



DUNBAR GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Dunbar Grammar is a caring community where you can RISE to be your best
RESPECT INCLUSION SUPPORT EFFORT



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Dear Parent / Carer

Arrangements for the May Assessment Window for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher

Following the cancellation of the 2021 exam diet for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher we have been working with schools across East Lothian to plan for a safe, supported and equitable assessment window after the Easter break. The purpose of these assessments is to meet the requirements set out by the SQA in their revised subject guidance whilst giving candidates the best possible opportunity to demonstrate their learning and attainment.

At Dunbar Grammar School, we are absolutely committed to ensuring every learner is given a fair and equitable opportunity to achieve their full potential and we recognise the challenges our students have faced due to the disruption to their education this academic session. Therefore our assessment timeline has been carefully considered with the following principles in mind:

- Teaching and learning will continue throughout the assessment window to allow on-going support and consolidation between assessments.
- All subjects will run assessments as required to meet the minimum standard set out by the SQA whilst ensuring qualifications remain valid and credible.
- Assessments will be reduced in length to fit within the existing school timetable thereby minimising the disruption of each assessment on other subject areas.
- Smaller assessments will be spaced out across the period to balance the demand on students and allow sufficient time for preparation for each assessment.
- Throughout the assessment window, students will have regular opportunities to receive feedback to support their learning and preparation for further assessment.
- Candidates who require additional assessment arrangements will have appropriate supports in place for each assessment.

The assessment window will commence on **Monday 26th April until Friday 4th June.**

Wherever possible we have taken steps to ensure that students should only have one assessment each day, however there may be some exceptions to this. If a student is concerned about the timing, spacing or frequency of their assessments they should discuss this with their teacher in the first instance to seek advice on alternative options.

There will be SQA assemblies on Monday 29th March and Mr McBride will also be available on Monday and Tuesday of next week to meet individual students. Students wishing to make an appointment must book an appointment slot by following the link below.

In many subjects not all students will sit their assessments at the same time and therefore it is important that all candidates are aware of their responsibilities and possible implications of any breach in our assessment policy. Further information and advice will be shared with students at our upcoming SQA assemblies and there is a link to the SQA guidance in the FAQ's section of this letter.

We know that our students and parents and carers will feel a mix of emotions about what lies ahead in May. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any concerns or wish to discuss individual circumstances which may impact upon the assessment window.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Duncan McBride', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Duncan McBride

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I know which assessments I will take?

Your assessments are arranged by subject, level and column, to find out when your assessments are you should check the subject, level and column on the timeline included with this letter. If you are unsure, it is best to check with your teacher and complete the individual template we have provided to support you to keep track of your assessments.

Why is my assessment over break / lunch or during my Core PE/PSE periods?

In some cases we have scheduled assessments over break and lunch time, in these instances students will be allocated an alternative break or lunch time after the assessment. Core periods have also been used in a small number of assessments to allow better spacing of assessments throughout the week. Alternative timings should be discussed with teachers and noted on individual student timetables for reference.

How can I get advice on preparing for my assessments?

Your teachers will continue to help you prepare for assessment in class and have built in opportunities for teaching, learning and assessment preparation into their timelines. Speak to your teacher in the first instance if you have specific questions about next steps in your learning.

Will I get study leave?

No. Due to the significant disruption to your schooling this year you will continue with your senior phase timetable throughout the month of May. This also allows us to ensure that you are supported throughout the assessment window and have the opportunity to get feedback and advice from your teachers to inform your next steps in learning.

When will I be told how I have performed in my assessments?

Each assessment within a subject and level must be marked against the standard set out by the SQA. Your teachers will give you information to help you prepare for your future assessments including guidance on areas you need to improve upon. All assessments may be subject to moderation and quality assurance throughout May and June therefore specific marks and grades will not be shared until the end of the assessment window when this process has been completed.

What if an assessment doesn't go well, can I sit it again?

No. Just like the SQA exams the key assessments are designed to be final in order to ensure all candidates have the same opportunity to demonstrate their learning. However, provisional grades will be produced using two to four pieces of assessment evidence and therefore a poor outcome in one assessment may be partially overcome by an improved performance in later assessments at the same subject and level. Please note that the weighting of each assessment in relation to the provisional grade varies, therefore you should ask your teacher for advice on this if relevant.

I have two assessments in one day, can one of them be moved?

Yes, there is some flexibility in the timing of assessments. Please speak to Mr McBride to discuss the possible alternatives. However candidates sitting 7 or 8 short subjects may find that they are more restricted due to having a higher number of assessments to fit into the assessment window.

What are my responsibilities around assessment security?

It is important that all candidates adhere to the SQA code of conduct in relation to their assessments. Any breach of the integrity or security or safety of the assessment will have serious consequences and may include withdrawal from the qualification. In particular students must note the following responsibilities:

- Do not take into the assessment room any notes or prohibited items.
- Candidates must not communicate in any way with, seek assistance from, or give assistance to, another candidate or candidates during an examination – including revealing the content of any assessments which they have sat during the assessment window.
- Do not intentionally cause a disturbance in the assessment room.
- Do not remove a question paper of any kind from an assessment room.
- Include rude, abusive, offensive or discriminatory language (including racist, sexist or homophobic content), in scripts or coursework.
- Plagiarise materials from another source, give assistance to or lend materials to another candidate or work with other candidates on a task which should be completed on the candidate's own.
- In addition, all candidates should not discuss or disclose any aspect of their assessments on social media including the themes, topics and content or sharing of images of the assessment materials.

What if I'm ill on the day of an assessment or have to self-isolate?

If you are unable to attend school for an assessment you will be given another opportunity to sit the assessment at a later date. You should take care in this instance to avoid any communication with other candidates that may contravene your responsibilities as outlined above.

When will I know my provisional grade?

Provisional grades will be shared with students towards the end of the school term and once all quality assurance and moderation activities have been concluded. Further details on this will be shared with pupils and parents in due course.

When can I leave school this year?

The school leaving date will be Friday 4th June for all eligible students.

I still have concerns, can I speak to someone?

Yes – you can speak to any of your teachers if your concern is around a specific subject, or contact your guidance teacher at any time if you would be worried about your school work. Mr McBride is also available for drop-in discussions between 2pm and 3pm on Monday and Tuesday next week. Please book an appointment using this [link](#).

Individual Assessment Timetable

This will be issued to all students to complete on Monday.

May Assessment Window



		Name _____		Class _____	
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
26 Apr	27	28	29	30	
Column 1	Column 1	Column 5	Column 5	Column 4A	Column 3A
3 May	4	5	6	7	
HOLIDAY	Column 1	Column 1	Column 2A	Column 3B	
10	11	12	13	14	
Column 1	Column 2B	Column 5	Column 5	Column 4B	Column 3B
17	18	19	20	21	
Column 4A	Column 2A	Column 5	Column 5	Column 2B	Column 3A
24	25	26	27	28	
INSERVICE	NO ASSESSMENTS PLANNED	Column 5	Column 5	Column 4B	Column 3B
31	1 Jun	2	3	4	
Column 1	Column 1				