

# Summer 2015 Data Exchange Procedures

## GCE, GCSE and Level 1/2 Certificates



The following procedures outline the data that must be provided by awarding organisations during the summer 2015 data exchange for each qualification forming part of the data exchange process.

This is a **Regulatory Document** under **Condition B7** of the General Conditions of Recognition<sup>1</sup> (November 2014): Compliance with Regulatory Documents.

This Regulatory Document applies to pre-reform GCE qualifications, GCSE qualifications graded A\* to G and Level 1/2 certificates.

### GCE A level

#### GCE A level predictions

Each awarding organisation must create for each GCE A level qualification<sup>2</sup> which it makes available its own prediction for its specific cohort of 18-year-old matched cash-in Learners<sup>3</sup>. The prediction must be based on the average of the national relationship between:

1. A level outcomes in that subject for 18-year-old Learners in 2010 and the GCSE outcomes for those Learners in 2008; and
2. A level outcomes in that subject for 18-year-old Learners in 2011 and the GCSE outcomes for those Learners in 2009.

Data for *matched Learners* against predictions must exclude partial absences.

Data for *all Learners* must include partial absences.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://ofqual.gov.uk/documents/general-conditions-of-recognition/>

<sup>2</sup> Qualification in this context refers to each individual specification.

<sup>3</sup> 'Learner' is defined in the General Conditions as, 'A person who is registered to take a qualification and to be assessed as part of that qualification.'

## GCE A level reporting

Wherever actual and predicted outcomes differ beyond the reporting tolerance (depending on entry size) specified below, the relevant awarding organisation must inform Ofqual, each other regulator of qualifications which regulates that qualification and other awarding organisations which offer the same qualification, of the details. The reporting tolerances for GCE A levels in all subjects are given in the following table.

Graded entry (matched 18-year-olds)	Reporting tolerance for grade A
500 or less	None
501–1,000	3%
1,001–3,000	2%
3,001 or more	1%

For A\*, for qualifications (except French, German and Spanish) where there are more than 500 matched entries and more than 100 of the matched entries obtain grade A cumulative overall, the allowable tolerance between predicted and actual outcomes is  $\pm 2$  per cent. The rules which an awarding organisation must comply with in moving the A\* conversion point are included in this document (Appendix 1).

For A\* in GCE A level qualifications in French, German and Spanish, the allowable tolerance between predicted and actual outcomes is 0 to +2 per cent, i.e. the outcome must not be below the prediction. Otherwise, the same rules apply.<sup>4</sup>

By **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015** each awarding organisation must, provide Ofqual with a schedule of dates (Tuesdays and Thursdays) to show when it expects to submit A level award outcomes to Ofqual. Submission of such outcomes should normally be on the first Tuesday or Thursday which is two days after the provisional sign-off of the award (for example, if the provisional sign-off takes place on a Monday the outcomes should be submitted on the Thursday of the same week). Ofqual will however permit exceptions where, for example, the outcomes for a suite of qualifications need to be reviewed together before the awards are finalised.

Where matched outcomes for a GCE A level qualification which it makes available are outside the reporting tolerance (measured to one decimal place) at grade A\* or A, an awarding organisation must report outcomes for matched Learners against predictions at grades A\*, A and E together with a full technical explanation (making reference to Ofqual's 'Reviewing GCE and GCSE outcome data received from

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<sup>4</sup> See appendix 1 for rules for moving the A\* conversion/boundary point.

awarding organisations as part of the data exchange procedures, Summer 2015'), **using Template A** and according to the schedule of dates which that awarding organisation has provided to Ofqual.

An awarding organisation must update **Template B** each Tuesday and Thursday, according to the schedule of dates which the awarding organisation has provided to Ofqual, to show interim A level results to date.

We accept that in a few cases awarding organisations may need to carry out further analyses post-award in order to establish the security of the outcomes. If there is to be a delay in submission, an awarding organisation must notify Ofqual via the data exchange mailbox [dataexchange@Ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:dataexchange@Ofqual.gov.uk) as soon as possible and, in any event, by the date on the schedule which that awarding organisation has submitted.

A final version of **Template B**, reporting all GCE A level outcomes must be submitted, by **10 a.m., Monday 27th July 2015**.

For specialist mathematics subjects (further mathematics, pure mathematics and statistics), data for matched Learners against predictions does not have to be reported, but awarding organisations must report outcomes for all Learners using Template B.

For GCE A level art and design, the outcomes from the suite of options must be reported as a whole.

Awarding organisations do not have to report applied GCE A level outcomes.

## **GCE AS**

### **GCE AS predictions**

In respect of each GCE AS qualification which it makes available, each awarding organisation must create a prediction for its specific cohort of 17-year-old matched cash-in Learners. The prediction must be based on the average of the national relationship between:

1. AS outcomes in that subject for 17-year-old Learners in 2011 and GCSE outcomes for those Learners in 2010; and
2. AS outcomes in that subject for 17-year-old Learners in 2012 and GCSE outcomes for those Learners in 2011.

Data for *matched Learners* against predictions must exclude partial absences.

Data for *all Learners* must include partial absences.

## GCE AS reporting

Wherever actual and predicted outcomes differ beyond the specified reporting tolerance (depending on entry size), the relevant awarding organisation must inform Ofqual, each other regulator of qualifications which regulates that qualification and other awarding organisations which offer the same qualification, of the details. The reporting tolerances for all GCE AS qualifications are given in the following table.

Graded entry (matched 17-year-olds)	Reporting tolerance for grade A
500 or less	None
501–1,000	3%
1,001–3,000	2%
3,001 or more	1%

By **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015**, each awarding organisation must provide Ofqual with a schedule of dates (Tuesdays and Thursdays) to show when it expects to submit AS level award outcomes to Ofqual. Submission of those outcomes should normally be on the first Tuesday or Thursday which is two days after the provisional sign-off of the award (for example, if the provisional sign-off takes place on a Monday the outcomes should be submitted on the Thursday of the same week). Ofqual will however permit exceptions where, for example, the outcomes for a suite of qualifications need to be reviewed together before the awards are finalised.

Where matched outcomes for a GCE AS qualification which it makes available are outside the reporting tolerance (measured to one decimal place) at grade A, an awarding organisation must report outcomes for matched Learners against predictions at grades A and E together with a full technical explanation (making reference to Ofqual's 'Reviewing GCE and GCSE outcome data received from awarding organisations as part of the data exchange procedures, Summer 2015'), **using Template D** and according to the schedule of dates which that awarding organisation has provided to Ofqual.

An awarding organisation must update **Template C** each Tuesday and Thursday, according to the schedule of dates which the awarding organisation has provided to Ofqual, to show interim AS level results to date.

We accept that in a few cases an awarding organisation may need to carry out further analyses post-award in order to establish the security of the outcomes. If there is to be a delay in submission, an awarding organisation must notify Ofqual via the data exchange mailbox [dataexchange@Ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:dataexchange@Ofqual.gov.uk) as soon as possible and, in any event, by the date shown on the schedule which that awarding organisation has submitted.

A final version of **Template C**, reporting all GCE AS outcomes must be submitted, by **10 a.m., Monday 27th July 2015**.

For specialist mathematics subjects (further mathematics, pure mathematics and statistics), data for matched Learners against predictions does not have to be reported, but awarding organisations must report outcomes for all Learners using template C.

For GCE AS art and design, the outcomes from the suite of options must be reported as a whole.

Awarding organisations do not need to report applied GCE AS outcomes.

## **GCSE**

### **GCSE predictions**

#### **GCSE qualifications that first certificated in summer 2011**

In respect of each GCSE qualification which they make available that first certificated in summer 2011, AQA, Pearson and OCR must each create their own prediction for their specific cohort of 16-year-old matched cash-in Learners. The prediction must be based on the average of the national relationship between:

1. GCSE outcomes in that subject for 16-year-old Learners in 2011 and Key Stage 2 outcomes for those Learners in 2006; and
2. GCSE outcomes in that subject for 16-year-old Learners in 2012 and Key Stage 2 outcomes for those Learners in 2007.

WJEC must follow the same procedure for each GCSE qualification which it makes available where its England entry for that qualification is more than 50 per cent of its total entry for that qualification and where there are more than 1,000 Key Stage 2 matched Learners.

AQA, Pearson and OCR must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above.

WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above where Key Stage 2 data are used. Where Key Stage 2 data are not used, WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on combined data from common centres (schools and colleges) in 2011 and 2012.

CCEA must report outcomes in respect of each GCSE qualification which it makes available against predictions based on combined data from common centres (schools and colleges) in 2011 and 2012.

## **GCSE Citizenship**

In respect of each GCSE qualification in Citizenship which they make available, AQA, Pearson and OCR must each create their own prediction for their specific cohort of 16-year-old matched cash-in Learners. The prediction must be based on the national relationship between GCSE outcomes for 16-year-old Learners in GCSE Citizenship in 2014 and Key Stage 2 outcomes for those Learners in 2009.

Awarding organisations must prioritise bringing full course outcomes into line with predictions.

## **GCSE qualifications that first certificated in summer 2012**

**GCSE English Literature, GCSE Gaeilge, GCSE ICT, GCSE Welsh, GCSE Welsh literature and GCSE Welsh second language.**

In respect of each GCSE qualification in the above subjects which they make available, AQA, Pearson and OCR must each create their own prediction for their specific cohort of 16-year-old matched cash-in Learners. The prediction must be based on the average of the national relationship between:

1. GCSE outcomes in that subject for 16-year-old Learners in 2012 and Key Stage 2 outcomes for those Learners in 2007.
2. GCSE outcomes in that subject for 16 year-old Learners in 2013 and Key Stage 2 outcomes for those Learners in 2008

WJEC must follow the same procedure for each GCSE qualification which it makes available in the same subjects where its England entry for that qualification is more than 50 per cent of its total entry for that qualification and where there are more than 1,000 Key Stage 2 matched Learners.

AQA, Pearson and OCR must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above.

WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above where Key Stage 2 data are used. Where Key Stage 2 data are not used, WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on combined data from common centres in 2012 and 2013.

CCEA must report outcomes in respect of each GCSE qualification which it makes available against predictions based on combined data from common centres (schools and colleges) in 2012 and 2013.

## **GCSE English and GCSE English language in England**

In respect of each GCSE qualification in the above subjects which they award in England, AQA, Pearson, OCR and WJEC must each create their own predictions for their specific cohort of 16-year-old matched cash-in Learners. Predictions must be based on the national relationship between GCSE outcomes for 16-year-old Learners across both GCSE English and GCSE English language in the academic year 2013/14 and Key Stage 2 outcomes for those Learners in 2009. Separate predictions for GCSE English and GCSE English language must also be provided based on national GCSE outcomes in the respective subjects for 16-year-old Learners in the academic year 2013/14.

Outcomes relative to the aggregate predictions across both GCSE English and GCSE English language are subject to the reporting tolerances quoted on page 12 (including  $\pm 2$  per cent at grade A\*).

AQA, Pearson, OCR and WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above.

The outcomes must be reported against predictions as follows:

1. For GCSE English
2. For GCSE English language
3. For GCSE English and GCSE English language combined.

For the speaking and listening endorsement of GCSE English and GCSE English language, AQA, Pearson, OCR and WJEC must report outcomes for matched 16-year-old Learners excluding partial absences and for all Learners including partial absences.

There are no reporting tolerances applied to outcomes for speaking and listening.

The outcomes must be reported for speaking and listening, using **Template K** as follows:

1. For GCSE English
2. For GCSE English language
3. For GCSE English and GCSE English language combined.

## **GCSE Mathematics**

In respect of each GCSE qualification in Mathematics which they make available, AQA, Pearson and OCR must each create their own predictions for their specific cohort of 16-year-old matched cash-in Learners. Predictions must be based on the national relationship between GCSE outcomes for 16-year-old Learners across both the (previously) modular and linear GCSE Mathematics qualifications in the academic year 2013/14 and Key Stage 2 outcomes for those Learners in 2009. Separate predictions for each GCSE Mathematics qualification must also be provided based on national GCSE outcomes in the aggregate of (previously) modular and linear specifications for 16-year-old Learners in the academic year 2013/14.

Outcomes relative to the aggregate predictions across both GCSE Mathematics qualifications are subject to the reporting tolerances quoted on page 11 (including  $\pm 2$  per cent at grade A\*).

WJEC must follow the same procedure for each GCSE Mathematics qualification which it makes available where its England entry for that qualification is more than 50 per cent of its total entry for that qualification and where there are more than 1,000 Key Stage 2 matched Learners.

AQA, Pearson and OCR must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above.

WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above where Key Stage 2 data are used. Where Key Stage 2 data are not used, WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on data from common centres in 2014.

The outcomes must be reported against predictions as follows:

1. For GCSE Mathematics – previous modular qualification
2. For GCSE Mathematics – previous linear qualification
3. For GCSE Mathematics combined

CCEA must report outcomes for each GCSE Mathematics qualification which it makes available against predictions based on data from common centres in 2014.

## **GCSE Applications of Mathematics and GCSE Methods in Mathematics (linked pair)**

In respect of each qualification in the above subjects which they make available, AQA, Pearson and OCR must each create their own prediction for their specific cohort of 16-year-old matched cash-in Learners. The prediction must be based on



the national relationship between GCSE outcomes for 16-year-old Learners in that subject in the academic year 2013/14 and Key Stage 2 outcomes for those Learners in 2009.

In respect of each qualification in the above subjects which it makes available, WJEC must follow the same procedure where its England entry is more than 50 per cent of its total entry for those qualifications and where there are more than 1,000 Key Stage 2 matched Learners.

AQA, Pearson and OCR must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above.

WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above where Key Stage 2 data are used. Where Key Stage 2 data are not used, WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on data from common centres in 2014.

### **GCSE Science**

In respect of each GCSE Science qualification which they make available, AQA, Pearson and OCR must create their own prediction for their specific cohort of 16-year-old matched cash-in Learners. The prediction must be based on the national relationship between GCSE outcomes for 16-year-old Learners in GCSE Science in 2014 and Key Stage 2 outcomes for those Learners in 2009.

In respect of each GCSE Science qualification which it makes available, WJEC must follow the same procedure where its England entry for that qualification is more than 50 per cent of its total entry for that qualification and where there are more than 1,000 Key Stage 2 matched Learners.

AQA, Pearson and OCR must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above.

WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above where Key Stage 2 data are used. Where Key Stage 2 data are not used, WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on data from common centres in 2014.

In respect of each GCSE Science qualification which it makes available, CCEA must report outcomes against predictions based on data from common centres in 2014.

### **GCSE qualifications that first certificated in summer 2013**

#### **GCSE Additional Science, GCSE Additional Applied Science, GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry, GCSE Physics and GCSE Environmental and Land-based Science**

In respect of each GCSE qualification in the above subjects which they make available, AQA, Pearson and OCR must each create their own prediction for their specific cohort of 16-year-old matched cash-in Learners. The prediction must be based on the national relationship between GCSE outcomes in that subject for 16-year-old Learners in 2014 and Key Stage 2 outcomes for those Learners in 2009.

In respect of each GCSE qualification in the above subjects which they make available, WJEC must follow the same procedure where its England for that qualification entry is more than 50 per cent of its total entry for that qualification and where there are more than 1,000 Key Stage 2 matched Learners.

AQA, Pearson and OCR must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above.

WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above where Key Stage 2 data are used. Where Key Stage 2 data are not used, WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on data from common centres in 2014.

In respect of each GCSE qualification in the above subjects which they make available, CCEA must report outcomes against predictions based on data from common centres in 2014.

### **GCSE qualifications that first certificated in summer 2014**

#### **GCSE Further Additional Science**

For GCSE Further Additional Science qualifications that share the same or very similar assessments with GCSEs in the separate sciences (biology, chemistry and physics)<sup>5</sup>, an awarding organisation must report outcomes for each such qualification that it makes available against the predictions created for the aggregate of the separate sciences and use test equating as appropriate to check that the standards set are comparable.

For each GCSE Further Additional Science qualification which it makes available that has unique assessments, an awarding organisation must create its own prediction for its specific cohort of 16-year-old matched cash-in Learners. The prediction must be

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<sup>5</sup> The same assessments having identical questions or very similar assessments where most of the questions are the same.

based on the relationship between GCSE outcomes for 16-year-old Learners in that awarding organisation's own GCSE further additional science qualification in 2014 and Key Stage 2 outcomes for those Learners in 2009.

### **GCSEs in Computing and Computer Science <sup>6</sup>**

For each GCSE qualification in Computing or Computer Science which they make available, AQA, Pearson and OCR will each create their own prediction for their specific cohort of 16-year-old matched cash-in Learners. The prediction will be based on the national relationship between GCSE outcomes in that subject for 16-year-old Learners in 2014 and Key Stage 2 outcomes for those Learners in 2009.

For each GCSE qualification in Computing or Computer Science which it makes available, WJEC must follow the same procedure where its England entry for that qualification is more than 50 per cent of its total entry for that qualification and where there are more than 1,000 Key Stage 2 matched Learners.

AQA, Pearson and OCR must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above.

WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE/Key Stage 2 relationships described above where Key Stage 2 data are used. Where Key Stage 2 data are not used, WJEC must report outcomes against predictions based on data from common centres in 2014.

### **GCSE English and GCSE English language in Northern Ireland**

For qualifications awarded to Learners in Northern Ireland which share all of the same assessments with qualifications awarded to Learners in England, awarding organisations need only report outcomes for all candidates and not against a specific prediction.

For qualifications awarded to Learners in Northern Ireland which have different assessments to qualifications awarded to Learners in England, awarding organisations must report outcomes against predictions based on data from common centres in 2014.

### **WJEC GCSE English language in Wales**

In respect of each GCSE qualification in English Language which it awards in Wales, WJEC must report outcomes for 16-year-olds in Wales, against outcomes for 16-year-olds in Wales in summer 2014. Qualification outcomes for 16-year-olds in Wales

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<sup>6</sup> OCR GCSE Computing first certificated in summer 2011.

must be comparable with the outcomes achieved by the 16-year-old cohort in summer 2014, unless WJEC has evidence of a compelling reason for change.

This is a continuation of the Welsh Government's requirements from summer 2013 and summer 2014, and reflects both WJEC's position as sole provider for this qualification in Wales and Welsh Government's requirements of comparable outcomes between years. A 1 per cent reporting tolerance will be applied at key grade boundaries.

### Other GCSEs

In respect of each GCSE qualification in Art and Design which it makes available, an awarding organisation must report the outcomes from the suite of options as a whole.

Awarding organisations do not need to report GCSE double-award outcomes or GCSE short course outcomes.

### GCSE reporting

In respect of a GCSE qualification which it makes available, wherever actual and predicted outcomes differ for grades A and C beyond the reporting tolerance (depending on entry size) specified below, an awarding organisation must inform Ofqual, each other regulator of qualifications which regulates that qualification and other awarding organisations which offer the same qualification of the details. The reporting tolerances for all GCSE qualifications, except where alternative provision is made above, are given in the following table.

Graded entry <sup>7</sup>	Reporting tolerance for grades A & C
500 or less	None
501 – 1,000	3%
1,001 – 3,000	2%
3,001 or more	1%

For A\*, where there are more than 500 matched entries and more than 100 of the matched entries obtain grade A cumulative overall, the allowable tolerance between predicted and actual outcomes is  $\pm 2$  per cent. The rules which an awarding organisation must comply with in for moving the A\* conversion point are included in this document (Appendix 1).

By **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015**, each awarding organisation must provide Ofqual with a schedule of dates (Tuesdays and Thursdays) to show when it expects to submit GCSE award outcomes to Ofqual. Submission of those outcomes should normally

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<sup>7</sup> Matched 16-year-olds for Key Stage 2 predictions and 16-year-olds from common centres for common centre predictions.

be on the first Tuesday or Thursday which is two days after the provisional sign-off of the award (for example, if the provisional sign-off takes place on a Monday the outcomes should be submitted on the Thursday of the same week). Ofqual will however permit exceptions where, for example, the outcomes for a suite of qualifications need to be reviewed together before the awards are finalised.

Where matched outcomes for a GCSE qualification which it makes available are outside the reporting tolerance (measured to one decimal place) at grade A\*, A or C, an awarding organisation must report outcomes for matched Learners against predictions at grades A\*, A, C and F together with a full technical explanation (making reference to Ofqual's 'Reviewing GCE and GCSE outcome data received from awarding organisations as part of the data exchange procedures, Summer 2015'), **using Template G** and according to the schedule of dates which that awarding organisation has provided to Ofqual.

- AQA, Pearson and OCR must report on **Template G** any outcomes that are out of tolerance against Key Stage 2 based predictions.
- WJEC must follow the same procedure for subjects where the England entry is more than 50 per cent of the total entry and where there are more than 1,000 Key Stage 2 matched Learners. Where this does not apply, WJEC must report out-of-tolerance outcomes against common centre predictions.
- CCEA must report any out-of-tolerance outcomes against common centre predictions.

All awarding organisations must update **Template F** each Tuesday and Thursday, according to the schedule of dates which each has provided to Ofqual, to show GCSE data based on predictions, excluding partial absences, to date.

We accept that, in a few cases, an awarding organisation may need to carry out further analyses post-award in order to establish the security of the outcomes. If there is to be a delay in submission, an awarding organisation must notify Ofqual via the data exchange mailbox [dataexchange@Ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:dataexchange@Ofqual.gov.uk) as soon as possible and, in any event, by the date shown on the schedule which that awarding organisation has submitted.

Inter-board screening data should be used, if consistent over two years, as a steer for outcomes to be slightly positive or negative against the predicted outcome for matched candidates, although an adjustment should not normally take a qualification out of tolerance. In exceptional cases, where a qualification is flagged as being out of tolerance at grades A or C, screening data can be used as an explanation providing that the data are consistent over two years and support the out-of-tolerance outcome.

All GCSE outcomes at grades A\*, A, C and F, including partial absences, must be reported, **using Template E**, by **10 a.m., Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2015** at the latest.

All GCSE English and English Language speaking and listening outcomes at grades 5, 3 and 1, must be reported, using **Template K**, by **10 a.m., Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2015** at the latest.

## **Level 1/2 certificates (commonly known as IGCSEs)**

An awarding organisation must report outcomes in respect of each Level 1/2 certificate qualification which it makes available which -

- (a) is included in DfE performance tables,
- (b) is accredited by Ofqual,
- (c) qualifies for funding under section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000, and/or
- (d) counts towards the Ebacc performance measure.

Outcomes must be reported for 2014 and 2015. There are no reporting tolerances applied to outcomes for these level 1/2 certificates.

An awarding organisation must report outcomes at grades A\*, A, C and F, including partial absences, **using Template H**, by **10 a.m., Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2015** at the latest.

## **Reporting significant differences in grade boundary positions**

For each **GCE and GCSE** qualification which it makes available an awarding organisation must report any instances where unit-/component-level key grade-boundary positions are significantly different from the previous series and/or summer 2014 series. (A significant difference might be one that could cause concern with centres or which would be considered to be an exception to normal trends.) These must be reported as soon as possible after the award and sign-off by the Responsible Officer, together with an explanation for the difference, **using Template J**.

## **Sending data**

Each awarding organisation must confirm its data exchange contact with Ofqual before the process begins. All data are to be uploaded to the secure collaborative portal and in accordance with the principles outlined in Appendix 2.

All returns are subject to the final ratification of the awards by the awarding organisation.

**On receipt of the above GCE, GCSE and Level 1/2 certificate information, Ofqual:**

1. will review the data on the basis of its published procedure,
2. may contact awarding organisations to ask for additional information or clarification, and aim to do this within 24 hours of receipt, and
3. will hold twice weekly teleconferences in July (Wednesdays and Fridays at noon) with awarding organisation technical colleagues, as necessary, to review data and explore any implications.
4. will discuss outcomes with awarding organisations at the Maintenance of Standards meetings on **28<sup>th</sup> July 2015 (AS and A level) and 4<sup>th</sup> August 2015 (GCSE and Level 1/2 Certificates)**.

## Appendix 1

### Rules for moving the A\* conversion/boundary point

1. In both A level and GCSE, the A\* raw mark conversion point (A level) or raw mark boundary (GCSE) is provisionally set on each unit as follows.
  - (i) Where the mark width from the grade A raw mark boundary to the maximum mark is more than twice the width from A to B, A\* is the same width above A as B is below A.
  - (ii) Where the mark width from the grade A raw mark boundary to the maximum is less than or equal to twice that from A to B, A\* is halfway between A and the maximum, rounded down where necessary to the nearest whole number below.
2. In order to maintain standards for A\* at subject level, it may be necessary to adjust the A\* conversion point/boundary on some units.
3. If adjustments are needed, the maintenance of subject standards at the judgemental grades must be the first priority.
4. For qualifications where there are more than 500 matched entries and where the cumulative number of matched Learners at grade A is more than 100, the tolerance between predicted and actual (matched) outcomes at grade A\* is  $\pm 2$  per cent (0 to +2 per cent in French, German and Spanish, i.e. the matched outcome must not be below prediction). There is no tolerance where one or both numbers do not exceed these thresholds.
5. Adjustments to the A\* conversion points/boundaries should not normally be made in series where the majority of Learners are not cashing in, even if the thresholds in paragraph 4 are exceeded. Possible exceptions should be discussed in advance with Ofqual, each other regulator of qualifications which regulates that qualification and other awarding organisations which offer the same qualification.
6. Before any changes are made to an A\* conversion point/boundary, consideration should be given to moving one or more boundaries at the judgemental grades (normally grade A), in order to bring the subject outcome at grade A\* within tolerance. Subject outcomes at the judgemental grades must, of course, remain within tolerance.
7. Because of the large numbers of internally assessed units, for which boundaries are normally carried forward, tolerances are not normally used for the judgemental grades in Applied GCEs. Therefore, the  $\pm 2$  per cent tolerance is not used for grade A\* in these qualifications.



8. Adjustments to the A\* boundaries/conversion points must be agreed by the Chair of Examiners but do not need to be discussed by the whole awarding committee.

## Appendix 2

### Principles for using the secure collaborative portal

1. The portal is to be used for sensitive data relating to the data exchange that was previously sent to Ofqual by email as an encrypted attachment.
2. Email should be used as usual where no sensitive data is included or attached. All email correspondence should be sent to [dataexchange@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:dataexchange@ofqual.gov.uk).
3. Where appropriate, notification alerts should be set up by individual users to notify them when folders or documents are added or changed.
4. In terms of version control, all templates must be uploaded using the date as a prefix, for example 01072015-WJEC-Template 1–08.30. Therefore, whenever a revised data template is uploaded, please create this as a new document using the date as a prefix and the time as a suffix where necessary.
5. Old versions of templates must not be deleted from the portal.
6. Awarding organisation users must not create extra folders within the data exchange library of the portal without consulting Ofqual first.