subject Choice Booklet along with recommended entry levels. In addition, students are given advice by both Guidance and Subject Staff to help them make appropriate choices: advice is given in interviews with Principal Teachers of Guidance, the Careers Service, the individual S4 pupil report, and the choice of course booklet.

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Where courses of a suitable level are not available in school, students are advised of appropriate courses available at Banff & Buchan College and arrangements may be made for them to gain Exceptional Entry where this is possible.

Decisions regarding appropriate courses and levels for pupils are based on the professional judgement and experience of members of staff and the aim is to ensure that there is always the greatest possible chance of success for pupils.

Timing of Internal Unit Assessments

Unit Assessments will take place when staff feel that students have covered the necessary content and mastered the skills needed to pass the assessment. Students will be given at least a week's notice of such assessments.

Attendance

Since unit assessments are essential for the award of a course, attendance for planned unit assessments is vital and all pupils must make every effort to attend on the day of assessments. A written explanation should be presented to the Depute Rector responsible should a pupil miss an assessment.

We greatly appreciate your support in ensuring that your son/ daughter meets the requirements of their National Qualifications.

(a) Timing

Most students should pass unit assessments at the first attempt. If a student fails a unit assessment, s/he will be given the opportunity to sit a re-assessment. In many cases, this will mean sitting a completely new 'test', but in some subjects, it will be possible to re-sit or re-do only the section(s) of the assessment that were failed in the first attempt. Departments will consider very carefully the timing of the re-assessment so that students are given adequate time to acquire the knowledge or develop the skills required. Students will be given at least a week's notice of any re-assessment.

Parents / carers will be informed by letter from the relevant Department or Faculty if a student fails a unit assessment.

(b) Re-assessment Policy

The school will follow the advice given by SQA and Aberdeenshire Authority as regards re-assessment, namely that one re-assessment opportunity will be offered to students, except in exceptional circumstances. Should a reassessment be failed discussion will take place involving the pupil, the subject Principal Teacher/ Faculty Head and the Principal teacher of Guidance. Parents will be informed of the situation and the options available to their child by letter

(c) Preparation for Re-assessment

If a student fails a unit assessment, the teacher will explain the reasons why this has happened and give advice about the steps the student must take in order that the re-assessment is successful.

Entry to External Assessment

To pass a National Qualifications course, students must pass all unit assessments and the final course exam. Students who pass all unit assessments are, therefore, normally entered for the external course assessment which will be held in May or June.

It is possible for a student to sit the external course assessment, even though s/he has not passed all unit assessment, but even if s/he passes this assessment, s/he will not be awarded the full course award but will be credited for the parts of the course that they have passed. We will therefore, present students who have passed the prelim. Where a student has failed two (or more) unit assessments, s/he will be advised not to sit the final examination.

It is very important that both students and parents / carers understand that passing unit assessments does not automatically guarantee success in the external examination.

Unit Credits

One feature of the design of National Qualifications is that if a student fails a unit assessment at one level and is clearly not going to experience success at that level, s/he may instead do the coursework and sit the unit assessments and final examination at the level below. If subject staff believe such a change would benefit a student, and the school is offering the course at the appropriate level, the Subject Department Principal Teacher or Faculty Head will contact parents to explain the opportunity. Other options available will also be outlined including the possibilities of sitting other units only, or sitting other units together with the final exam. In either instance it would be possible to gain certification for the units passed and then re-sit the course the following year to gain the course award.

Arrangements for Students to Carry Forward Unit Credits

Every unit assessment a student passes is formally recorded, and the information is forwarded to the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). All unit passes are then noted on one of the certificates sent to students once final course assessment results are known.

Because of this, students who have achieved success in some, but not all, unit assessments should, theoretically, have the opportunity to re-sit units in which they have failed without having to re-sit the entire course. Practically, however, such an arrangement will only be available to students in exceptional circumstances when a Principal Teacher is satisfied that the student has all the necessary material to allow them to prepare adequately and then pass the assessment.

More usually, therefore, students who are not awarded a course pass because they have failed unit assessment(s) or the final examination, will be advised to re-sit the whole course. This will allow them to consolidate what has already been achieved and develop the skills or acquire the knowledge needed to achieve success in the remaining units and/or final examination. The student would not have to re-sit unit assessments already passed but it would be expected that different unit assessments would be sat to improve exam technique.

Handling Disagreements

Students and parents who disagree with recommended entry levels will be invited to discuss the issue with the Subject Principal Teacher/ Faculty Head and the pupil's Guidance Teacher. If necessary the Year Head may also become involved

Disputes relating to re-assessments will be dealt with by the Year Heads with responsibility for S5 and S6 who will liaise with all staff involved to ensure a full history of a student's performance in the subject concerned is prepared.

<u>Grade</u>						<u>Tariff Points</u>
Advanced Higher	Higher	Scottish Interdisciplinary Project**	Intermediate 2	Standard Grade	Core Skills	
A						130
B						110
C						90
	A					80
D						72
	B	A				65
						60
		B				55
	C					50
		C				45
			A			42
				Band 1		38
	D					36
			B			35
			C	Band 2		28
					Higher	20