

Larbert High School: useful facts

- 2000 students
- 150 teachers
- largest non-denominational school in Scotland (Falkirk County Council)
- approx. 400 students in each year group
- S1 up to S6

Key staff

Andy Auld is a Depute Head Teacher as well as the SQA exams co-ordinator Larbert, and had previously been involved at Local Authority level with the adoption of student iPads across all schools in the authority. It was during this time that he read an article in the TES about an SQA Pilot of Exam.net within schools in Glasgow City Council. After looking into it, he quickly realised the potential Exam.net had to enable the school to manage the growing number of students with Additional Support Needs (ASN) in assessments.

Adam Llewellyn is the Assessment Arrangements Manager at Larbert and has been key in leading the implementation of Exam.net in the school. His particular focus has been on supporting the pupils through the transition to digital assessments and running in-school teacher training.

[“We didn’t need to ask Exam.net for help, we simply used the resources provided on the platform - which shows how good they are”](#)

Before Exam.net: Specific challenges regarding AAAs in formal exams

- 40% of pupils registered with ASN
- Variety of individual needs difficult to meet
- 15 - 20 rooms extra rooms for these students needed simultaneously (with large number of accompanying staff, including invigilators)
- Logistics of managing large numbers of rooms with the ability to print student work and get it signed
- Students felt isolated from their teacher
- Students forgot to save their work on their PC

As Andy said, [“...logistically it was a nightmare and headache!”](#)

After Exam.net: Solutions through using Exam.net

- Extra rooms reduced to approx 2 at any time
- Decidedly simplified invigilation timetable with fewer resources needed
- The vast majority of ASN catered for within the Exam.net window
- Streamlined printing procedures
- Student work never lost
- Students less isolated
- Those needing a reader could now have text read aloud

“Exam.net not only benefits the students, but from a logistics perspective Exam.net is outstanding.”

Extra benefits experienced with Exam.net

- The high security mode is fully reliable and ensures no cheating (students cannot escape from the Exam.net window or import text from any source)
- Individual AAs can be added at the start of the exam while students wait in the ‘virtual lobby’ (set to ‘Discoverable mode’ instead of ‘Open’), also ensuring everyone starts at the same time.
- Different lengths of extra time easily managed from the monitoring view
- SQA papers (pdfs) can be quickly uploaded onto Exam.net before an exam starts
- Student work can be printed out with the relevant information included (eg. SCN)

“We had absolutely no problems with Exam.net during the whole of the exam session 2024”.

Implementation school-wide

...for staff

1. To begin with a handful of teachers familiarised themselves with Exam.net led by Andy and Adam.
2. On an INSET day at the start of the autumn term, Adam gave a 30 minute workshop in small groups on rotation so that all teachers had an active (mandatory) introduction to Exam.net. Adam took the teacher role, and the teacher participants were the students.
3. Adam visited each faculty over a period of a few weeks - here he focused on specific tools and functions relevant for that faculty as well as giving concrete examples of assessments that could be run through Exam.net
4. Optional after-school drop-ins were offered. Here teachers were encouraged to bring along an assessment they wanted help digitising or ask for help preparing for the prelims, for example.

....for the students with ASN:

1. Each student was given a one-hour training session with Exam.net in smaller groups
2. Students provided with headphones and/or keyboard for assessments

Going forward

“From being able to scale up Exam.net for high stakes examinations in particular, obviously other doors and possibilities have opened up from there...”

In only their second year working with Exam.net they are already running the end-of-year SQA exams for all AAA students, and already have two of their faculties running all assessments for all students in S1 on Exam.net.

“Our aim is that within the next 18 months to 2 years, we’ll be doing every assessment with every kid in every year through Exam.net. Then they are all familiar with the platform ready for high stakes exams.”

Andy is also considering acquiring stylus pens for the iPads so that students can more easily write formulas, for example, within Exam.net. This will open up possibilities for Maths and Science subjects to run their exams entirely digitally.