

# Exam results 'shame SNP complacency' on education

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Today's exam results which show the persistent decline in attainment should "shame" the SNP government's complacency on education, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

It was revealed this morning that Higher passes are down two per cent from last year, dropping below 75 per cent.

Advanced Higher passes have also reduced from 80.5 per cent in 2018 to 79.4 per cent this year.

Only National 5 results showed any improvement, but even they remain lower than every other year except last year.

Attainment in core subjects is down across the board, with Higher pass rates in the key areas of English down 2.7 per cent, and maths 2.1 per cent.

Shadow education secretary Liz Smith said the dip in pass rates was not only bad news for pupils and their career ambitions, but could damage the economy too in future years.

**Scottish Conservative shadow education secretary Liz Smith said:**

"It is important, first of all, to warmly welcome all those individual pupils who have been successful in these exams.

"A lot of hard work goes into months of study and due recognition should be given to their teachers too.

"However, the overall national trend is a matter of very serious concern given the fall in attainment levels across the board with the exception of National 5.

"John Swinney has made a great deal in recent years about the Higher being the 'gold standard' of Scottish education.

"That claim now looks very hollow given further drops in pass rates, and it comes at the same time as last year's improvement in the Advanced Higher has been reversed.

"The whole structure of the Curriculum for Excellence has been brought into question by these results.

"We have known for months that subject choice has been squeezed and that there have been deeply worrying downturns in some key subject areas which

have a major impact on the economy.

“Mr Swinney has persistently refused to listen to what teachers, parents and young people are telling him. These results shame that complacency.”