

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



## **EDUCATION EXECUTIVE**

### **S5 AND S6 SCQF EXAMINATION RESULTS 2021**

#### **REPORT BY INTERIM HEAD OF EDUCATION (SECONDARY)**

##### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide members with an update on the performance of students in attaining Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) Awards at Level 6 (Higher or equivalent) in the S5 and S6 stages, and at Level 7 (Advanced Higher or equivalent including HNC) in the S6 stage.

##### **B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Education Executive notes:

- that the performance of S5 students in 5+, 3+ and 1+ Awards at SCQF Level 6 has risen in the five year period.
- that the performance of S6 students in 5+, 3+ and 1+ Awards at SCQF Level 6 has risen in the five year period.
- that the performance of S6 students in 1+ Awards at SCQF Level 7 has risen in the five year period.

##### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>I Council Values</b>   | Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; making best use of our resources; working in partnership |
| <b>II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b> | Raising Attainment is a key strategic objective of the Council as set out in the Single Outcome Agreement, Corporate Plan and National Improvement Framework Improvement Plan.            |
| <b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>   | None.   |
| <b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>  | SCQF attainment is reflected in the key performance indicators of the service.  |
| <b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>  | SCQF attainment is reflected in the performance indicators contained in the Single Outcome  |

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|--|--|
|  | Agreement.   |
| <b>VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b> | Examination results are delivered within agreed central education and devolved school budgets. |
| <b>VII Consideration at PDSP</b>                         |  |
| <b>VIII Other consultations</b>                          | None.  |

## **D TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D1 Introduction**

The Education Executive, at its meeting of 6 December 2016, agreed to adopt Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Awards as the key measure of attainment reported to members, parents and the public with effect from the 2017 exam diet.

The Education Executive noted that moving to the SCQF framework was appropriate as it includes and recognises an extended and enhanced range of achievement in the senior phase which is in line with the principles of Developing the Young Workforce. Specifically, it was agreed to adopt 5+, 3+ and 1+ Level 6 SCQF Awards at point of exit as the key measure of attainment.

It was noted that this change would allow easier comparison with national performance for members, parents and the public, and would present the fullest and most accurate measure of the totality of the attainment and achievement of young people throughout the totality of their school attendance. It was also noted, however, that performance management undertaken at schools and authority level would continue to rely on a wide range of measures in order to allow performance to be measured at key stages, and the performance of particular subjects, curricular areas, and groups of pupils to be measured.

The attainment of 5+, 3+ and 1+ SCQF Awards at Level 6 by students at the S5 stage, and 1+ SCQF Award at Level 7 by students at the S6 stage remain important measures of school performance, and for this reason they will continue to be reported to members annually. In addition, in this report the attainment of 5+, 3+, and 1+ SCQF awards at level 6 by students at the S6 stage has been included.

Results contained in this report include the following data: Verified National Qualification data from the SQA and Ungraded SCQF Awards completed by pupils in 2020/21. In addition to this any attainment at the appropriate level completed by pupils in previous sessions has also been included, for example 2020/21 S6 pupils who achieved other Highers when they were in S5.

## **D2 Context**

Following the cancellation of the 2021 National Qualifications examination diet due to Covid-19, the Alternative Certification Model (ACM) was put in its place by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). Under this model, pupils' results last session were based on a range of assessment evidence gathered in school over the academic year as part of the learning and teaching process. For each subject area, SQA provided guidance on the range of assessment evidence that results should be based on and also provided assessment resources for schools to use as they chose to. Schools submitted provisional results to SQA on 25 June 2021 and pupils received their final results on Tuesday 10 August 2021.

In order to ensure that all pupils' results are robust and accurate, SQA set out clear roles and responsibilities for all involved in the ACM. The West Lothian approach to the ACM was based on these roles and responsibilities with underpinning principles such as a common approach to principles of assessment, the requirement for effective communication with pupils and parents, and the development and support of collaborative working across networks.

A clear quality assurance process for the ACM was put in place in West Lothian this session. Key to this were clear communication and expectations, robust moderation of pupils' submitted evidence at school, local authority and, where required, Regional Improvement Collaborative level, as well as ongoing engagement with schools by the Quality Improvement Team in the lead up to 25th June. This process was supported by close working within authority subject networks and senior leader networks.

In April 2021, Education Scotland officers met with representatives of West Lothian Education Services including a group of senior leaders and a group of classroom practitioners and professional association members as part of its national engagement with local authorities focusing on the quality assurance of the ACM. Feedback from this meeting was very positive.

In May and June 2021, SQA issued further guidance on the appeals process for pupils as well as contingency arrangements for any pupils unable to complete assessments for one or more subjects as a result of extreme disruption to their learning this session.

## **D3 Attainment at SCQF Level 6 in S5**

Over the 5 year period 2017 to 2021, the percentage of students attaining 5+, 3+ and 1+ Awards at SCQF Level 6 in S5 has improved.

In each of the measures (for which data is available), performance of West Lothian schools and students has outperformed both the national average and the virtual comparator. Please note, comparative data for 2021 is not yet available.

The virtual comparator is made up of pupils from schools in other local authorities who have similar characteristics to those in West Lothian schools in terms of factors including stage, gender, additional support needs, and the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

**5 + Awards at SCQF Level 6 in S5**

|                    | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| West Lothian       | 29   | 32   | 41   | 44   | 48   |
| Virtual Comparator | 19   | 19   | 22   | 24   | N/A  |
| National           | 20   | 20   | 22   | 24   | N/A  |

**3 + Awards at SCQF Level 6**

|                    | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| West Lothian       | 46   | 52   | 58   | 60   | 63   |
| Virtual Comparator | 38   | 38   | 42   | 46   | N/A  |
| National           | 40   | 40   | 43   | 46   | N/A  |

**1+ Awards at SCQF Level 6**

|                    | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| West Lothian       | 66   | 69   | 71   | 75   | 78   |
| Virtual Comparator | 58   | 59   | 61   | 64   | N/A  |
| National           | 60   | 60   | 62   | 64   | N/A  |

**D4 Attainment at SCQF Level 6 in S6**

Over the 5 year period 2017 to 2021, the percentage of students attaining 5+, 3+ and 1+ Awards at SCQF Level 6 in S6 has improved.

**5 + Awards at SCQF Level 6 in S6**

|                    | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| West Lothian       | 38   | 40   | 44   | 52   | 52   |
| Virtual Comparator | 35   | 33   | 34   | 38   | N/A  |
| National           | 34   | 34   | 35   | 38   | N/A  |

**3 + Awards at SCQF Level 6 in S6**

|                    | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| West Lothian       | 52   | 54   | 58   | 62   | 63   |
| Virtual Comparator | 49   | 47   | 48   | 52   | N/A  |
| National           | 48   | 48   | 50   | 52   | N/A  |

**1+ Awards at SCQF Level 6 in S6**

|                    | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| West Lothian       | 66   | 70   | 71   | 73   | 76   |
| Virtual Comparator | 65   | 63   | 63   | 66   | N/A  |
| National           | 63   | 64   | 65   | 66   | N/A  |

**D5 Attainment at SCQF Level 7 in S6**

**1+ Awards at SCQF Level 7**

|                    | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| West Lothian       | 20   | 22   | 21   | 25   | 25   |
| Virtual Comparator | 22   | 22   | 21   | 25   | N/A  |
| National           | 21   | 22   | 22   | 24   | N/A  |

**E. CONCLUSION**

Attainment has been raised through focused and rigorous application of the Raising Attainment Strategy in all West Lothian Schools. The National Improvement Framework (NIF) Improvement Plan is also used to continue to drive improvement in performance.

The SCQF attainment figures demonstrate that the attainment of West Lothian students has risen over the five year period. Comparative data for 2017-2020 demonstrates that West Lothian students are outperforming the Scottish average and the average of pupils with similar socio economic characteristics at Level 6 in both S5 and S6. Comparative data for 2021 will be available following the release of Insight.

## F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Reports to the Education Executive 6<sup>th</sup> December 2016, 29<sup>th</sup> August 2017 and 28<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

Reports to the Education Executive 19/1/21, 18/5/21 and 22/6/21.

Appendices/Attachments

Report to Education Executive presented 19/1/21

<https://coins.westlothian.gov.uk/coins/viewDoc.asp?c=e%97%9Dh%97I%7B%90>

Report to Education Executive on Education Recovery presented 18/5/21

<https://coins.westlothian.gov.uk/coins/viewDoc.asp?c=e%97%9Di%8Fj%80%8A>

Report to Education Executive on Education Recovery presented 22/6/21

<https://coins.westlothian.gov.uk/coins/viewDoc.asp?c=e%97%9Di%8Fq%82%88>

Contact Person:

**Ali Lewis, Education Officer: Secondary**

Email: [alison.lewis@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:alison.lewis@westlothian.gov.uk)

**Catrina Hatch, Interim Head of Education (Secondary)**

Email: [catrina.hatch@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:catrina.hatch@westlothian.gov.uk)

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