



Principles for sharing Provisional Results management information for Awarding 2021

“Provisional Results information” refers to any results summaries (e.g. headline results or further analyses of these results) derived from the Provisional Results submitted to SQA by centres for Awarding 2021.

Accordingly, these exclude the Final Results, which will include subsequent ‘late amends’ and withdrawals by centres, and which will be finalised in the week of 02 August 2021 for publication on 10 August 2021. (Any sharing of these Final Results will be undertaken in accordance with the *Pre-release Access to Official Statistics (Scotland) Order 2008* and are therefore not covered by these principles.)

The principles in this document have been informed by the Code of Practice for Statistics and OSR guidance on management information and Official Statistics in the context of the pandemic¹.

They have also been informed by the Rapid Review of National Qualifications Experience 2020² undertaken by Professor Priestley which found, *inter alia*, that the “arrangements around data sharing” in 2020, whilst suitable in normal times, may not have been appropriate in the extraordinary context of a pandemic.

SQA’s Principles for sharing Provisional Results management information for Awarding 2021 are set out below:

- i) **Provisional Results information will only be shared with designated individuals who agree to a set of conditions for accessing the information** – to maintain the confidentiality of provisional results, information will only be shared with designated individuals who agree to a set of conditions for accessing the information. The conditions are set out in the accompanying document titled ‘*Provisional Results – Individual Agreement*’, and include the requirement that Provisional Results information is not forwarded or discussed with individuals who have not agreed to the conditions of access.

¹ [COVID-19: Production and use of management information by government and other official bodies – Office for Statistics Regulation \(statisticsauthority.gov.uk\)](https://www.statistics.gov.uk/production-and-use-of-management-information)

[National Statistician’s Guidance – Management Information and Official Statistics – Code of Practice for Statistics \(statisticsauthority.gov.uk\)](https://www.statistics.gov.uk/national-statistician-guidance)

² [Rapid Review of National Qualifications Experience 2020, Final Report \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/rapid-review-national-qualifications-experience-2020/final-report/)

- ii) **Provisional Results information will only be shared with individuals with a clear need to access the information** – there is likely to be considerable interest in results information this summer, from individuals who require this information to perform their roles, and from others who have an interest in the process. To maintain confidentiality and to protect the integrity of the process, Provisional Results information will only be shared with individuals who have a clear need to access the information to perform their roles.
- iii) **Provisional Results information will be shared with the minimum number of individuals possible** – Provisional Results information and analyses are confidential. As a principle, therefore, and to minimise risks of results being shared publicly ahead of publication of Final Results, Provisional Results information will be shared with the minimum number of individuals possible. In the event of a breach or public sharing of information prior to results day, SQA will consider how to respond, including whether to publish a Provisional Results overview containing the information prior to results day.
- iv) **Provisional Results information identifying individual centres will not be shared** – sharing detailed information that identifies individual centres risks differentially exposing the Provisional Results from specific centres (and potentially learners at those centres). As a principle, therefore, information identifying individual centres will not be shared. Note that this does not include the sharing of aggregate numbers of centres per course, etc.
- v) **Learner level results data will not be shared** – To ensure full compliance with Data Protection legislation, to reduce risks to individuals and to ensure that there is consistency in all analyses that are conducted, learner level data will not be shared.

The only exception is where SQA needs to share learner-level data with another organisation to undertake specific analyses, e.g., equalities analyses, for which learner-level data have to be matched with other data that SQA does not hold. In those cases, the sharing of such data will be underpinned by a strict Data Sharing Agreement agreed and signed by all parties.