



Summary:

- Pupils attend school as normal until the **end of the day** on Thursday 4th November
- The first prelim for all pupils is on **Friday 5th November**
- On the days pupils have a prelim assessment, they are **only required to attend** the assessment. On the days pupils **do not** have assessments pupils **are required** to attend their regular timetabled classes where they will be take part in supervised study classes (except in some practical subjects)
- Prelims continue for 2 weeks and finish on Friday 19th November
- Pupils return to normal classes on Monday 22nd November
- All pupils must attend each prelim, wearing school uniform
- A further prelim timetable will be issued after the October holidays showing the location of each assessment.

What are prelims?

A prelim is often a longer assessment than can usually be completed during class time. They are often based on much of the course content from the start of S3 up to this point in S4.

Prelims cover much of the *knowledge, understanding* and *skills* that are required for the final course assessments and more closely match the challenge of the final course assessment in terms of *length* of the assessment, *range of topics* covered and *types of questions*.

Attendance

We are not permitted to give 'Exam Leave' during these prelim assessments. However on the days pupils have a prelim assessment, they are only required to attend the assessment. They should arrive at least 15 minutes before the start time and can leave the school after the assessment.

On the days pupils not have assessments pupils are required to attend their regular timetabled classes where they will be able to have supervised study classes. The exception to this will be for some practical subjects.

SQA National 5 Examinations

The National 5 [SQA 2022 Exam Timetable](#) for S4s in 2022 is now available. Most courses have been modified for this session due to the impact of school closures. These are shown [here](#). The prelim assessments are an important opportunity for pupils to revise for larger and lengthier assessments that are based on longer term retention of knowledge.

Assessment Locations and COVID mitigations

Like the May SQA exams, prelims are normally held in our Sports Hall. At the time of writing we currently plan to use reduce the numbers of pupils in the Sports Hall and use additional spaces. However we are waiting on updated Scottish Government guidance and as such we will provide an update to the assessment locations soon after the October holidays.

In the event that any pupils may be have to self-isolate during the prelims. We will ensure that they have an opportunity to complete these assessments on their return to school. This will be coordinated and communicated separately. Prelim assessments cannot be undertaken at home.

Revision Practice

Prelims provide a focus for pupils and an opportunity to practice revision techniques. They should be revising S3 work as well as work completed in S4. Teachers have been helping with advice such as how to make a home study plans and how best to approach revision in each subject.



All S4s should be revising at home. Advice can be found within the TEAMS groups and within our [Subject Resources Summaries](#). These documents describe some of the different revision guides which are extremely useful for learners. Also there are suggested websites including BBC [Bitesize](#) and [SCHOLAR](#).

Revision Notes

Many pupils will produce their own revision notes, mind maps and flash cards based on revision guides and their class work. Making these often help pupils to learn key information and prelims allow them to test their revision *technique* and refine their approach, making improvements as necessary, for later assessments. Here are some [Revision Top Tips](#).

SQA website

Prelims provide a good chance to use some useful SQA documents. These include *Course Specifications* which clearly state the main course knowledge and skills. These subject pages also have *Past Exam Papers* and *marking schemes*. Many prelims use past exam questions and these provide a guide to the assessment standards at National 5 and 4.



Feedback

Pupils will get feedback on their prelim and they will evaluate their own performance looking at areas that they performed well in and areas for further practice. You will receive a written report in December and the Parent Consultation is in January 2022.



Estimate Grades

Whilst teachers ultimately have to provide SQA with estimate grades, these are completed towards the end of S4 and the prelim result will not usually be the only evidence used for to generate these estimate grades. Teachers will be collecting attainment data throughout S4 and the prelims support this process together with a range of other gathered assessment information.

Prelim Grades

These are given in Bands. *Notional* cut off scores are used for *indicative* grade bands. These are continually adjusted up or down depending on the length of the question paper and the range of topics and difficulty of questions. The typical grade cut off scores vary from subject to subject. For example a prelim score of:

- 62% should be thought of as a upper grade C or lower grade B
- 47% is indicative of grade D or lower grade C

SQA Band	Typical Grades	Notional %
1	A upper	85-100
2	A lower	70-84
3	B upper	65-69
4	B lower	60-64

5	C upper	55-59
6	C lower	50-54
7	D	40-49
8	No Award (NA)	30-39
9	No Award (NA)	0-29

Prelim Grades and Working Grades

Whilst the prelim scores are likely to be included in the next Tracking report and shown as a band (see table above) the Working Grade *may be different* from the prelim score. This may be because of previous class assessments, completed coursework or general performance and engagement in class learning. Teachers will use their professional judgement when making these assessment judgements.

Many subjects have coursework elements, these include *folios, assignments* or *practical* components. The prelim grade may or may not take into account any coursework and may also be the reason for differences in prelim and working grades

Working Levels – National 3,4 or 5

Our school aim for all pupils to achieve a qualification in every subject. Throughout S3 and S4 pupils work towards achieving a qualification at the highest level possible. Final levels of course presentation (Nat 3, 4, or 5) are often made after the Parent Consultation evening in January 2022 and into Spring 2022. For some it may be earlier. Subject Curricular Leaders may contact pupils, parents and carers to discuss Working Levels after the prelims.

Next Level of Study for S5

Prelims provide useful early information to support discussions and initial planning for the next levels of study in subjects progressing from S4 into S5. Please be assured that these decisions are not based solely on prelim results and occurs later in 2022. Please note for most S5 Higher courses a National 5 pass at Grades A-C in S4 is recommended.

Future Assessments

Whilst prelims have always been an important opportunity for learners to practice for later assessments, all pupils will have other assessment opportunities throughout S4.

Finally!

All pupils will be supported throughout this period. All will benefit from this learning experience and will move forward and continue to develop as increasingly confident independent learners.



Mr Hembury

Depute Head Teacher, Boroughmuir High School