

**Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS)  
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**Five year high: improved pass rates and increased number of A grades**

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SQA exam results in independent schools improved again in 2011. Pass rates and the proportion of entries awarded A grades at Intermediate 2, Higher and Advanced Higher have been increasing steadily and consistently over the past three years. In independent schools, the proportion of entries awarded A grades at Advanced Higher has increased by 20% in three years. In mainstream independent schools over half of all S5 Higher entries were awarded the top grade.

**2011 Pre-appeal SQA Results- SCIS mainstream schools only**

|                            |              | <b>2011</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>2009</b> | <b>2008</b> | <b>2007</b> |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>S5 Highers</b>          | % A-C passes | 92          | 91          | 91          | 90          | 90          |
|                            | % A grades   | 53          | 51          | 50          | 49          | 47          |
| <b>S6 Advanced Highers</b> | % A-C passes | 91          | 89          | 87          | 88          | 87          |
|                            | % A grades   | 47          | 44          | 39          | 38          | 37          |

John Edward, Director of SCIS, said:

**“The fact that pass rates and the proportion of A grades in the independent sector continue to rise is a testament to the quality of teaching and the purposeful learning environment that exists in our schools. Congratulations to all the students on their achievements and I wish them well in their next steps and in their careers ahead.**

**Although modest in number, the independent school sector in Scotland makes a significant contribution to the number of exam presentations, particularly at Advanced Higher where the numbers are disproportionately high. Independent schools also make an important contribution to the study of sciences and languages which remain vital to the strength and diversity of Scotland’s economy.**

## Notes to Editors

**Table 1: 2011 Pre-appeal SQA Results- all SCIS schools (mainstream and special)**

| 2011                   | SCIS entries as a % of all entries | Entries – SCIS schools | Entries – all schools | A-C Pass Rate SCIS schools % (1-6 Pass Rate for Standard Grade) | A-C Pass Rate all schools % (1-6 Pass Rate for Standard Grade) |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| Standard Grade         | 2.5                                | 8,292                  | 330,873               | 99.7  | 98.5   |
| Intermediate 1         | 1.1                                | 756                    | 65,797                | 85.8  | 77.1   |
| Intermediate 2         | 8.3                                | 10,612                 | 127,499               | 95.4  | 81.0   |
| Highers                | 8.4                                | 13,982                 | 165,732               | 89.9  | 76.5   |
| Advanced Highers       | 16.6                               | 3,514                  | 21,159                | 90.9  | 79.4   |
| Scottish Baccalaureate | 8.8                                | 15                     | 170                   | 86.7  | 80.0   |

Source: SCIS analysis of SQA data<sup>1</sup>

Scottish Baccalaureate pass rates refer to the percentage of entries awarded a pass or a distinction.

- SQA exam results in independent schools improved again in 2011. Pass rates and the proportion of entries awarded A grades at Intermediate 2, Higher and Advanced Higher have been increasing steadily and consistently over the past three years. In independent schools, the proportion of entries awarded A grades at Advanced Higher has increased by 20% in three years.
- The uptake of Standard Grade exams has been decreasing over the past three years, with entries falling by 12% over the period. Performance remains excellent, with three fifths of Standard Grade entries being awarded grade A in independent schools this year. Intermediate 1 and 2 have seen an increase in popularity, with the number of entries increasing by 4% and 5% respectively over three years.
- Uptake at Higher has remained consistently strong over the past three years, and the independent sector's share of entries has been stable at around 8%. Pass rates have improved annually for the past three years and the percentage of independent school entries awarded the top grade has increased by 6% over the period. In 2011, nearly half of all Higher entries from independent school candidates were awarded a grade A.
- The second tranche of Scottish Baccalaureate results was of high quality: over half of independent school entries were awarded distinctions. However, entries fell by just under a third.

The table of each school's pre-appeal examination results produced by SCIS reflects the wide choice of subjects and the diversity of qualifications on offer at Scotland's independent schools. A number of schools offer vocational, GCSE, A level or International Baccalaureate exams.

**For further information please contact John Edward or Sarah Randell on 0131 556 2316.**