

**Grantown Grammar School**

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COMHAIRLE NA GAIDHEALTACHD**

Mr Tom Magowan, Acting Head Teacher

25 March 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

**SQA exams and coursework**

We are very aware of what exams and course awards mean to our pupils. Exams bring the powerful mix of excitement and nerves as pupils strive to do their best and display their knowledge and skills amassed over the year or a number of years. Every one of our pupils wants their hard work and dedication to be recognised with awards that will allow them to proceed to further learning or work.

However, all Senior pupils and parents will be fully aware of the changing circumstances with SQA courses during the Covid 19 outbreak. On Thursday, Deputy First Minister John Swinney announced that there would be no exams this academic year. We have been waiting for clarity from SQA to follow up on this announcement and although we do not have all the details yet, feel that this is a point where we can shine a bit more light on the situation.

On Sunday, the First Minister announced that no young person with SQA coursework to complete should attend school to do so. On Tuesday, the SQA followed up that announcement by stating that coursework would not be submitted for marking in Higher and Advanced Higher courses. GGS pupils worked incredibly hard to complete this work early for most Higher courses as well as a number of Advanced Highers and should be rightly proud of their efforts to achieve that. However, the submission date for that work is not until mid April and not all subjects or schools were able to complete this before the closure of schools on Friday. So this announcement makes sense and is fair to all pupils across the length and breadth of the country.

The work produced by GGS pupils is still in the school and can be used as further evidence of pupil attainment should it be required for Higher and Advanced Higher candidates. It has also been a superb up-to-date source of our pupils' full skills and knowledge which is allowing GGS staff to make rounded and accurate estimates of their grades, at this time.

In terms of National 5 courses, GGS pupils submitted most of their coursework to SQA in mid March and we have been informed that SQA markers will be assessing this work. This was packaged up and sent on schedule. Again, GGS pupils should be very proud of this work. It is always a stressful time for National 5 pupils as the deadline for most subjects come at the same point of the year and with Covid 19 looming over everyone, our pupils did themselves and the school proud by submitting their work on time and to the best of their ability.

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National 5 courses with an April or May uplift date will not be submitted to SQA.

There are still a number of unanswered questions which we are waiting for clarity on. In these unprecedented times, the school will work closely with SQA to do the best we can for our pupils. When we know the final details, we will update pupils and family with as much information as we can. In the meantime, be proud of the work achieved so far and keep working hard.

Yours faithfully

Ruairidh Ross  
Depute Head Teacher  
SQA Co-ordinator