

Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers

To: Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers

On: 6 June 2023

Education Recovery
Report by
Joint Secretary (Teachers' Side)

Background

SQA recently announced a return to full National Qualifications assessment requirements in 2023/24. The SSTA has conducted a survey of teachers delivering National Qualifications. The survey found that 68% of the 2000+ respondents do not agree that pupils are ready for a full return to National Qualifications assessment measures.

These survey results indicate the strength of feeling against a return to pre-covid assessment requirements. They also demonstrate the disconnect between decision makers' views of current arrangements and those of teachers delivering National Qualifications.

Action

JNC members to note results of this survey. The management side to reinforce this view at national meetings involving organisations such as Scottish Government, SQA and Education Scotland.



Secondary Teachers Tell SQA To Think Again

The SSTA conducted a survey of members delivering national qualifications following the SQA announcement that National Qualifications course assessments in session 2023-24 will return to full requirements – including reinstating coursework and exam assessment and the National 4 added value unit. The majority of SSTA members are opposed to the change with only 19% wanting a return to the pre-pandemic arrangements.

Seamus Searson, General Secretary said

"The SSTA survey has shown that SQA must go back and reconsider its decision when pupils and teachers are still in the process of education recovery. To reintroduce pre-pandemic exam arrangements in 2024 when teachers say that only 12% pupils are ready is foolhardy by an organisation that is oblivious of the realities in secondary schools".

"The damage to pupils' learning and the task for teachers in trying to bridge the gap cannot be underestimated, and to make more changes to qualifications when the whole qualification system is about to change requires the SQA to think again. Members are concerned about the wellbeing of their pupils and the immeasurable workload demands on a profession that is already 'on its knees'. The SQA needs to listen to the teachers who are in schools everyday trying to support pupils and deliver the national qualifications. I challenge the SQA to engage with the profession and consider the findings of the SSTA survey".

"68% of members said no to a return of pre-pandemic arrangements with only 19% supporting a return SSTA members in favour of return to pre-pandemic SQA arrangements. However, many members sought a phased return over a number of years allowing time for preparation of materials and restructuring of courses in addition of time for upskilling their pupils".

The largest resistance to the SQA proposals came from teachers delivering higher qualification with up to 91% in some subjects.

Music	91%
Modern Studies	91%
Geography	88%
Art and Design	85%
Modern Foreign Languages	85%
Biology	85%
Physics	85%
Chemistry	83%
Religious Moral Education	79%
History	75%
Mathematics	70%
Drama	69%
Home Economics	69%
English	64%
Technological Education	64%
Physical Education	59%
Computing Science	56%
Business Education	44%

"The survey highlighted the range of resistance to the SQA imposition between different subjects and at different national qualification level. Only 30% of members saw the benefit of reintroduction of measures as a benefit at National 4 whilst only 15% sought a return at Higher".

- **30% - National 4**
(45% PE and Maths, 44% Business Ed, and 42% Computing Science)
- **26% - National 5**
(51% Maths, 49% Business Education, 44% PE and 42% Music)
- **15% - Higher**
(44% Business Ed, 32% PE and 27% Technological Ed)
- **18% - Advance Higher**
(29% Business Ed, 26% Physic, 25% English, and 23% Art & Design)

"71% of teachers said that their pupils would need a lot or a great deal of support to be able to meet the requirements of the pre-pandemic arrangements. In addition, 76% said that increase in teacher workload would go up a lot or a great deal. This is a situation that cannot be ignored and I hope the Scottish Government will intervene and protect our pupils who already struggling and teachers that have no capacity to meet these imposed changes".