



Qualifications and
Curriculum Authority

National curriculum assessments: 2008 maladministration report

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Executive summary

This report details the range of allegations of maladministration reported to the National Assessment Agency's (NAA)¹ national curriculum assessment maladministration team throughout the 2008 test cycle. The report compares the patterns of allegations made and the outcomes of cases submitted to the maladministration committee between 2006 and 2008. This report also offers recommendations for improvements in 2009 and for future test cycles.

The term 'maladministration' refers to any act that could jeopardise the integrity, security or confidentiality of the national curriculum tests and lead to test results that do not accurately reflect the unaided work of pupils. There are a number of errors in administering the tests, both deliberate and accidental, which are referred to as maladministration such as: test papers being opened incorrectly; pupils cheating; test administrators over-aiding pupils and changes being made to pupils' completed test scripts.

In 2008, local authority maintained key stage 2 and key stage 3 schools were statutorily obliged to administer the national curriculum tests to all eligible pupils. Key stage 1 schools were required to submit teacher assessment levels for English, mathematics and science using the key stage 1 tasks and tests to inform their decisions.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) had a statutory duty to investigate any matter brought to its attention that related to the accuracy and correctness of any results of any pupil in the key stage 2 and key stage 3 national curriculum tests. These instances were investigated in partnership with local authorities in accordance with the published *maladministration procedures*.

For 2009, following the Secretary of State's announcement on 14 October 2008 that the key stage 3 national curriculum tests are no longer statutory, QCA will not investigate allegations of maladministration relating to the key stage 3 national curriculum tests.

In 2008, local authorities were responsible for investigating all allegations of maladministration in the key stage 1 assessments. QCA gave advice to local authorities on how to investigate the allegations appropriately and to make decisions on changes to pupils' results.

Local authorities moderate key stage 1 teacher assessment for 25% of schools in their area and QCA moderates 25% of local authorities in order to maintain consistent standards across

¹ Now referred to as QCA

the country. Schools are required to store the key stage 1 test materials responsibly. Maladministration at key stage 1 is most commonly self-reported by schools following issues with the storage of test materials or by local authorities following moderation of teacher assessment.

The remit of QCA in investigating cases of alleged maladministration is to determine whether there is doubt over the correctness or accuracy of pupils' results. The aim of this remit is to safeguard the integrity of the statutory national curriculum assessments and the interests of the pupils.

There was an overall reduction in the total number of maladministration cases logged in 2008 compared to previous cycles, with 503 cases logged in 2008 in comparison to 532 cases in 2007 and 579 cases in 2006.

In 2008 approximately 20,600 key stage 2 and key stage 3 schools participated in the 2008 national curriculum tests. A total of 70 schools, 0.34 percent of the total number participating in the tests, had cases which led to either a change to, or annulment of, pupil results. Of these cases, 88 per cent comprised of schools self-reporting pupils cheating or requesting a change to or annulment of pupils' results following investigations into alleged maladministration of the tests.

Approximately 1.24 million pupils were each assessed in English, mathematics and science in the 2008 national curriculum tests. Less than 0.03 per cent (339 pupils) received changes to results or annulments.

These numbers illustrate that the vast majority of schools administered the tests in accordance with the published *Assessment and reporting arrangements (ARA)* without any cause for concern despite the difficulties experienced with the overall administration of the 2008 national curriculum tests.

In the course of an investigation into an allegation of maladministration, if a test result is deemed not to reflect the pupils' own unaided work or there have been errors in the administration of the tests, which put the pupils' results in doubt, the QCA maladministration team will make a recommendation that the case is referred to the QCA maladministration committee and that the pupils' results be annulled or appropriately changed.

The number of cases referred to the maladministration committee fell from 21 in 2007 to 10 in 2008. Consequently, the number of committee decisions leading to changes to or annulments of results fell from 18 in 2007 to nine in 2008. One reason for the decrease in committee cases was a change in policy that now allows schools to request changes to, or annulment of,

pupils' results when they agree that the tests have been subject to maladministration. Also, there were no reported cases relating to breaches of test security in 2008. This followed changes made to the timing of the delivery of test materials to markers in light of recommendations made in the *National curriculum assessments: 2007 maladministration report*.

There was only one case resulting in a whole school cohort annulment in 2008, compared to four in 2007. The maladministration team focus on the specific pupils who have been affected by any alleged maladministration when conducting investigations. In 2008, the majority of schools whose cases were referred to the maladministration committee had large cohorts. In such schools, tests are often administered in more than one room and by a number of test administrators and instances of maladministration were therefore limited to particular groups of pupils in a school cohort.

Allegations of maladministration continue to be reported to QCA by a number of different sources. Schools self-reported the largest proportion of incidents of maladministration (43 per cent), but a significant number of cases were also reported by markers (24 per cent) and local authorities (21 per cent). In 2008 local authorities were required to monitor the administration of the tests in at least 10 per cent of relevant key stage 2 and key stage 3 schools, either before, during or after the test period. The majority of cases reported by local authorities were instances of minor maladministration that did not affect the integrity or security of the tests following monitoring visits to schools.

The cases of maladministration reported relating to key stages 2 and key stage 3 were evenly distributed, representing 50 per cent and 49 per cent, respectively. Cases at key stage 1 represented just one per cent of the total number reported.

The most common reported allegations of maladministration related to the period during test administration (69 per cent), covering the period from when the tests are administered to pupils until the completed test scripts are sent for external marking. The most common allegation in this period was Pupil cheating. Test administrators over-aiding pupils was the second most reported allegation in this period. The instances where the allegation was found to have some substance highlighted the continued need for test administrators to receive adequate training. Unfounded allegations suggested a need for a greater understanding amongst pupils and parents of what assistance test administrators can provide.

Each year QCA undertakes an internal evaluation of protocol and procedures. For 2008, internal improvements included improved training for the national curriculum tests helpline and a new system whereby calls and emails received by the helpline were immediately logged into

the customer relationship management (CRM) system. The new system of logging allegations received allowed for daily case review sessions to occur, ensuring cases were allocated to members of the maladministration team efficiently and that more serious allegations were followed up in a timely fashion.

More emphasis was placed on contacting schools by telephone to discuss allegations of maladministration and to collect statements where appropriate, as opposed to requesting statements by letter.

These measures were carried out to speed up the process from the first reporting of an allegation of maladministration to the closing of the case, to ease the burden on both schools and local authorities.

Key findings

QCA presents the following key findings relating to maladministration in 2008.

- Less than 0.03 percent off the approximate 1.24 million pupils who participated in the key stage 2 and key stage 3 national curriculum tests received changes to results or annulments
- The total number of cases of maladministration reported to QCA in 2008 decreased by approximately five per cent compared to 2007 and by 13 per cent since 2006. QCA works with local authorities and schools to improve test administration and consequently reduce the number of cases of maladministration reported each year.
- The percentage of reported cases from markers doubled from almost 13 per cent in 2007 to more than 24 per cent in 2008. This has resulted from an increase in the number of cases reported relating to mixed-tier entries and incorrect completion of *Use of a transcript* and *Use of an amanuensis* forms. Changes to the processes of mark capture and how markers requested missing forms from schools also contributed to this increase.
- Schools self-reported the highest percentage of cases (43 per cent), consistent with 2007 results, and a significant number were also reported by markers (24 per cent) and local authorities (21 per cent).
- The number of reported cases at key stage 2 decreased by 28 cases from the previous year. The number of cases reported at key stage 1 remained the same and there was one fewer case reported at key stage 3 compared to the number of cases reported in 2007. The drop in the number of cases at key stage 2 meant that the percentage of cases at both key stage 2 (50 percent) and key stage 3 (49 per cent) were almost equally distributed.
- The number of reported cases occurring in the period before test administration fell to 145 in 2008, from 217 the previous year. This included a decrease in the number of allegations of coaching of pupils from 24 cases in 2007 to five cases in 2008.
- The number of reported cases relating to the period during test administration increased from 305 cases in 2007 to 348 cases in 2008. This increase can be attributed to an increase in the number of incorrect papers given to pupils and incorrect completion of

transcript allegations reported. As in 2007 pupils cheating and test administrator over-aiding allegations were the most commonly reported.

- A total of 70 (14 per cent) reported cases resulted in either changes to, or annulment of, results. Of these 70 cases, 61 were either self-reported by schools or requested by schools following investigation.
- The maladministration committee heard 10 cases in 2008 and nine of these cases resulted in either a change to, or annulment of, pupils' results. There were fewer committee cases in 2008 compared to 2007 as there were no cases relating to test security and schools were, when in agreement with the recommendations of the maladministration team, given the opportunity to request changes to results or annulments. No schools requested an appeal in 2008.
- The use of a forensic document service enabled the maladministration team and the maladministration committee to focus on individual pupil annulments and changes to results, especially in cases where it was suspected that papers had been changed by another hand.
- The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and its upgrade this year have allowed the maladministration team to continue logging cases in a secure and efficient fashion. A greater emphasis was placed on contacting schools by telephone to discuss incidents of maladministration instead of writing letters for more information to resolve cases faster and to reduce the administrative burden on schools.

Looking ahead: The 2009 test cycle

Following the key findings for the 2008 cycle and 'lessons learnt' exercises with internal colleagues and external stakeholders, including local authority representatives, the following recommendations are for action in 2009 and for future test cycles.

- Continue to work with local authorities and schools to improve test administration, through reviewing and updating published guidance, face-to-face training and telephone support.
- Provide additional communications to schools about maladministration in the weeks before the tests, reminding schools of the importance of training test administrators, the risks of one-to-one test administration and to suggest informing parents about test procedures and access arrangements.
- Continue to make unannounced monitoring visits to a sample of schools that experienced issues during the 2008 test cycle.

QCA will review all recommendations that identify revisions to the published procedures for investigating and managing allegations, and where appropriate, seek advice from QCA's legal advisers.

Breakdown of 2008 maladministration cases

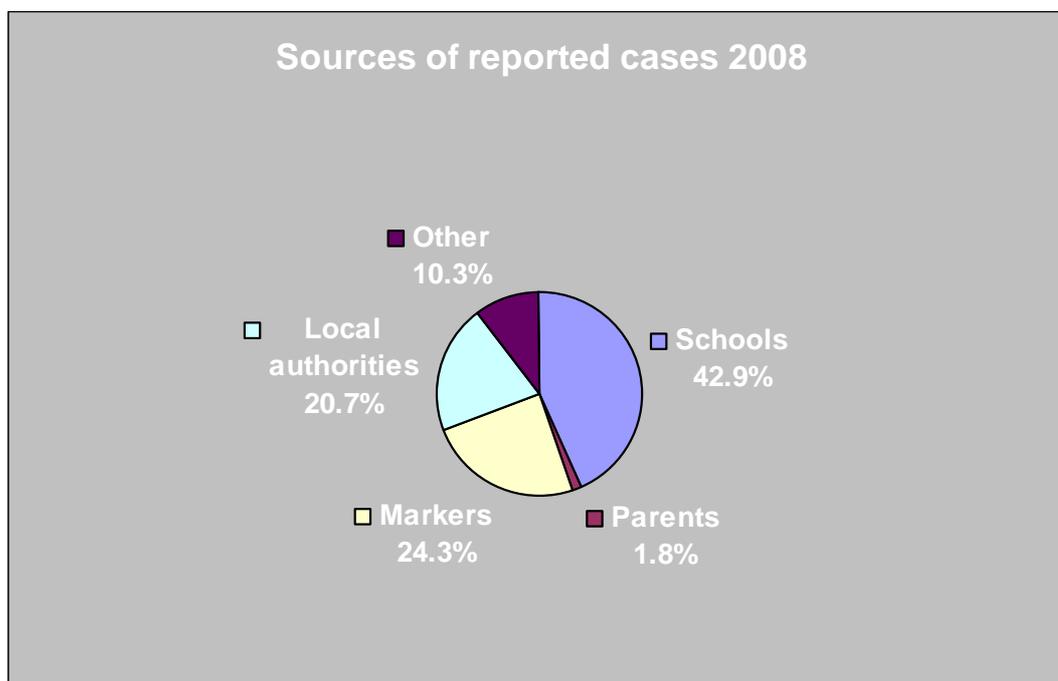
The information contained in this section compares differences in maladministration cases from 2006, 2007 and 2008, reporting on sources, patterns and timing of the allegations of maladministration.

Number of reported cases of maladministration

| Year | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|----------------------|------|------|------|
| Total reported cases | 579 | 532 | 503 |

In 2008, there was a five per cent decrease (29 cases) in reported maladministration cases in comparison to 2007, and 76 fewer cases (13 per cent) than in 2006.

Sources of reported cases 2008



Schools self-reported the highest percentage of cases (43 per cent) with markers (24 per cent) and local authorities (21 per cent) also reporting a considerable percentage of the maladministration cases.

Schools tend to be honest and open in reporting administrative errors and irregularities. Cases reported by local authorities generally arise from monitoring visits during the test period or from schools self-reporting errors to their local authority rather than directly to QCA.

Sources of reported cases 2006–2008 (%)

| | Schools | Parents | Markers | Local authorities | Other |
|------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------|-------|
| 2006 | 49.7 | 1.5 | 12.6 | 27.3 | 8.9 |
| 2007 | 51.1 | 1.7 | 12.6 | 26.5 | 8.1 |
| 2008 | 42.9 | 1.8 | 24.3 | 20.7 | 10.3 |

The percentage of cases reported by markers almost doubled from approximately 13 per cent in 2007 to more than 24 per cent in 2008. The higher percentage represents an increase in the number of incorrect papers given to pupils cases and incorrect completion of a transcript cases reported by markers.

The decrease in percentage of cases received from schools and local authorities is offset by the increase in cases received from markers. Schools and local authorities represented 56 per cent and 27 percent respectively of all cases not reported by markers, which is comparable to 58 per cent and 30 per cent in 2007.

Despite the increase in the percentage of cases coming from markers in 2008, the figures show that year on year, the majority of cases are still reported by schools.

Cases by key stage

| | Key stage 1 | | Key stage 2 | | Key stage 3 | |
|------|--------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|
| | No. of cases | % of total cases | No. of cases | % of total cases | No. of cases | % of total cases |
| 2006 | 7 | 1.2 | 321 | 55.4 | 251 | 43.4 |
| 2007 | 6 | 1.1 | 280 | 52.6 | 246 | 46.3 |
| 2008 | 6 | 1.2 | 252 | 50.1 | 245 | 48.7 |

The number of cases reported at key stage 1 and key stage 3 has remained consistent from 2006 to 2008, while there has been a significant decrease in the number of cases reported at key stage 2 each year. The decrease of key stage 2 cases has seen an increase in the percentage of the total number of cases at key stage 3.

The types of allegation made at key stage 1 differ from those at key stage 2 and key stage 3 as schools have different responsibilities relating to the reporting of key stage 1 assessment to

those at key stage 2 and key stage 3. The majority of the six cases reported at key stage 1 concerned the storage of test materials with one allegation concerning the moderation of teacher assessment.

At key stage 2 the most common allegations made were test administrators over-aiding pupils (18 per cent), pupils cheating (12 per cent) and incorrect completion of transcripts/notification of amanuensis forms (10 per cent).

At key stage 3 the most common allegations made were of the incorrect papers having been given to pupils (18 per cent), *Mark scheme packs* being opened early (15 per cent), pupils cheating (15 per cent) and photocopying test materials without permission (12 per cent).

QCA analyses the data gathered on allegations of maladministration to identify any key issues or trends. The maladministration team feeds back any common issues identified to the relevant internal teams at QCA to focus on how communication to, and training materials for, schools concerning these issues might be improved.

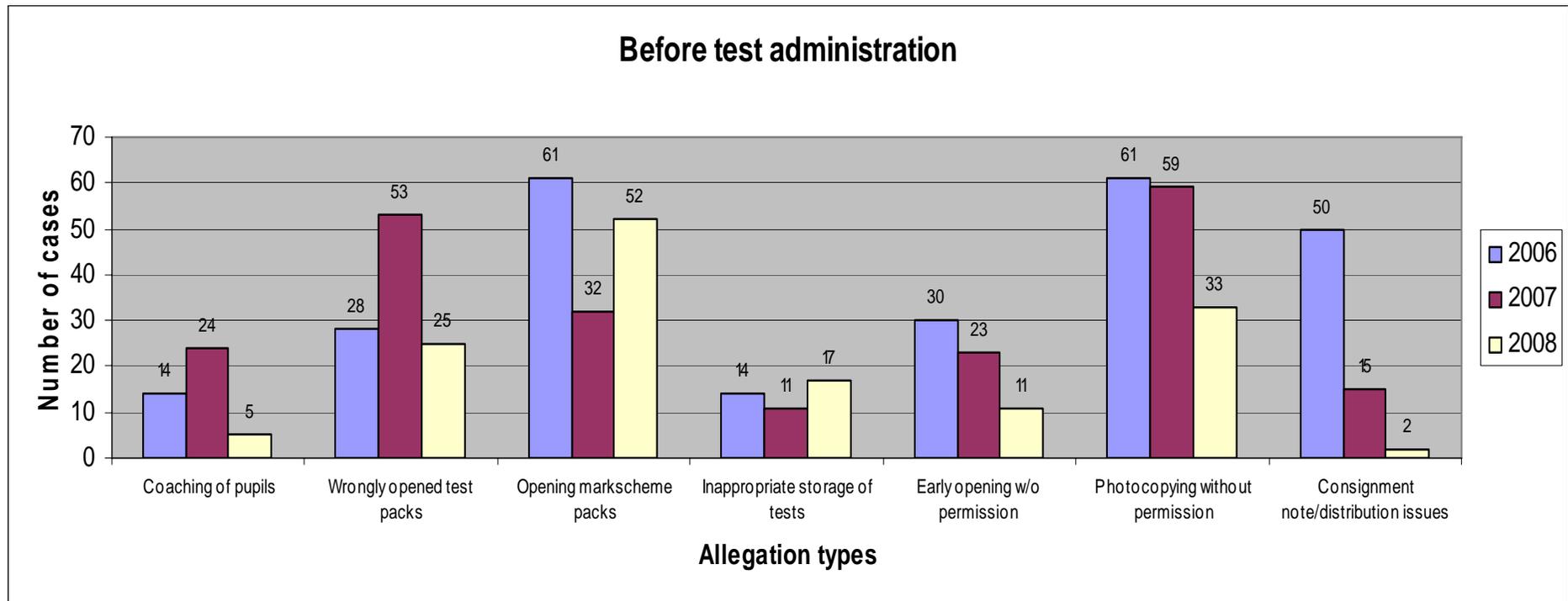
Timing of maladministration allegations (%)

| | Before test administration | During test administration | After test administration |
|------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2006 | 39.0 | 59.3 | 1.7 |
| 2007 | 34.8 | 63.4 | 1.8 |
| 2008 | 28.8 | 69.2 | 2.0 |

Allegations reported to QCA can be divided into three distinct time periods:

- before test administration – between the delivery of test materials to schools and when they are administered to pupils
- during test administration – from when the tests are administered to pupils until the completed test scripts are sent for external marking
- after test administration – once marked test scripts have been returned to schools.

There has been an increase in the percentage of allegations made relating to the period during test administration and a decrease in the percentage of allegations made relating to the period before test administration. There was a slight increase in the percentage of allegations made relating to the period after test administration; however the actual number of cases in this period only increased from nine cases in 2007 to 10 cases in 2008.



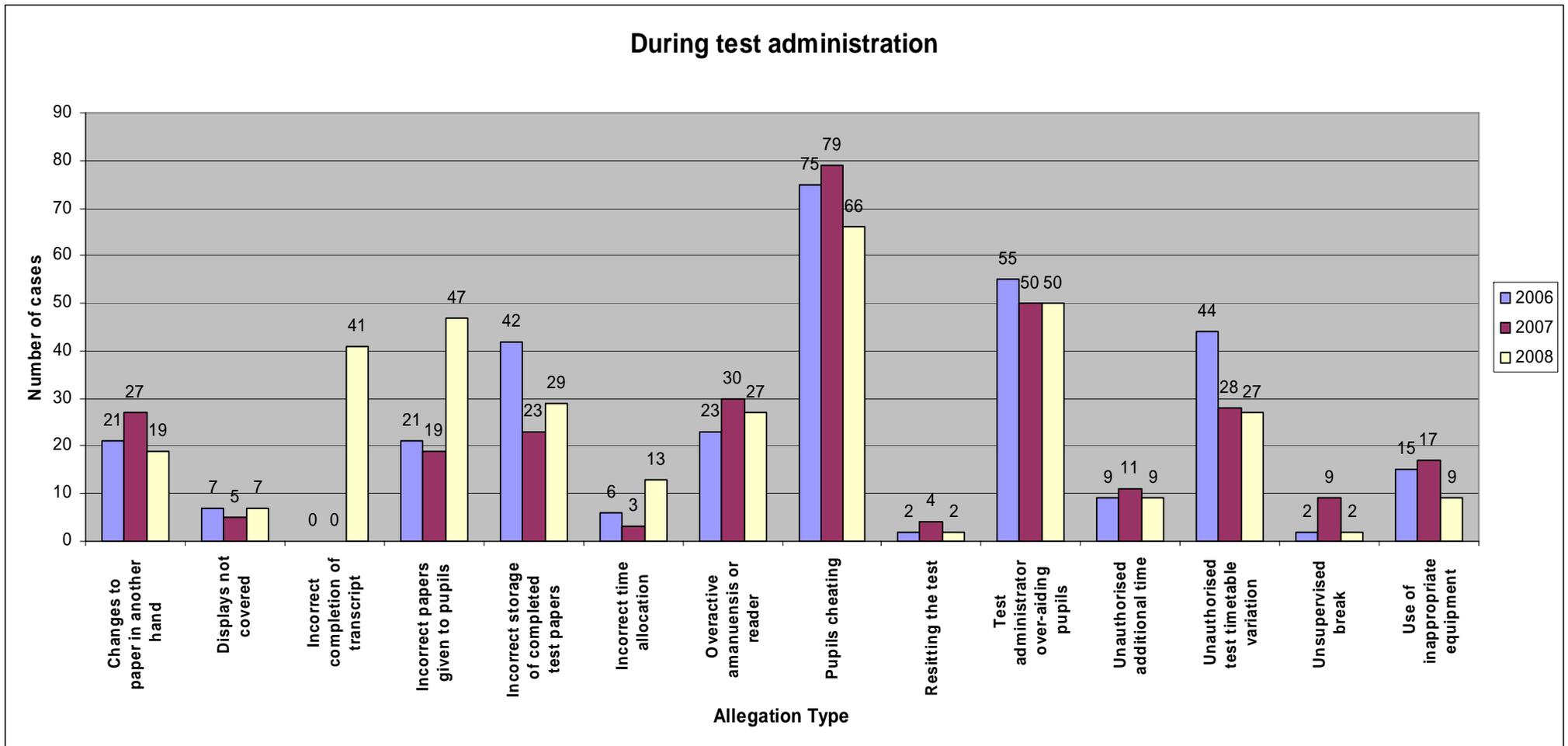
Before test administration

The total number of allegations relating to instances before test administration dropped from 217 in 2007 to 145 in 2008. Only the number of allegations of opening mark scheme packs and inappropriate storage of tests increased in 2008.

The majority of Opening *mark scheme packs* cases were reported at key stage 3 and were either self-reported by schools or by local authorities following monitoring visits. Schools often needed to open the *Mark scheme packs* to obtain copies of tests following changes to the tier of entry in the mathematics and science tests or to access different Shakespeare papers for individual pupils in the English tests. *Mark scheme packs* were also opened unintentionally at a number of key stage 3 schools, due to their similarity in appearance to the test materials. At key stage 2 *Mark scheme packs* are a different colour to the test materials and are consequently less often opened accidentally.

The number of allegations of coaching of pupils fell from 24 reported cases in 2007 to five in 2008. Following an increase in the number of allegations relating to coaching of pupils in 2007 the NAA made recommendations to the test operations agency regarding the timing of the delivery of test materials to markers, to increase their security prior to the tests. The reduction in the number of allegations of coaching of pupils in 2008 might be attributed to the implementation of those recommendations.

The number of allegations relating to schools photocopying test materials without permission decreased from 59 reported cases in 2007 to 33 in 2008. The majority of these cases were self-reported by schools after they had photocopied the materials.



During test administration

The majority of reported cases of maladministration occurred during the test administration period.

The most common allegation reported in this period remains pupil cheating. The majority of these cases are self-reported by schools.

In 2008, there was an increase in the number of instances of pupils sitting the incorrect papers and submitting mixed-tier entries reported to QCA, from 19 in 2007 to 47 in 2008. In previous years, markers recorded mark totals for each paper on paper marksheets, however for 2008 the online mark capture system, provided by the test operations agency, required markers to enter question level data and was consequently tier specific. Markers needed to request a change to the marking system for mixed-tier entries in order to enter the marks. A number of these instances were passed on to the maladministration team.

Similarly, 2008 saw an increase in the number of allegations relating to the incorrect completion of *Use of a transcript* and *Use of an amanuensis* test forms. In 2008, test scripts were distributed to markers from a central distribution centre rather than being sent directly from schools, which meant that the direct link between markers and schools was severed. In previous years when markers suspected that either a *Use of a transcript* form or *Use of an amanuensis* form had not been attached to a test script, they were able to contact the school directly to request any missing notifications. In 2008, markers contacted the test operations agency instead of the school and these instances were passed on to the maladministration team for investigation.

The increases in reported instances of pupils sitting the incorrect papers and the incorrect completion of *Use of a transcript* and *Use of an amanuensis* forms represent changes in the processes by which the tests were distributed to markers and how marks were captured, rather than any change to how schools administered tests in 2008 compared to previous years.

These changes in process have highlighted areas where guidance and training for schools can be improved. However, the announcement made in October 2008 that key stage 3 national curriculum tests will no longer be statutory means that investigations into mixed-tier entry cases in the future will no longer be necessary as the key stage 2 national curriculum tests are not separated into tiers.

As in 2007, test administrators over-aiding pupils was the second most reported allegation during the test administration period. It indicates that there continues to be a need for

increased training of test administrators, and where allegations were unfounded, a greater understanding amongst pupils and parents of what assistance test administrators can provide.

After test administration

| | Changes to test scripts before review | Changes to English reading or writing scripts | Moderation of teacher assessment levels |
|------|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| 2006 | 1 | 8 | 0 |
| 2007 | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| 2008 | 9 | 0 | 1 |

There were nine allegations of schools making changes to test scripts before sending them for review in 2008 compared to eight in 2007. As a result of the difficulties experienced this year with the marking process the number of reviews submitted increased. However, this does not appear to have had a corresponding impact on the number of allegations received relating to the period after test administration.

There was a single allegation relating to the moderation of teacher assessment at key stage 1 in 2008, as there was in 2007.

Overall, the allegations made relating to this period of test administration make up only two per cent of the total allegations received.

Annulments and changes to results

After conducting an investigation, the maladministration team can refer its recommendation for a change to, or annulment of, the result for a pupil or pupils to the maladministration committee. The decision of the committee is based on the confidence that QCA has in results being a valid measure of the pupils' own, unaided work. If schools do not agree with the decision of the committee then they have the right to request an appeal.

Where the maladministration team made a recommendation for either a change to, or annulment of, results and the school was in agreement, schools were given the opportunity to request either the change or annulment rather than have the case presented to the maladministration committee.

In 2008, 70 schools had cases of maladministration that lead to either a change to or annulment of pupils' results:

- 41 schools reported pupils cheating
- 20 schools requested changes or annulments following investigations
- 9 schools had changes to, or annulments of, results following committee decisions.

The committee reviewed 10 cases in 2008, nine of which led to either a change to, or annulment of, pupils' results. In 2007, 23 cases were brought to the committee, 18 of which led to either a change to, or annulment of, pupils' results. The reduction in the number of cases taken to committee is both a reflection of schools requesting changes and annulments and as a result of new procedures introduced for 2008, including a change to when test materials were sent to markers and the increased security of the tests that this enabled. There were four cases taken to the maladministration committee in 2007 relating to coaching of pupils and no cases in 2008.

Number of schools receiving a change to, or annulment of results following a maladministration committee decision in 2008

| | Key stage 2 schools | | | Key stage 3 schools | | |
|---|---------------------|-------------|---------|---------------------|-------------|---------|
| | English | Mathematics | Science | English | Mathematics | Science |
| Results in one subject annulled or changed | 3 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Results in two subjects annulled or changed | 2 | | | 0 | | |
| Results in all subjects annulled or changed | 0 | | | 0 | | |

The majority of cases that resulted in either changes to, or annulments of results were at key stage 2, with the remaining three cases at key stage 3. More than one subject was affected at key stage 2 only. Annulments in more than one subject at key stage 2 usually occur when the different tests are administered by the same test administrator, increasing the likelihood that where one test is administered incorrectly the other tests may be similarly affected.

There was a single annulment of a whole cohort in 2008, in comparison to four in 2007. This follows continued effort by the maladministration team to be focused on which pupils were affected by any alleged maladministration. Also, in 2008, the majority of schools whose cases were seen by the committee had large cohorts. Where schools have more than one class in the cohort tests will often be administered in more than one room by a number of test administrators. Under such circumstances, instances of maladministration are often limited to particular groups of pupils in a cohort.

Number of schools with whole cohort annulments and number of schools with individual pupil annulments/changes to results 2006–2008

| | Schools with whole cohort annulments | | Schools with individual pupils annulments/changes to results | |
|------|--------------------------------------|-------------|--|-------------|
| | Key stage 2 | Key stage 3 | Key stage 2 | Key stage 3 |
| 2006 | 1 | 0 | 38 | 58 |
| 2007 | 4 | 0 | 48 | 31 |
| 2008 | 1 | 0 | 36 | 33 |

The overall number of schools with individual pupil annulments and changes to results fell in 2008 when compared to 2007. There were 12 fewer key stage 2 schools affected while the number of key stage 3 schools affected increased slightly, by two schools.

Summary

In 2008:

- a total of 339 pupils' results were affected by annulments, changes to results following committee decisions, requests from schools and pupil cheating forms – this is 44 per cent fewer than the 602 pupils affected in 2007
- the single annulment for a whole school cohort for one subject at key stage 2 affected 25 pupils
- individual annulments following decisions made by the maladministration committee affected 210 pupils – 94 at key stage 2 and 116 at key stage 3
- changes to results following a decision made by the maladministration committee affected nine pupils at key stage 3, all at a single school
- the results of 50 pupils were changed or annulled following the submission of pupil cheating forms by schools – 21 at key stage 2 and 29 at key stage 3
- the results of 21 pupils were annulled following requests made by the school after investigations into maladministration – 10 at key stage 2 and 11 at key stage 3
- the results of 24 pupils were changed following requests made by the school after investigations into maladministration (23 at key stage 2 and one at key stage 3) – of the 23 pupils at key stage 2, 17 were at one school

- no schools requested an appeal following the decision made by the maladministration committee in 2008. There have been no appeals since 2006, when four were requested.

Appendix A: Roles and responsibilities in maladministration in 2008

In 2008 QCA had a statutory duty to investigate any matter brought to its attention that related to the accuracy and correctness of any results of any pupil in the key stage 2 and key stage 3 national curriculum tests². From 2004 to 2008 this remit was carried out by the NAA, a subsidiary of QCA, with the aim of safeguarding the integrity of the key stage 2 and key stage 3 national curriculum tests and the interests of pupils.

For key stage 1, the responsibility for investigating and resolving possible causes of maladministration lay with the local authority. After notifying QCA of any potential maladministration, the local authorities were required to inform QCA of the final outcome of all investigations.

In 2008, the role of QCA was to ensure that:

- tests were administered according to the guidance in the *Assessment and reporting arrangements* (ARA) for the relevant key stage
- procedures were in place to monitor the administration of the tests
- test scripts were accurately marked
- results were reported accurately and on time.

The maladministration team at QCA conducted investigations into allegations of maladministration.

Where the maladministration team recommended a change to, or annulment of, a result for a pupil or pupils, the team presented this recommendation to the maladministration committee. When schools were in agreement with the recommendation of the maladministration team they were given the opportunity to request the change to or annulment of, the pupils' results.

The maladministration committee was established in 2005 as part of the management process of the QCA's maladministration remit and its roles and responsibilities will not change in 2009. The maladministration committee hears evidence submitted by the maladministration team

² The Education (National Curriculum) (Key Stage 2 Assessment Arrangements) (England) Order 2003

The Education (National Curriculum) (Key Stage 3 Assessment Arrangements) (England) Order 2003

and the school involved in the investigation before making a final decision. A maladministration committee meeting is not a formal hearing, trial or tribunal, but a process put in place to ensure fairness for schools and to instill confidence in the validity of national curriculum test results. The decision of the committee is based on the confidence that QCA has in the results being a valid measure of the pupils' own, unaided work.

QCA worked closely with local authorities before, during and after the test period to investigate reported allegations of maladministration. QCA ensured that local authorities received annual guidance and training on maladministration through materials provided on the QCA website and through regional test administration conferences. It also identified and shared good practice between local authorities on monitoring the administration of the tests. In November 2008, a feedback session was held with a number of local authority representatives regarding maladministration investigations, with a view to updating and improving the guidance provided to local authorities.

In 2008 local authorities were responsible for:

- providing training to school staff on administering the tests
- monitoring the administration of the tests in at least 10 per cent of relevant key stage 2 and key stage 3 schools, either before, during or after the test period – the focus of these visits was on the secure handling of test papers and schools' adherence to the published arrangements to administer the tests, as detailed in the relevant ARA
- reporting any irregularities in the administration of the national curriculum tests to the maladministration team
- investigating, where appropriate and on behalf of QCA, any allegations of maladministration in the key stage 2 and key stage 3 national curriculum tests
- investigating all allegations of maladministration in key stage 1 assessments, seeking advice from QCA on how to investigate the allegation appropriately and making decisions on changes to pupils' results.

In 2008, it was the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that the national curriculum tests were administered according to the procedures outlined in the appropriate ARA, and that all test administrators received appropriate training. After the final test, the headteachers were required to complete a *Headteacher's declaration form* to confirm that the school had:

- administered the tests at each key stage correctly

- followed security arrangements (according to the arrangements set out in the ARA)
- sent all completed test scripts for external marking.

It was the headteacher's responsibility to notify QCA if for any reason they were unable to confirm that the above responsibilities had been met and that they could not complete the *Headteacher's declaration form*.

If a school felt that a pupil had cheated in the tests and that the accuracy or correctness of their results may have been affected, the school should have completed and submitted the online *Pupil cheating form* available on the QCA *Test forms* website at www.qca.org.uk/testforms. By completing and submitting this form the headteacher agreed to either a change to, or annulment of, the results of the pupil concerned, as detailed on the *Pupil cheating form*.

If a school believed that either the key stage 2 or key stage 3 national curriculum tests had not been administered correctly, that teacher assessment at key stage 1 had been incorrectly reported or that there had been a possible breach in confidentiality or security of the test materials, schools should have been contacted QCA immediately through the national curriculum tests helpline on 08700 60 60 40 or the maladministration team at maladministration@qca.org.uk.

Appendix B: Procedures for investigating maladministration

The maladministration team investigates all allegations of maladministration in line with the statutory instruments, maladministration policy and maladministration procedures.

QCA informs the appropriate local authority of any allegation of maladministration at key stage 1 received by the maladministration team. The local authority is requested to investigate the matter according to their internal procedures and to report the outcome of the investigation to maladministration team. All allegations at key stage 1 are logged on the QCA CRM system for annual reporting and future reference.

The statutory instruments for key stage 2 and key stage 3 state that:

The authority shall investigate any matter referred to them under article 6(7) or otherwise brought to their attention which, in their opinion, relates to the accuracy or correctness of any results of any pupil in respect of the NC tests administered under article 5.

For cases reported before results are reported and test scripts have been returned to schools, the maladministration committee is required to make a decision based on a level of doubt over the accuracy or correctness of a pupil's results.

Where [...] before the external marking agency have provided the record of the results to the headteacher under article 5(5), the Authority determines that the accuracy or correctness of a pupil's results in respect of the NC tests administered under article 5 is in doubt, the record of the results to be provided by that agency to the headteacher shall be the record of results determined by the Authority.

For cases reported after results and test scripts have been returned to schools, the maladministration committee is required to make a decision based on the fact that a pupil's result is inaccurate or otherwise correct.

Where [...] the external marking agency have provided the record of the results to the headteacher under article 5(5), the Authority determines that that record of the results is inaccurate or otherwise incorrect, the Authority shall provide to the headteacher a record of the results determined by the Authority and that record of the results shall be the record of the results for the pupil.

Where appropriate, the relevant local authority supports the maladministration team in conducting the investigation. The sole interest of QCA in investigating cases of alleged maladministration is to determine whether there is doubt over the accuracy or correctness of pupil results. QCA does not have a remit to investigate who is responsible for any maladministration and does not lay blame or take part in any disciplinary procedures.

When requested, QCA endeavours to ensure that the name of the person making the allegation remains confidential.

Independent schools and some academies are monitored by a monitoring agency appointed by QCA and any allegation of maladministration resulting from the agency's monitoring visit is investigated according to QCA's maladministration procedures.