

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by the Chief Education Officer****Educational Services: 6 December 2017**

Subject: Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Examination Results 2017**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To update Members on the performance of West Dunbartonshire schools in the national Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations of 2017.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** Members are requested to:

- a) Note the contents of this report and the attached appendices;
- b) Congratulate the pupils, parents and carers, staff and centrally deployed staff for achievements in this year's examinations.

3. Background

- 3.1** With the introduction of Insight in 2014, emphasis shifted in how a school is judged to be performing. Instead of the previous measures of how many pupils gained a number of passes at specific levels, a school is now measured according to its performance in key national benchmarks. These benchmarks encourage taking a holistic approach to evaluating achievement and attainment. A complete picture of local authority and school performance requires the national benchmarks to be considered as a whole. The four National Benchmarks focus on:

- 1. Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy
- 2. Improving attainment for all
- 3. Increasing post school participation
- 4. Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers.

- 3.2** Insight presents information on the achievements of school leavers at their point of exit from school, be that in S4, S5 or S6. Previously, we focussed on the attainment of an individual cohort taken as a whole (S4, S5 or S6). This change is in line with the Curriculum for Excellence approach which sees the Senior Phase as a single coherent experience leading to a positive destination. Each young person's experience will be different depending on their needs.

- 3.3** Insight data is drawn from a number of sources. It includes data from Skills Development Scotland about post school leaver destinations, wider achievement awards accredited from organisations other than the SQA and socio-economic data relating to other characteristics of young people. As these sources present data at different times of year there are implications for the timing of processes associated with performance analysis. Insight is updated twice a year, in August with SQA exam results and in February when it updates leaver destinations and the four National Measures. For this reason it is not possible to provide a complete picture of performance through the four national measures until after the February update. A further report will be brought to committee once this update is available.
- 3.4** Benchmark comparisons are no longer made against real comparator schools and local authorities but against virtual comparators. Insight makes these virtual comparisons by selecting real young people from across Scotland that match the characteristics of students in West Dunbartonshire schools or in the local authority as a whole. In the case of school leavers, ten comparable virtual leavers are made for every one of our school leavers from West Dunbartonshire.
- 3.5** Schools will continue to use the SQA results data released in August to inform their school and department improvement agenda in relation to attainment. This is quality assured through our Improvement Framework and through the publication an analysis of Standards and Quality reports.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** We continue to make good progress in closing the poverty related attainment gap. Overall, we presented 2,165 number of candidates for 9,927 number of qualifications across National 2 – Advanced Higher. 84% of those presentations resulted in a passing grade.
- 4.1.1** At National 4, the West Dunbartonshire data shows a decrease in attainment of 2% when compared with 2016 (96% pass rate in 2017 compared with 98% in 2016).
- 4.1.2** At National 5, the West Dunbartonshire data shows an increase in attainment of 2% when compared with 2016 (81% pass rate in 2017 compared with 79% in 2016).
- 4.1.3** At Higher, the West Dunbartonshire data shows an improvement of 1% when compared with 2016 (76% pass rate in 2017 compared with 75% in 2016).
- 4.1.4** At Advanced Higher, the West Dunbartonshire data shows an improvement of 1% when compared with 2016 (78% pass rate in 2017 compared with 77% in 2016).

4.1.5 The performance of each school in relation to the West Dunbartonshire and national average is shown in **figure 1** below. It should be noted however that percentage pass rates do not convey the number of young people in the cohort being presented for the qualification. For session 2016-17, each school had its own criteria when presenting young people for qualifications.

	CHS	DA	Kilpatrick	OLSP	SPTA	Choices	VOLA	WDC	National
AH	76.00%	77.00%	0.00%	76.00%	88.00%	0.00%	70.00%	78.00%	80.00%
H	79.00%	70.00%	0.00%	84.00%	74.00%	0.00%	73.00%	76.00%	77.00%
N5	78.00%	81.00%	0.00%	86.00%	81.00%	0.00%	80.00%	81.00%	79.50%
N4	100.00%	99.26%	0.00%	88.21%	94.00%	100.00%	100.00%	96.51%	92.80%
N3	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%	99.12%	92.75%	97.22%	100.00%	98.10%	90.80%
N2	0.00%	100.00%	80.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	87.50%	81.60%

Figure 1 – establishment performance

4.1.6 A consistent council wide presentation policy for establishments has been developed for implementation in session 2018-19. This will help establishments to support young people in making the best choices of both subjects and levels across all of our establishments and work with wider partners.

4.2 Analysis by Curricular Area

Figure 2 below shows the trend by curriculum area for 2014 – 2017:

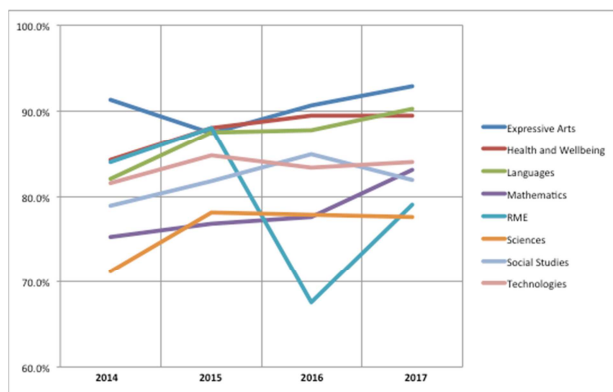


Figure 2: Trend by curriculum area

It should be noted that RME varies considerably due to the fluctuation in numbers presented.

4.3 Insight data

As noted in 3.3 above the data for the four national benchmarks for session 2016-17 is not finalised and published in Insight until February 2018. Therefore data shown below will not include leaver destination data or indeed changes reflected by the Post Results Service offered by the SQA.

In the sections that follow, we have presented data relating to our performance at local authority level. A more detailed analysis of performance of each of our secondary schools is presented in **Appendix 1**.

4.3.1 National Benchmark 1: Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

Figure 3 below shows the levels of attainment in Literacy and Numeracy obtained by WDC school leavers at SCQF levels 4 and 5 (*Literacy and Numeracy qualifications now include awards for Literacy, English, English as a Second Language, Numeracy and Mathematics*). It shows that at both levels leavers in WDC are achieving higher levels of attainment than those in our virtual comparator local authority, with statistically significant differences highlighted in the blue comment box. This result is gratifying given the focus that the service has taken in these core areas.

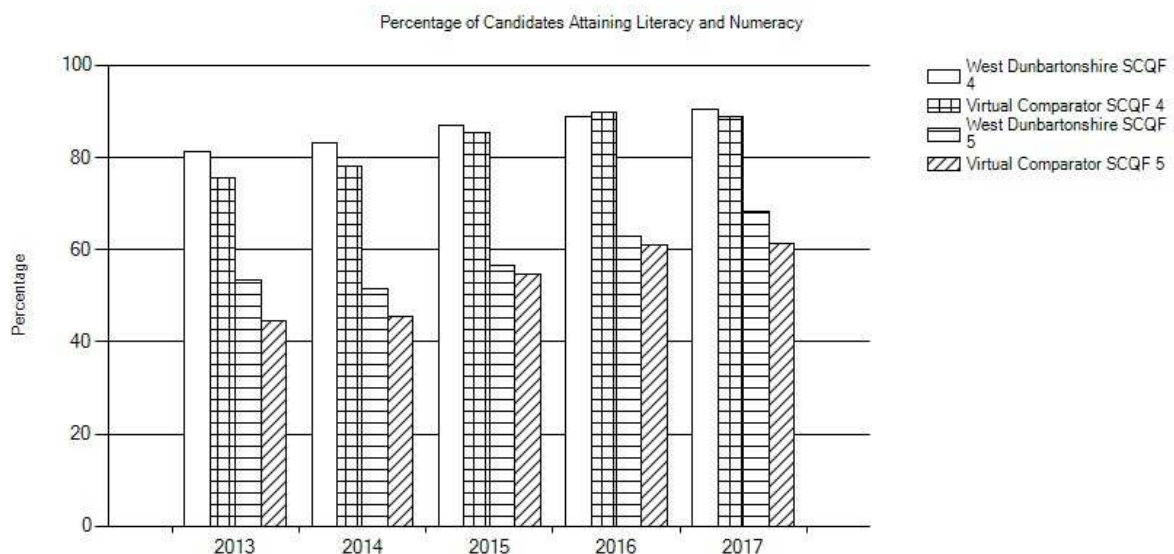


Figure 3 – Performance in Literacy and Numeracy

Testing found that the following comparisons were significant.

Performance in Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 5, 2017 is greater than our Virtual Comparator

Performance in Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 4, 2014 is much greater than our Virtual Comparator

Performance in Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 5, 2014 is greater than our Virtual Comparator

National Benchmark 1: Improving attainment in Literacy.

Figure 4 below shows our performance in literacy in isolation from numeracy.

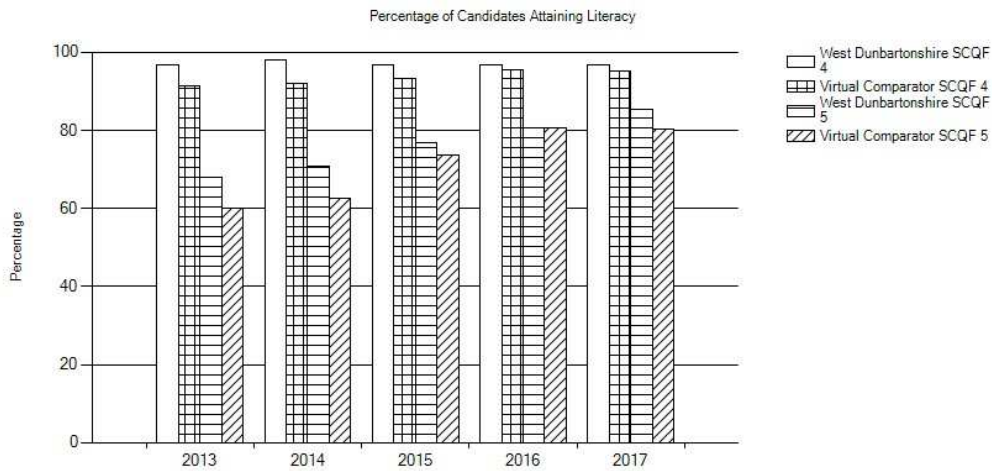


Figure 4 – Performance in Literacy

Testing found that the following comparisons were significant.

- Performance in Literacy at SCQF Level 4, 2017 is greater than our Virtual Comparator
- Performance in Literacy at SCQF Level 5, 2017 is greater than our Virtual Comparator
- Performance in Literacy at SCQF Level 4, 2016 is greater than our Virtual Comparator
- Performance in Literacy at SCQF Level 4, 2015 is much greater than our Virtual Comparator
- Performance in Literacy at SCQF Level 5, 2015 is greater than our Virtual Comparator

This shows that whilst we have broadly maintained our performance over time in literacy at National 4, we have improved our performance at National 5. Compared to our virtual comparator, we are consistently above at both National 4 and 5 over time.

National Benchmark 1: Improving attainment in Numeracy.

Figures 5 below shows our performance in numeracy in isolation from literacy.

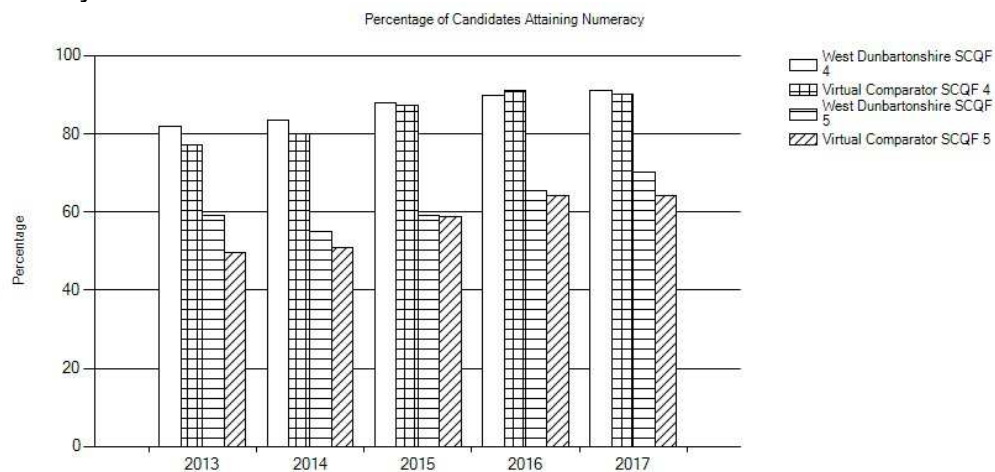


Figure 5 – Performance in Numeracy

Performance in Numeracy at SCQF Level 5, 2017 is greater than our Virtual Comparator

This shows that whilst we have improved our performance over time in numeracy at both level 4 and 5, the gap has closed in relation to our virtual comparator at National 4.

4.3.2 National Benchmark 2: Improving attainment for all

This measure allows us to examine how different ability cohorts are attaining in relation to our virtual cohort and the national one. Attainment is measured using a tariff scale developed for Insight. This scale allocates points to each qualification (*courses and units which make up courses are all allocated points*). The number of points awarded is dependent on the level of the course, with more demanding qualifications being awarded more points than less demanding ones. Three cohorts are identified, those in the bottom 20% of tariff points scored, those in the middle 60% of tariff points scored and those in the top 20% of tariff points scored.

Figure 6 below shows the average total tariff points gained by our cohorts of young people.

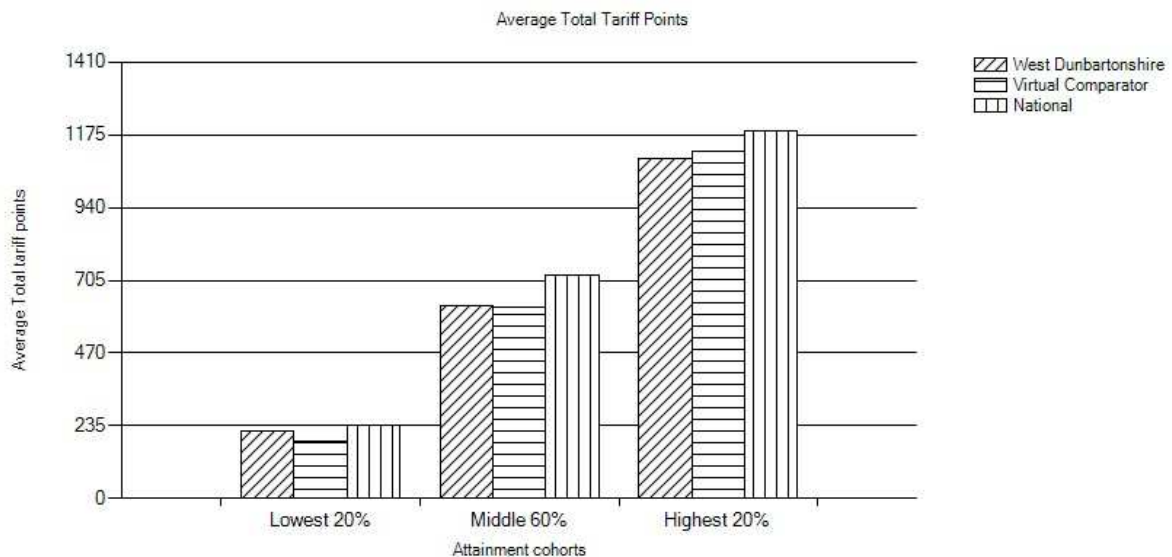


Figure 6 – Average Total Tariff points

This shows that the least able young people in WDC are attaining relatively better than those of our comparator, and broadly in line with the national cohort. Young people in the middle 60% are showing higher levels of attainment than our comparator but below the national cohort. The highest attaining cohort's tariff score is slightly below those in the virtual comparator and below the national cohort.

4.3.3 National Benchmark 3: Increasing post school participation

The third national benchmark looks at the destinations of our young people. This data will be updated in Insight in February 2018, so this measure will be reported to a future committee.

4.3.4 National Benchmark 4: Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers

This measure shows attainment measured using the same tariff scale as referred to in the **Improving attainment for all** measure above. Leavers are presented in a decile according to their Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data. Decile 1 refers to the attainment of young people with postcodes within data zones identified as being in the 10% most deprived in Scotland according to SIMD. Those young people in decile 10 have postcodes in the 10% least deprived data zones according to SIMD. The area of each the 'circle' represents the number of young people in each decile. Ideally the attainment line for Scotland would be level through each decile showing that postcode background had no effect on a student's attainment. Unfortunately this is not the case nationally.

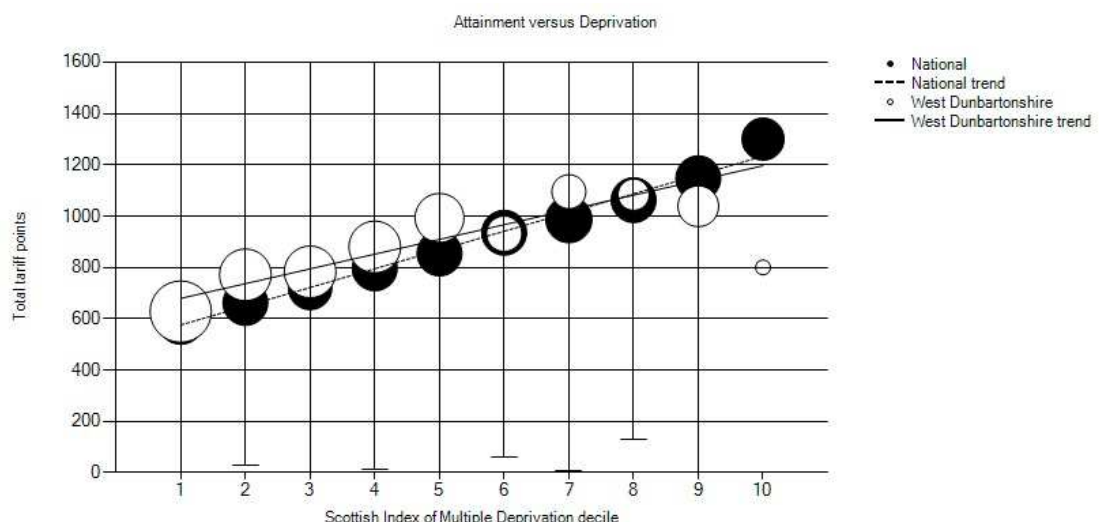


Figure 7 – Attainment versus Deprivation

Testing found that the following comparisons were significant.
In SIMD decile 2,3,4,5 and 7, performance is greater than the National Establishment.
In SIMD deciles 1,6 and 8, performance is in line with the National Establishment.
In SIMD deciles 9 and 10, performance is below the National Establishment.

Figure 7 above shows that the majority of the school leavers in WDC have postcodes in the lower SIMD deciles (larger 'circles' in deciles 1-5) and consequently that few of our leavers reside in upper decile postcodes. The data shows that the young people of WDC in deciles 1-8 have attainment either equal to or better than the national trend.

4.4 The relationship between qualifications and destinations.

With the establishment of Curriculum for Excellence, young people were entitled to a Senior Phase that continued to develop the four capacities and gain qualifications, and entitled to support into making a transition into a sustained positive destination. With Insight, these two entitlements have been brought much closer together.

To help show this in a meaningful context, we have looked at presenting this information in a different way. If qualifications are a means to gain entry to a further destination post school, then we have looked to break this down in a visual format to show the percentage of our school leavers that have gained the qualifications necessary to enter into a variety of destinations. **Figure 8** on the following page shows this for the young people of West Dunbartonshire as a whole. **Appendix 2** then shows this for each establishment.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

Outcome of the cohort of young people completing the Senior Phase of Curriculum for Excellence, 2014 – 2017



















Pupils achieved the following levels of attainment:		These enable the following post-school destinations:	In comparison with the preceding year group the following change was seen:	
	100% of pupils achieved units at SCQF Level 1 or above	Accredited achievement which evidences personal skills needed for a range of Modern Apprenticeships and employment opportunities	0.4% more pupils achieved SCQF unit awards	
	91.6% of pupils achieved Literacy at SCQF Level 4 or above		1.5% more pupils achieved literacy at SCQF level 4 or above	
	90.5% of pupils achieved 3 or more National 4s or better	Qualified for more selective Modern Apprenticeships (e.g. administration)	0.9% fewer pupils achieved 3, 4 or 5 National 4s or better	
	76.2% of pupils achieved Numeracy at SCQF Level 4 or above	Accredited achievement in numeracy skills, enabling a wider range of opportunities	The same percentage of pupils achieved numeracy at SCQF level 4 or above	
	71.9% of pupils achieved 3 or more National 5s or better	Qualified for the most selective Modern Apprenticeships (e.g. finance, engineering)	5.2% more pupils achieved 3, 4 or 5 National 5s or better	
	63.6% of pupils achieved 1 or more Higher	Qualified to progress to study an HNC	5.4% more pupils achieved 1 or more Highers	
	41.4% of pupils achieved 3 or more Highers	Qualified for a range of Higher Education opportunities	1.9% more pupils achieved 3 or more Highers	
	21.5% of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at Grades A or B	Qualified for more selective degree courses (e.g. science, etc)	1.5% more pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at Grades A or B	
	16.2% of pupils achieved 1 or more Advanced Higher	Better qualified for more selective degree courses	0.9% fewer pupils achieved 1 or more Advanced Highers	
	8.4% of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at Grade A	Qualified for the most selective degree courses (e.g. veterinary science, medicine)	1.5% more pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at Grade A	

Figure 8 – Relationship between qualifications and destinations

4.5 Members may wish to note that WDC pupils have demonstrated success in a wide variety of other qualifications which contribute to wider achievement. A significant and increasing number of our pupils are taking courses with partner providers such as West College Scotland and WD Leisure Trust in a variety of areas including construction, motor vehicle engineering, hospitality, hairdressing, early education and childcare, sport and recreation, beauty and photography. For the first year, some of our young people have embarked upon Foundation Apprenticeships, which we will report on at this time next year. In addition, a wide range of non-SQA accredited qualifications have been achieved. These include:

- ASDAN awards
- Caritas award
- Dance leadership
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Fashion brand retailing (Caledonian University)
- Forest Schools
- Green Flag Award
- John Muir award
- Mark Scott Foundation Award
- Mini Vinnie Award
- Pool life guard
- Pope Francis Faith Award
- Saltire awards
- Scottish Sports Award
- Social Enterprise Academy Award
- Sport leadership
- Stonewall Champion Award
- West Dunbartonshire Volunteering Award
- Youth Achievement Awards

4.6 The Council will ensure that schools are given every challenge and support to raise attainment in the areas outlined in this report through both local engagement and by encouraging involvement with national bodies.

5. People Implications

5.1 There are no personnel issues related to this report.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications related to this report.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 As members are only being asked to note the contents of this report and the attached appendix a risk assessment is not required.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** Educational Services has carried out a screening in equality for this report. The report was found not to be relevant to the specified equality duty because the content provides an update on service delivery rather than stating a change of policy.

9. Consultation

- 9.1** Legal Services and the Section 95 Officer have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.

10. Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** This report reflects the Council's aspiration to reduce inequalities for the people of West Dunbartonshire.

Laura Mason
Chief Education Officer

Person to Contact: Andrew Brown,
Senior Education Officer: Performance & Improvement,
Education, Learning and Attainment,
Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton G82 3PU.
Telephone (01389) 776970.

Appendices: **Appendix 1** – Insight data for West Dunbartonshire schools.
Appendix 2 – The relationship between Qualifications and Destinations.

Background Papers: EIA Screening

Wards Affected: All council Wards.

