

The Highland Council

Education, Children and Adult Services Committee – 28 August 2014

Agenda Item	13.
Report No	ECAS/30/14

Educational Attainment Update

Report by Director of Care and Learning

Summary

This report provides an initial analysis of SQA results in Highland schools in 2014.

1. Background

- 1.1 According to the SQA website result certificates were sent to 146,181 candidates across Scotland. The candidates have been rewarded for completing coursework, exams and unit assessments throughout the academic year 2013-14 in a wide range of qualifications and subjects, to suit all learners.
- 1.2 These include Access, Intermediates, Highers and Advanced Highers – and, for the first time, the new Nationals which support Curriculum for Excellence. In addition a range of Awards, Skills for Work, National Progression Awards and National Certificates have been certificated.
- 1.3 Whilst the standards of qualifications at SCQF levels 3 to 5 remain as high in 2014 as they have in previous years, there are several changes both in the qualifications and in the wider education system as a result of Curriculum for Excellence that mean that the results published look different from previous years. These new National Courses have been introduced on a phased basis, by level, as learners experiencing Curriculum for Excellence, move through the school.
- 1.4 Candidates with active MySQA accounts received their results by text message and/or by email. This year, 37,237 candidates have opted for this service. All candidates will receive their certificates by post.
- 1.5 The new qualifications have been designed to reflect the purposes and principles of Curriculum for Excellence and involve the assessment of different skills and knowledge, for example, deeper learning and higher order thinking skills. Learners have undertaken different approaches to assessment of the new qualifications. National 4 qualifications are internally assessed and verified by SQA. Almost all of the new National 5 courses include some sort of coursework assessment, to allow valid assessment of a wider range of skills and knowledge and most include a final examination. As this is the first certification of the new National Qualifications, there will be no trend information in 2014; however, in subsequent years comparative information on the previous years will be reported.

2. The Highland Picture

- 2.1 The statistics on the attached documents are based on the number of candidates enrolled in September of S4 who went on to achieve passes in S4, and later in S5 and S6. All results are based on the initial information provided by the SQA.

- 2.2 Overall, the strong showing of recent years has been maintained apart from the normal fluctuations that can appear in successive years. Behind the statistics, there are many outstanding individual and group performances.
- 2.3 While annual statistics are useful, trends over a five year period are more informative.
- 2.4 A more detailed analysis will follow later in the year when results are finalised and the detailed school data is published.
- 2.5 In S4 the SQA have made clear, direct comparisons between the new National qualifications and Standard Grade pass rates cannot validly be made.
- 2.6 For example, National 5 pass rates cannot be directly compared with the old Standard Grade pass rates. Those passing National 5 this year have achieved a level equivalent to the highest Standard Grade level – Credit. The two pass rates are therefore not comparable.
- 2.7 In S4 we can look at national pass rates for National 2-5.
- At National 2 the national pass rate was 73.6% where in Highland it was 94.7%.
 - At National 3 the national pass rate was 89.8% where in Highland it was 95.3%.
 - At National 4 the national pass rate was 93% where in Highland it was 93.4%.
 - At National 5 the national pass rate was 81.1% where in Highland it was 82.9%.
- 2.8 In S5, the year on year improvements in the number of candidates achieving 3+ awards at Level 6 (Higher) continued with a sixth rise, this time of 3.0%, to a five year high of 30.6%. The number of candidates achieving 5+ awards at Level 6 increased from 11.6% to the five year average figure of 13.6% The highest for the last five years. Across Highland, a total of 76 candidates passed 5 Highers at A pass. Again this is the highest figure in the last five years. Year by year comparisons are shown in **Appendix 1**
- 2.9 The difference between female and male attaining 3+ passes at Level 6 increased from 7% to 9.9% and from 3.1% to 3.5% at 5+ Level 6 passes. The % difference between females and males passing Higher English was 15.1%. In Higher Maths, the difference was 1.1%.
- 2.10 In S6, the percentage of candidates achieving 3 passes at Level 6 decreased by 1.5%. At Level 7, 409 candidates passed at least one Advanced Higher. Year by year comparisons are shown in **Appendix 2.**
- 2.11 The difference between S6 females and males passing Higher English was 4.3% but in Higher Maths males performed better than females with a 1.2% difference in their favour.

3. Implications

- 3.1 There are no Resource, Legal, Climate Change/Carbon Clever, Risk and Gaelic and Rural implications as a result of this report. There continue to be gender differences in most attainment categories that are the subject of ongoing research by Quality Improvement Officers and will feature in future work by the ECS Equalities Working Group.

4. Recommendation

4.1 Members are invited:

- to comment on the initial analysis of this year's SQA results and
- to congratulate the young people of Highland on their successes in this year's exams

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Date: 18 August 2014

Author: Jim Steven, Head of Education

S5 Attainment Pre Appeal

All Pupils	Year	Total Roll	Awards English Level 6		Awards Maths Level 6		1+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		3+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		5+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		5+ Awards at Level 6 Grade A	
			No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
	2014	2655	738	27.8%	516	19.4%	1350	50.8%	813	30.6%	361	13.6%	76	2.9%
	2013	2585	654	25.3%	449	17.4%	1231	47.6%	713	27.6%	300	11.6%	55	2.1%
	2012	2765	711	25.7%	469	17.0%	1332	48.2%	752	27.2%	344	12.4%	71	2.6%
	2011	2710	666	24.6%	509	18.8%	1265	46.7%	727	26.8%	322	11.9%	47	1.7%
Highland Totals	2010	2789	619	22.2%	484	17.4%	1254	45.0%	731	26.2%	307	11.0%	49	1.8%

Female Pupils	Year	Total Roll	Awards English Level 6		Awards Maths Level 6		1+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		3+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		5+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		5+ Awards at Level 6 Grade A	
			No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
	2014	1300	462	35.5%	260	20.0%	733	56.4%	464	35.7%	200	15.4%	43	3.3%
	2013	1256	397	31.6%	224	17.8%	643	51.2%	392	31.2%	166	13.2%	28	2.2%
	2012	1372	438	31.9%	238	17.3%	727	53.0%	430	31.3%	199	14.5%	42	3.1%
	2011	1321	388	29.4%	245	18.5%	661	50.0%	390	29.5%	169	12.8%	24	1.8%
Highland Totals	2010	1387	369	26.6%	243	17.5%	700	50.5%	413	29.8%	166	12.0%	24	1.7%

Male Pupils	Year	Total Roll	Awards English Level 6		Awards Maths Level 6		1+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		3+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		5+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		5+ Awards at Level 6 Grade A	
			No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
	2014	1355	276	20.4%	256	18.9%	617	45.5%	349	25.8%	161	11.9%	33	2.4%
	2013	1329	257	19.3%	225	16.9%	588	44.2%	321	24.2%	134	10.1%	27	2.0%
	2012	1393	273	19.6%	231	16.6%	605	43.4%	322	23.1%	145	10.4%	29	2.1%
	2011	1389	278	20.0%	264	19.0%	604	43.5%	337	24.3%	153	11.0%	23	1.7%
Highland Totals	2010	1402	250	16.7%	241	17.2%	554	39.5%	318	22.7%	141	10.1%	25	1.8%

S6 Attainment Pre Appeal

Appendix 2

All Pupils			Awards English Level 6		Awards Maths Level 6		3+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		5+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		1+ Award at Level 7	
	Year	Total Roll	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
	2014	2585	299	11.6%	145	5.6%	414	16.0%	4	0.2%	409	15.8%
	2013	2765	276	10.0%	146	5.3%	483	17.5%	5	0.2%	440	15.9%
	2012	2710	279	10.3%	148	5.5%	483	17.8%	10	0.4%	443	16.3%
	2011	2789	270	9.7%	160	5.7%	467	16.7%	9	0.3%	474	17.0%
Highland Totals	2010	2885	229	7.9%	147	5.1%	460	15.9%	6	0.2%	440	15.3%

Female Pupils			Awards English Level 6		Awards Maths Level 6		3+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		5+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		1+ Award at Level 7	
	Year	Total Roll	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
	2014	1256	173	13.8%	63	5.0%	246	19.6%	1	0.1%	232	18.5%
	2013	1372	174	12.7%	55	4.0%	271	19.8%	1	0.1%	254	18.5%
	2012	1321	176	13.3%	66	5.0%	262	19.8%	9	0.7%	234	17.7%
	2011	1387	175	12.6%	66	4.8%	266	19.2%	6	0.4%	272	19.6%
Highland Totals	2010	1446	145	10.0%	62	4.3%	260	18.0%	1	0.1%	249	17.2%

Male Pupils			Awards English Level 6		Awards Maths Level 6		3+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		5+ Awards at Level 6 & Above		1+ Award at Level 7	
	Year	Total Roll	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
	2014	1329	126	9.5%	82	6.2%	168	12.6%	3	0.2%	177	13.3%
	2013	1393	102	7.3%	91	6.5%	212	15.2%	4	0.3%	186	13.4%
	2012	1389	103	7.4%	82	5.9%	221	15.9%	1	0.1%	209	15.0%
	2011	1402	95	6.8%	94	6.7%	201	14.3%	3	0.2%	202	14.4%
Highland Totals	2010	1439	84	5.8%	85	5.9%	200	13.9%	5	0.3%	191	13.3%