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Dear Parent/Carer

Scottish Qualifications Authority Examinations 2017

1. Study Leave Dates

National Qualification examinations at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher levels begin in the near future. To assist your son/daughter to prepare for examinations they have been granted a period of study leave.

The last day of lessons for S4 & S5 pupils is Friday 28th April. The first day of Study Leave for S4 & S5 pupils is Tuesday 2nd May.

The last day for S6 pupils will be Friday 28th April. A further letter will be issued to S6 parents/carers about the arrangements for the activities taking place and expectations of pupils on the day. The first day of Study Leave for S6 pupils is Tuesday 2nd May.

All S4-6 pupils will return to school on Tuesday 6th June.

Please note that a copy of the actual SQA timetable can be found online at www.sqa.org.uk. Please note that some SQA examinations will finish after the end of the school day and pupils and parents/carers will require to make arrangements for travel home after an examination scheduled to finish after the school day.

All S4/S5/S6 pupils will be issued with a personal copy of their examination timetable during the first week back after the Easter holidays. I will be happy to answer any queries about the timetable. It is vitally important that your son/daughter examines their timetable carefully as soon as they receive it and they should contact myself immediately if they find errors or identify problems.

2. Study Leave Arrangements

I encourage you to ensure that your son/daughter uses the period of study leave in a productive manner. The time is provided for revision and pupils should create a study plan. Each subject should be revised thoroughly before the examination.

Most pupils are likely to study at home during study leave, however, the SQA study room (Room 40 opposite the Barra cafeteria) will be available for pupils who wish to study in school, or need accommodating before, between or after exams. This room will be available for the purpose of study only. Pupils intending to use this room must bring materials for study. After their exam finishes for the day, pupils can either make use of the study room or sign out of school at the office in order to go home to study.

For Health & Safety reasons, pupils who are in school but not at an exam (e.g. to attend an arranged study class with a teacher) should sign in/out at the School Office.

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3. Exam Days

Pupils attending school for examinations, or to meet teachers during study leave, must wear school uniform.

Pupils have been issued with a booklet from the SQA setting out the guidelines for their conduct and giving advice for examinations which invigilators have to enforce. A copy can be found online at:

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/SQA_Your_Exams_2017.pdf

NB – Your son/daughter should bring the Scottish Candidate Number Card from this booklet into their examinations with them.

It is the responsibility of pupils to bring the necessary equipment such as pens, pencils, rulers, calculators etc. for each examination. A pen must be used for any extended written answers. Some spare stationery items will be available for emergencies. Pupils should be sure to bring only what is permissible for each exam, and to carry them without a pencil case.

Mobile phones, i-pods, mp3 players and smartwatches are strictly forbidden in the examination room.

Pupils found with any of the above items in an exam venue are likely to have their qualifications withheld by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

It is vitally important that pupils arrive in school in good time before the start of an exam.

A minimum of 15 minutes before the start time of the exam is recommended to give time to double check the exam room venue and seat number etc. Pupils waiting for an examination should gather at the Study Room (R40) from where they will be called forward to the exam hall by a member of the SLT or Invigilator. Pupils with additional time (early start) should report to the foyer outside the hall 15 minutes before the start of their exam.

4. Absence from an exam

If your son/daughter misses an examination because of illness please contact the school immediately.

Whenever possible, absentee evidence will be submitted to the SQA for consideration. A medical certificate from a doctor will be required and this must be submitted to the school within **3 days** of the missed exam.

5. Return to school following exams

S6 pupils will receive their S6 Agreement form and information about training for S6 Responsibilities prior to Study Leave. It is expected that they will attend any necessary training during Study Leave.

All S5/6 pupils start their school timetable on Tuesday 6th June 2017.

6. Exam Results

This year's SQA examination results will be sent to your son/daughter on Tuesday 8th August. These results will arrive by first class post, and by text or e-mail if your son/daughter has registered for this service through *My SQA*. The closing date for signing-up to *My SQA* is Monday 19th July.

In 2014, SQA introduced two new Result Services which replace the appeals process, and as the new qualifications are rolled out, we wanted to take this opportunity to remind you how these new procedures work.

- **The Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service** will operate throughout the examination period. If a pupil is unable to sit an exam, for very good reason, such as a family bereavement or serious illness, or if performance in an exam is badly affected by circumstances such as these, parents should contact the school immediately. Where exceptional circumstances have affected a pupil, the school will then put the pupil forward for Exceptional Circumstances Consideration. In such cases, the school will forward alternative evidence - a sample of the pupil's work – to SQA, to support the request for a qualification to be awarded. The award granted, however, may not be the same as that estimated by the school.

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- **The Post-Results Service** may be used by schools where a pupil's grade is significantly different from that expected. Based on the evidence the school holds about the pupil's performance throughout the course, a school may request a clerical check and/or an SQA marking review. **The pupil must, however, give permission for this in writing.**
- A clerical check is a check that all questions have been marked and all marks totalled correctly
 - A marking review is where an SQA senior examiner will review the marks awarded to each question to ensure that the original marking is in line with national standards: the work will not be re-marked.

Please note:

- The decision to ask for a marking review rests solely with the school
- As a result of a clerical check and/or marking review, the pupil's grade may stay the same or be amended up **or** down.

It is important that parents understand that the school will not be able to submit alternative evidence, like course work or prelim examination evidence, to support its request for a review. Decisions about the grade awarded will be made solely on the pupil's performance in the SQA examination.

The SQA has recognised that the Post-Results Service is a significant departure from previous practice and so have put in place more stringent checks of each markers' work to ensure that final results are as accurate as possible.

Should you have any questions about your son's/daughter's results, when they arrive in August, you should contact myself in the first instance. If the school decides to make a Results Service request for your son/daughter, I will advise you as to the steps that need to be taken.

It would be very helpful if you could share the information contained in this letter with your son/daughter.

Finally, on behalf of Inverurie Academy staff, I would like to take this opportunity to wish your son/daughter every success in their examinations.

Yours sincerely

Pauline Fraser
Depute Rector/ SQA Coordinator

Maria walker, Director of Education, Learning & Leisure

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