STATUTORY GUIDANCE

November 2019 data exchange procedures

GCSEs (9 to 1)

ofqual

This document applies to GCSE (9 to 1) qualifications in English language and mathematics.

The following procedures outline the data that must be provided by awarding organisations during the November 2019 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'[1] (June 2016): Compliance with Regulatory Documents.

In addition, this document sets requirements under Condition GCSE3.1 and GCSE9.1 of the GCSE Qualification Level Conditions.[2]

---

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-conditions-of-recognition

[2] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/591884/GCSE__9_to_1__Qualification_Level_Conditions_and_Requirements_-_Feb_2017.pdf

1 GCSE (9 to 1)

1.1. GCSE (9 to 1) predictions

In respect of each GCSE qualification in English language and mathematics which it makes available in November 2019, each exam board must create its own cohort-specific prediction for matched learners,[3] following the subject-specific requirements listed below.

GCSE English language

Each awarding organisation must create its own predictions for its specific cohort of 17-year-old matched learners. Predictions must be based on the national relationship between GCSE outcomes in English language for 17-year-old learners in November 2018 and mean GCSE attainment for those learners in June 2018.

Each awarding organisation must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE and mean GCSE relationship described above.

Note: The November 2019 GCSE English language results must be compared with GCSE English language results of the same learners in June 2019, where those learners have taken the assessments in both June and November 2019. Comparisons must be undertaken for matched 17-year-old learners and all learners.

For the spoken language endorsement for GCSE English Language, awarding organisations must report outcomes (to include carry forward grades) both for matched 17-year-old learners and for all learners.

GCSE mathematics

Each awarding organisation must create its own predictions for its specific cohort of 17-year-old matched learners. Predictions must be based on the national relationship between GCSE outcomes in mathematics for 17-year-old learners in November 2018 and mean GCSE attainment for those learners in June 2018.

Each awarding organisation must report outcomes against predictions based on the GCSE and mean GCSE relationship described above.

Each awarding organisation must use the outcomes of test equating (chained equi-percentile or nominal weights method) to support comparability between tiers at grades 4 and 5, where there are sufficient entries on each tier. The chained equi-percentile method should be used where there are more than 250 candidates at each tier. Where there are 250 or fewer candidates at one or both tiers, the nominal weights method could be used. For specifications with very small entries, it may not be possible to use test equating.

Note: The November 2019 GCSE mathematics results must be compared with GCSE mathematics results of the same learners in June 2019, where those learners have taken the assessments in both June and November 2019. Comparisons must be undertaken for matched 17-year-old learners and all learners.

---

[3] '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' and has the same meaning in this Regulatory Document.

1.2. Setting grade 9 in GCSE (9 to 1) qualifications

Each awarding organisation must set grade 9, in the GCSE (9 to 1) qualifications in November 2019, using the method described in appendix 1.

1.3. Setting grade 1 in GCSE (9 to 1) qualifications

Each awarding organisation must set grade 1, in the GCSE (9 to 1) qualifications in November 2019, using the method described in appendix 1.

1.4. GCSE reporting

Each awarding organisation must report all of its GCSE English language outcomes at grades 9, 7, 5, 4 and 1, **using template 1, no later than two days after the provisional sign-off of the award and by 12 noon, Friday 20th December 2019.**

Each awarding organisation must report all of its GCSE mathematics outcomes at grades 9, 7, 5, 4 and 1, **using template 2, no later than two days after the provisional sign-off of the award and by 12 noon, Friday 20th December 2019.**

Each awarding organisation must report information on four key areas, as detailed in the above templates:

1. **GCSE outcomes data**. Data must be reported on matched learners, excluding partial absences (EPA) where available, against predicted outcomes where these have been derived. Data must also be reported on all learners, including partial absences (IPA), where available.

2. **Evidence used.** Awarding organisations must also describe how evidence was used to guide the award, covering each category on the template.

3. **Maintaining standards**. Awarding organisations must also report any issues or concerns in the context of maintaining standards.

4. **Significant differences in grade boundary positions.** Awarding organisations must report any instances where GCSE subject level key grade boundary positions are significantly different from the previous series and/or the November 2018 series. A significant difference could be one which could cause concern with centres. These must be reported as soon as possible after the award is signed off by the Responsible Officer, together with an explanation for the difference.

For GCSE mathematics, each awarding organisation must also report:

5. **Test equating**. Awarding organisations must report the technical details of how test equating has been used to support comparability between the foundation and higher tiers, where there are sufficient entries on each tier.

Each awarding organisation must report all of its GCSE English language spoken language outcomes at pass, merit and distinction using **template 3**, **by 12 noon, Friday 20th December 2019**.

Each awarding organisation must report all of its November 2019 GCSE English language results for 17-year-olds and all learners compared with GCSE English language results for the same learners in June 2019, using **template 4, no later than two days after the provisional sign-off of the award and by 12 noon, Friday 20th December 2019.**

Each awarding organisation must report all of its November 2019 GCSE mathematics results for 17-year-olds and all learner compared with GCSE mathematics results for the same learners in June 2019, using **template 4, no later than two days after the provisional sign-off of the award and by 12 noon, Friday 20th December 2019.**

2 Sending data

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

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

On receipt of the above GCSE information, Ofqual:

- will review the data on the basis of its published procedure

- may contact awarding organisations to ask for additional information or clarification, and aim to do this as soon as possible after receipt

- will discuss outcomes for the November series with awarding organisations at the Maintenance of Standards meeting on 3 January 2020

Appendix 1

Setting the 9/8 and 1/U subject level boundaries in the November 2018 awards of reformed GCSE specifications

1. The nature of the cohort and mark distributions towards the top and bottom of the grade range in the November series means that predictions cannot be used reliably as the principal means of setting the 9/8 or 1/U boundaries.

2. Instead, a provisional grade 9/8 and 1/U boundary will be set based on the relative position of the grade boundaries in the reformed specifications in previous June series.[4] Awarders will then use their professional judgement to determine whether the quality of work demonstrated at the provisional boundaries is acceptable, based on comparisons with the grade 9 and grade 1 archives from the previous June series.

3. To calculate the provisional 1/U boundary in English language and mathematics:

   Place the boundary above zero by the number of marks which is 20% of the width between the grade 4 boundary and zero.[5]

4. To calculate the provisional 9/8 boundary in English language:

   Place the boundary above the grade 7 boundary by the number of marks which is 40% of the width between the maximum and the grade 7 boundary.

5. To calculate the provisional 9/8 boundary in mathematics:

   Place the boundary above the grade 7 boundary by the number of marks which is 60% of the width between the maximum and the grade 7 boundary.

6. In all cases, the report on the award must provide evidence to justify the final boundary mark recommended.

---

[4] Consideration should also be given to the position of the boundaries relative to previous series.
[5] Note that all calculated boundaries should be rounded to the nearest whole number.

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.

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 11122019-WJEC-Template 1. 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.

Published by:

ofqual

Earlsdon Park
53-55 Butts Road
Coventry
CV1 3BH

0300 303 3344
public.enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/ofqual

November 2019   **Ofqual/19/6563**