



National curriculum assessments review outcomes at key stage 2 in England, 2015: Quality and methodology information

This document provides an overview of the data used in the production of the National curriculum assessments review outcomes at key stage 2 in England, 2015 tables.

It provides information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data including how it is validated.

1. About the output

Results for key stage 2 tests referred to in this document can be found in the following Statistical First Release (SFR):

- [National curriculum assessments: key stage 2, 2015 \(provisional\)](#)

School level information for the end of primary school is published in the primary school [performance tables](#).

Data sources

Tests must be administered by state-funded schools in England. Independent schools, non-maintained special schools and pupil referral units may take part in the KS2 assessments if they wish to do so.

In 2015 the marking supplier collected all levels 3-5 test data and level 6 test data for all tests, regardless of whether they were marked on paper or onscreen. The data set analysed in this report was Data feed 6 and was supplied to STA on Tuesday 29 September 2015.

How the output is created

Data is collected by the marking supplier and supplied to STA. The data is checked by STA to ensure reviews have been correctly applied and the outcomes were returned to schools on 4th September 2015. This data, and any late reviews that were supplied prior to 29th September, are summarized in this SFR.

Historical data from previous provisional SFRs is updated and included for reference in this SFR.

SFR production

All data in the SFR tables is dual run by two analysts independently. Any discrepancies in the data produced are discussed and more experienced staff involved as required to agree the correct figures. Additional checks are also carried out on the data by the producers, and by a third senior analyst.

Examples of additional checks

- Comparisons with previous figures to identify any large changes
- Check totals are consistent across tables
- Check patterns in the data are as expected

2. Technical Information

Key stage 2 test review services in 2015

Schools could apply for either of the following types of review service:

- clerical review
- individual review

Guidance for schools interested in applying for a marking review is published on GOV.UK at www.gov.uk/key-stage-2-tests-how-to-apply-for-a-review-of-key-stage-2-results.

All levels 3-5 and level 6 English grammar, punctuation and spelling, English reading and mathematics tests were marked onscreen. Transcription or addition errors could not arise for onscreen marked tests. There was however a small risk that a pupil's test script image could have been incorrectly matched to another pupil's data record. A clerical review service was therefore available for the onscreen marked tests so that schools could highlight any instances of test results being incorrectly assigned to the wrong pupil. There were also some exceptional test scripts which had to be marked on paper as they were not suitable for onscreen marking, for example braille test scripts or any test which was unscannable due to additional sheets for example. The clerical review service for these scripts was completed on paper. Schools that wished to apply for a review for a script that was marked on paper had to repackage these and return to the marking agency.

Since 2010, an individual review service has involved a review of marking of the entire test script. This checks that the published mark scheme was applied to the agreed national standard throughout the test script. The review marker reviews the mark awarded for each item or question against the mark scheme to confirm it has been correctly applied. Since 2011, schools have been provided with the option to highlight any specific item(s) or question(s) they wish to bring to the review marker's attention. This gives schools the opportunity to highlight specific concerns. Both practices continued in 2015 for both the levels 3-5 and level 6 individual review services.

For all tests marked on paper, an individual review also includes a clerical check of the addition of marks on all test scripts submitted for review. If an individual review request is unsuccessful because the mark scheme had been applied appropriately by the original marker but a clerical error is detected, the review is reported as a clerical review rather than an individual review.

Schools that participated in the 2015 key stage 2 tests received their marked test scripts and results for the levels 3-5 and level 6 tests by the published deadline of Tuesday 7 July 2015. The deadline for requesting a review was Friday 17 July 2015.

Like in 2014, in 2015 schools could only apply for a review of testing by using the NCA tools website. All applications were processed by our marking supplier.

The national curriculum test scripts were marked onscreen by a pool of up to 1119 markers per subject. Tests were split into sections before they were marked, meaning a test could be marked by up to:

- 30 markers for levels 3-5 English grammar, punctuation and spelling;
- 41 markers for levels 3-5 mathematics;
- 23 markers for levels 3-5 English reading;
- 18 markers for level 6 English grammar, punctuation and spelling;

- 26 markers for level 6 mathematics; and
- 16 markers for level 6 English reading.

Markers entered item level marks into the onscreen marking software as part of the marking process. All item level marks for a pupils's test script were automatically aggregated to create a total mark for the test. The agreed level thresholds were later applied to the data feed by STA's marking supplier.

Any national curriculum tests that could not be marked onscreen (eg modified test papers and unscannables) were reviewed in hard copy by a review marker. Their item level marks were then keyed into the onscreen marking system by a processing member of staff at the marking supplier. Item level marks were automatically aggregated and the level thresholds applied in line with the test scripts marked onscreen.

Review fees and process reviews

Schools were informed that they would be charged for any individual review applications that did not result in a change to the test level reported for the child for the levels 3-5 tests, or the test outcome for the child for the level 6 tests. The individual review fee has remained unchanged since 2010 at £9. This fee applied to both the levels 3-5 and level 6 test reviews.

As in 2014 the charge for a clerical review where the level did not change, but a clerical error was found, was removed. Schools were still charged if a clerical error was not found. The clerical review fee has remained unchanged since 2010 at £5, and applies to both the levels 3-5 and level 6 test reviews.

Schools could request a process review if they were not satisfied that the correct procedures had been followed in the conduct of an individual review. The outcome of a process review is final and there is no right of appeal. At the time of writing, one process review application has been received.

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