

Comhairle Welcomes SQA Results 2020

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Pupils across the Western Isles received the results of their SQA National Qualification results today following the most challenging and unusual academic year for those undertaking qualifications. Despite the difficulties experienced by both pupils and staff this year, the Comhairle is pleased to be able to report significant improvements in results this year, with many more awards being achieved by Western Isles pupils than in previous years.

The introduction of lockdown in March resulted in national school closures at a time when pupils were at a critical time in their studies. The SQA subsequently then confirmed the cancellation of all exams across Scotland, meaning that qualifications this year were going to be based on teacher professional estimates, analysis of past performance and careful scrutiny of results across the country. The consequence of this is that, for the first year on record, pupils will today receive their qualifications having undertaken no exams.

National 5

In Comhairle schools, pass rates for those achieving A-C passes at National 5 in S4 have increased by 1.4% to 89.2%, representing a year-on-year increase in performance at this level. The Comhairle pass rate at National 5 was 8.1% higher than that seen nationally.

Higher

A-C passes at Higher for S5 and S6 pupils increased significantly again this year by 2% to 80.6% with a number of subject areas showing improvement. Presentations at Higher increased 6% this year and A-C passes at Higher level were 1.7% greater than the national rate.

Advanced Higher

After a small decrease in awards at Advanced Higher last year, a major increase of 13% was recorded this year, with A-C passes jumping to 92.9% from an increased cohort. This is 8% higher than the national pass rate for Advanced Higher.

Across the authority, at all levels, there were 2823 presentations, slightly down on the previous year. Of these presentations, 2458 resulted in an A-C pass, indicating an overall pass rate of 87.1%. This is an increase in the region of 1.5% on last year. Education officers and school staff are currently analysing each school's data to identify areas of strength and areas for development

In what has been an exceptional year in terms of disruption to schooling, The Comhairle recognises and celebrates the significant achievements of our young people. We appreciate and would like to thank all the pupils and school staff for their hard work and commitment in bringing this year's awards to a positive conclusion in very challenging circumstances. It is also important to note that we recognise the many achievements of our pupils beyond today's academic results, in areas of applied learning, sport, culture, heritage and community service.

We understand that some young people will be concerned about the results received today and our staff will be available to provide support where it's required. Any parents or pupils who have queries regarding the results can contact their local school directly.

Pupils can also contact and get support in the following ways:

- SDS National Helpline on 0808 100 8000.
- DYW No Wrong Path Campaign #NoWrongPath
- My World of Work Facebook
- My World of Work Twitter

Any pupils who have not received the results they'd hoped for and are considering a change of options are encouraged to contact the Comhairle's Education & Training Section on accreditedtraining@cne-siar.gov.uk. This team are able to advise and provide information about a range of other opportunities, including Foundation and Modern Apprenticeships available locally.

Chairman of the Education, Skills and Children's Services Committee, Cllr Angus McCormack, said: "In what has been a most difficult year for pupils and school staff these results demonstrate just how much work has gone in to ensuring that our young people were not disadvantaged by having their education disrupted. I am delighted with these results and I congratulate our students and their teachers on their achievements".