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# Enquiries about results and appeals

*Report on the summer 2003 GCSE and A level examinations series*

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## **Introduction**

This is a report on enquiries about results and appeals made to awarding bodies for the summer 2003 GCSE and A level examinations series.

It summarises the performance of all five awarding bodies offering these qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland:

- Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA)
- Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (Northern Ireland) (CCEA)
- London Qualifications (Edexcel)
- Oxford, Cambridge, and RSA Examinations (OCR)
- Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC)

The report has the final data submitted by awarding bodies to the regulatory authorities (QCA in England, ACCAC in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland). The report:

- details the processes and 2003 reporting arrangements for enquiries about results and appeals
- provides data for the five awarding bodies for the three common services for enquiries about results and the two stages for appeals
- provides data about the performance of each individual awarding body

## The enquiries about results and appeals process

### Enquiries about results

Every year, for the five awarding bodies, the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) publishes information and guidance to centres on making use of the post-results service for the relevant summer examinations series.

Candidates receive the results of their summer examinations in August. If an examination centre (usually a school or college) is concerned about a candidate's grade, it can ask the awarding body to investigate the grade. Candidates cannot ask awarding bodies to investigate; they must ask through a centre. This is because centres have responsibility for entering candidates for examinations. Private candidates are an exception; they can ask the awarding body directly.

If the investigation shows that marking or processing errors have been made and the candidate's grade is incorrect, the grade will be adjusted to the correct level. Since 2001, grades have been adjusted downwards as well as upwards.

Each awarding body offers three post-results services for re-marking and checking examination scripts and coursework.<sup>1</sup> These are common to all awarding bodies. They are:

- service 1: a clerical re-check for an individual candidate
- service 2: a re-mark for an individual candidate
- service 3: a re-moderation of coursework, with feedback.

#### **Service 1: A clerical re-check for an individual candidate**

The awarding body checks the script to make sure that every question has been marked and the total number of marks awarded for each paper is correct. It provides a statement of the marks awarded for each part of the examination for the candidate. This must be requested by 20 September.

#### **Service 2: A re-mark for an individual candidate**

An examiner (one not involved in the original marking) re-marks the externally assessed components. The awarding body also does a full clerical re-check (service 1).

There are two levels of priority for service 2:

- *non-priority*: this must be requested by 20 September
- *priority*: this can be requested if the candidate's place at a further or higher education college depends upon the outcome of an enquiry about results. Requests for a priority level service 2 enquiry must be submitted within eight days of the result being issued.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Service 3: A re-moderation of coursework with feedback**

Service 3 is not available for individual candidates.

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<sup>1</sup> The deadlines for completion of these services are in the GCSE, GCSE in vocational subjects, GCE, VCE, GNVQ and AEA: Code of practice 2004/5, QCA, 2004

<sup>2</sup> In 2003 the deadline for awarding bodies to notify centres about the outcome of a priority level service 2 enquiry was 30 days. In 2004 the deadline was reduced to 20 days.

The awarding body re-moderates a centre's coursework marks and provides feedback on the centre's assessment of the coursework. This must be requested by 20 September.

### **Appeals**

If a centre has gone through the enquiries about results process and is still dissatisfied with the outcome, it can appeal to the awarding body.

A centre must make an appeal within 14 days of receiving the outcome of the enquiry.

There are two stages in the appeal process:

- stage 1: a review of the case by a senior member of the awarding body who has not been involved previously with the particular case.
- stage 2: a presentation of the case to an appeals panel. The panel will be convened by the awarding body. It will comprise three members, one of whom must be independent (ie not a current member of the awarding body's staff or committees). A centre can take the appeal to stage 2 only after going through stage 1.

All appeals must be completed by 14 February.

If a centre is dissatisfied with the outcome of the stage 2 appeal, it can apply for a hearing to the Examinations Appeals Board (EAB), which is independent.

## The summer 2003 examinations series data

It was reasonable to expect that, because of the problems in the summer 2002 series, there would be a large number of enquiries about results and appeals in the summer 2003 series. In fact, there were relatively few enquiries about results and appeals, compared to the number of overall entries.

### Enquiries about results

The entry figures in the tables below are from the awarding bodies.

GCSE data does not include GCSE short course data. The number of GCSE short course unit entries is insignificant, usually less than one per cent of total GCSE unit entries.

The A level data includes GCE data only.

The awarding bodies and regulatory authorities now have a formal and agreed schedule for reporting on enquiries about results and appeals. This was introduced in 2003. The awarding bodies and the regulatory authorities exchanged data weekly, during the summer 2003 series and at the end of the post-results period. The data in these tables are from these exchanges.

### Total entry

Qualification	AQA	EDEXCEL	OCR	CCEA	WJEC
GCSE (subject entry)	3,166,293	1,109,390	962,688	213,838	314,653
A level (subject entry)	824,521	431,212	452,895	34,795	77,677
A level (unit entry)	2,592,960	1,422,429	1,429,003	121,393	268,652

### Service 1

	AQA	EDEXCEL	OCR	CCEA	WJEC
<b>GCSE (subject entry)</b>	<b>3,166,293</b>	<b>1,109,390</b>	<b>962,688</b>	<b>213,838</b>	<b>314,653</b>
Enquiries received (% of total subject entry)	260 (0.008)	114 (0.01)	711 (0.074)	4 (0.002)	9 (0.003)
Enquiries completed within deadline (% of enquiries received)	248 (95.4)	113 (99.1)	711 (100)	4 (100)	9 (100)
Enquiries that resulted in a change to an overall grade (% of enquiries received)	23 (8.8)	7 (6.1)	37 (5.2)	2 (50)	0 (0)
<b>A level (unit entry)</b>	<b>2,592,960</b>	<b>1,422,429</b>	<b>1,429,003</b>	<b>121,393</b>	<b>268,652</b>
Enquiries received at unit level (% of total unit entry)	355 (0.014)	216 (0.015)	511 (0.036)	1 (0.0008)	7 (0.0026)
Enquiries completed within deadline (% of enquiries received)	355 (100)	216 (100)	511 (100)	1 (100)	7 (100)
Enquiries that resulted in a change to an overall grade (% of enquiries received)	15 (4.2)	12 (5.5)	36 (10.5)	1 (100)	0 (0)

**Service 2: non-priority level**

	<b>AQA</b>	<b>EDEXCEL</b>	<b>OCR</b>	<b>CCEA</b>	<b>WJEC</b>
<b>GCSE subject entry</b>	<b>3,166,293</b>	<b>1,109,390</b>	<b>962,688</b>	<b>213,838</b>	<b>314,653</b>
Enquiries received (% of total subject entry)	21,328 (0.67)	7,369 (0.66)	6,904 (0.72)	2,036 (0.95)	803 (0.26)
Enquiries completed within deadline (% of enquiries received)	20,229 (94.8)	7,227 (98.1)	6,854 (99.3)	2,036 (100)	803 (100)
Enquiries that resulted in a change to an overall grade (% of enquiries received)	6,432 (30.2)	1,619 (22)	1,256 (18.2)	682 (33.5)	184 (23)
<b>A level (unit entry)</b>	<b>2,592,960</b>	<b>1,422,429</b>	<b>1,429,003</b>	<b>121,393</b>	<b>268,652</b>
Enquiries received at unit level (% of total unit entry)	16,446 (0.63)	13,313 (0.94)	9,977 (0.69)	1,630 (1.3)	565 (0.21)
Enquiries completed within deadline (% of enquiries received)	15,677 (95.3)	13,286 (99.8)	9,968 (99.9)	1,630 (100)	565 (100)
Enquiries that resulted in a change to an overall grade (% of enquiries received)	2,432 (14.8)	1,332 (10)	824 (8.2)	145 (8.9)	112 (19.8)

**Service 2: priority level<sup>1</sup>**

	<b>AQA</b>	<b>EDEXCEL</b>	<b>OCR</b>	<b>CCEA</b>	<b>WJEC</b>
<b>A level (unit entry)</b>	<b>2,592,960</b>	<b>1,422,429</b>	<b>1,429,003</b>	<b>121,393</b>	<b>268,652</b>
Enquiries received at unit level (% of total unit entry)	4,958 (0.19)	3,261 (0.23)	2,482 (0.17)	558 (0.46)	145 (0.054)
Enquiries completed within deadline (% of enquiries received)	4,851 (97.9)	3,261 (100)	2,482 (100)	558 (100)	145 (100)
Enquiries that resulted in a change to an overall grade (% of enquiries received)	917 (18.5)	337 (10.3)	202 (8.1)	61 (10.9)	23 (15.9)

<sup>1</sup> In 2003 the deadline for awarding bodies to notify centres about the outcome of a priority level service 2 enquiry was 30 days.

**Service 3**

	<b>AQA</b>	<b>EDEXCEL</b>	<b>OCR</b>	<b>CCEA</b>	<b>WJEC</b>
<b>GCSE subject entry</b>	<b>3,166,293</b>	<b>1,109,390</b>	<b>962,688</b>	<b>213,838</b>	<b>314,653</b>
Enquiries received (% of total subject entry)	402 (0.012)	240 (0.022)	102 (0.011)	5 (0.002)	10 (0.003)
Enquiries completed within deadline (% of enquiries received)	355 (88.3)	96 (40)	100 (98)	5 (100)	10 (100)
<b>A level (unit entry)</b>	<b>2,592,960</b>	<b>1,422,429</b>	<b>1,429,003</b>	<b>121,393</b>	<b>268,652</b>
Enquiries received at unit level (% of total unit entry)	324 (0.013)	427 (0.03)	177 (0.012)	3 (0.002)	7 (0.003)
Enquiries completed within deadline (% of enquiries received)	289 (89.2)	281 (66)	175 (98.9)	3 (100)	7 (100)

## Appeals

### Stage 1 and stage 2 appeals

	AQA	EDEXCEL	OCR	CCEA	WJEC
Stage 1 appeals received	138	218	242	1	0
Stage 2 appeals received	24	15	22	0	0
Stage 2 appeals completed by 14 February 2004 (%)	(54)	(100)	(100)	n/a	n/a
Appeals that resulted in a change to an overall grade	16	24	26	1	n/a

## Data by awarding body

### AQA

#### Enquiries about results

Total entries: GCSE 3,166,293; A level 824,521				
Service	Qualification	Enquiries received	Enquiries completed within deadline	Enquiries that resulted in a change to an overall grade
Service 1	GCSE	260	248	23
	A level	355	355	15
Service 2: non-priority	GCSE	21,328	20,229	6,432
	A level	16,446	15,677	2,432
Service 2: priority	A level	4,958	4,851	917
Service 3	GCSE	402	355	n/a
	A level	324	289	n/a

Data source: Awarding body data exchange submitted 01/12/2003, 26/03/2004 and 10/05/2005

## Appeals

Service	Received	Completed within deadline	Appeals that resulted in a change to an overall grade
Stage 1	138	n/a	16
Stage 2	24	13	

Data source: Awarding body data exchange submitted 01/04/2004



## EDEXCEL

### *Enquiries about results*

Total entries: GCSE 1,109,390; A level 431,212				
Service	Qualification	Enquiries received	Enquiries completed within deadline	Enquiries that resulted in a change to an overall grade
Service 1	GCSE	114	113	7
	A level	216	216	12
Service 2: non-priority	GCSE	7,369	7,227	1,619
	A level	13,313	13,286	1,332
Service 2: priority	A level	3,261	3,261	337
Service 3	GCSE	240	96	n/a
	A level	427	281	n/a

Data source: Awarding body data exchange submitted 7/04/2005

### *Appeals*

Service	Received	Completed within deadline	Appeals that resulted in a change to an overall grade
Stage 1	218	n/a	24
Stage 2	15	15	

Data source: Awarding body data exchange submitted 27/05/2005

## OCR

### *Enquiries about results*

Total entries: GCSE 962,688; A level 452,895				
Service	Qualification	Enquiries received	Enquiries completed within deadline	Enquiries that resulted in a change to an overall grade
Service 1	GCSE	711	711	37
	A level	511	511	36
Service 2: non-priority	GCSE	6,904	6,854	1,256
	A level	9,977	9,968	1,710
Service 2: priority	A level	2,482	2,482	202
Service 3	GCSE	102	100	n/a
	A level	177	175	n/a

Data source: Awarding body data exchange submitted 01/12/2003 and 30/03/2004

**Appeals**

Service	Received	Completed within deadline	Appeals that resulted in a change to an overall grade
Stage 1	242	n/a	26
Stage 2	22	22	

Data source: Awarding body data exchange submitted 02/04/2004

**CCEA****Enquiries about results**

Total entries: GCSE 213,838; A level 34,795

Service	Qualification	Enquiries received	Enquiries completed within deadline	Enquiries that resulted in a change to an overall grade
Service 1	GCSE	4	4	2
	A level	1	1	1
Service 2: non-priority	GCSE	2,036	2,036	682
	A level	1,630	1,630	145
Service 2: priority	A level	558	558	61
Service 3	GCSE	5	5	n/a
	A level	3	3	n/a

Data source: Awarding body data exchange submitted 04/12/2003

**Appeals**

Service	Received	Completed within deadline	Appeals that resulted in a change to an overall grade
Stage 1	1	n/a	1
Stage 2	0	0	

Data source: Awarding body data exchange submitted 01/04/2004

**WJEC****Enquiries about results**

Total entries: GCSE 314,653; A level 77,677

<b>Service</b>	<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Enquiries received</b>	<b>Enquiries completed within deadline</b>	<b>Enquiries that resulted in a change to an overall grade</b>
Service 1	GCSE	9	9	0
	A level	7	7	0
Service 2: non-priority	GCSE	803	803	184
	A level	565	565	112
Service 2: priority	A level	145	145	23
Service 3	GCSE	10	10	n/a
	A level	7	7	n/a

Data source: Awarding body data exchange submitted 01/12/2003

**Appeals**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Received</b>	<b>Completed within deadline</b>	<b>Appeals that resulted in a change to an overall grade</b>
Stage 1	0	n/a	n/a
Stage 2	0	n/a	

Data source: Awarding body data exchange submitted 01/04/2004