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Appeals Against Results for GCSE and GCE:

Summer 2010 Examinations Series

March 2011

Ofqual/11/4822

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Key findings

During the summer 2010 examinations series, 6.1million GCSE and 2.2 million GCE qualification awards were made in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Over 15 million GCSE and GCE examination scripts were marked by the awarding organisations.

If an examination centre is concerned about a candidate's grade, it can ask the awarding organisation to investigate the grade through the enquiries about results process. A report on enquiries about results for the summer 2010 examinations series is available at www.ofqual.gov.uk/research-and-statistics/statistics/165/371

Following the release of results for the summer 2010 examinations series, there were 171,700 enquiries about results. For GCSE, there were a total of 24,200 subject grade changes following enquiry, representing 0.40 per cent of all GCSE subject entries. For GCE, there were a total of 10,500 subject grade changes following enquiry, representing 0.47 per cent of all GCE subject entries.

If a centre is still dissatisfied with the outcome of an enquiry, it can appeal to the awarding organisation. Two post-result stages are available for appeals.

Stage 1: review by senior member of the awarding organisation

Following the summer 2010 examinations series, there were 333 Stage 1 appeals made against results – a decrease of 34 per cent from 2009.

Stage 2: appeals panel

A centre may progress an appeal to Stage 2 if it is still not satisfied with the result after a Stage 1 appeal.

Of the Stage 1 appeals following the summer 2010 examinations series, 29 proceeded to a Stage 2 appeal – a decrease of 29 per cent from 2009.

Of the Stage 2 appeals, 97 per cent were completed within the guideline of 50 working days from receipt of the appeal.

In total, 24 subject grades were changed as the result of an appeal, representing 0.0003 per cent of all subject entries. For GCSE, six subject grades were changed as a result of an appeal, and for GCE, 18 subject grades were changed. All grade changes occurred at Stage 1 of the appeals process.

Introduction

This report, published on behalf of the regulators in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, presents data on appeals made to awarding organisations for the summer 2010 GCSE and GCE examinations series. The report summarises the performance of the five awarding organisations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland:

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

The awarding organisations provide the regulators in England, Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual); Wales, Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS); and Northern Ireland, Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), with statistical data on appeals against results.

The report:

- details the processes and reporting arrangements in 2010 for appeals against GCSE and GCE results
- provides data for the five awarding organisations in terms of the two stages for appeals
- provides data on the number of appeals received and the number of changes made to subject grades as a result

Please note: the marking issues for AQA and CCEA following the 2010 summer examinations did not impact on the figures for appeals and grade change in this report, as these were dealt with through a separate mechanism.

The appeals process

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

Enquiries about results

Every year, the GCSE and GCE awarding organisations publish information and guidance for 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 organisation to investigate the grade. Candidates cannot ask awarding organisations to investigate; they must ask through their centre. This is because centres have responsibility for entering candidates for examinations. Private candidates are an exception; they can ask the awarding organisations directly.

If the investigation shows that marking or processing errors have been made and the candidate's grade is incorrect, the awarding organisation will adjust the grade to the correct level. Since 2001, grades have been adjusted down as well as up.

A report on the enquiries about results for the summer 2010 examination series was published in December 2010 and is available at www.ofqual.gov.uk/research-and-statistics/statistics/165/371

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 organisation.

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

There are two stages in the appeals process:

- Stage 1 – a review of the case by a senior member of the awarding organisation who has not been involved previously with the particular case
- Stage 2 – a presentation of the case to an appeals panel. The awarding organisation convenes the panel. It will comprise at least three members, one of whom must be independent (someone who is not, and has not been, a member of the awarding organisation's board or committees, or an employee or examiner at the awarding organisation, at any time during the previous five years). A centre can take the appeal to Stage 2 only after going through Stage 1.

Appeals should be completed within 50 working days of being lodged with the awarding organisation. However, there are circumstances where this is not possible or appropriate. Some appeals may take place beyond 50 days of the initial request if this is necessary to find a date on which relevant members of staff from both the centre and awarding organisation are available to attend the appeal.

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 of the awarding organisations and the regulators. Details of appeals heard by the EAB can be found at www.theeab.org.uk.

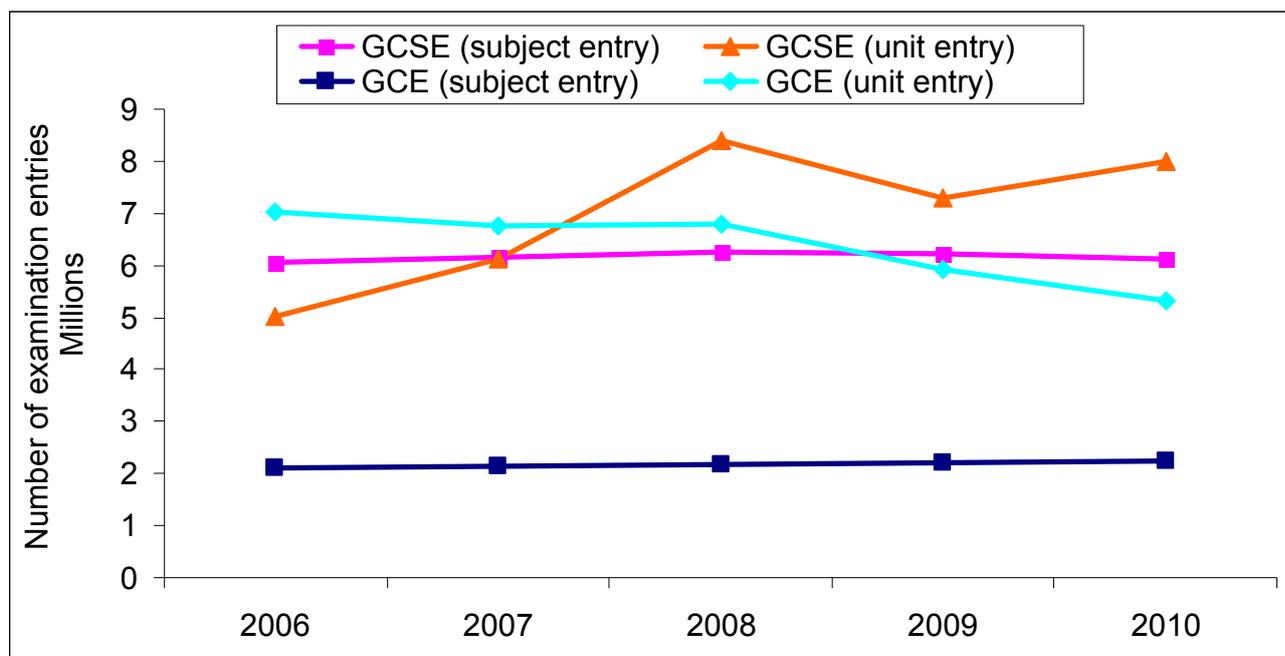
Data source

The data are provided by the awarding organisations. The awarding organisations and regulators have a formal and agreed schedule for reporting on enquiries about results and appeals, which was introduced in 2003.

Summer 2010 examinations series

During the 2010 summer examinations series, there were 6.1 million GCSE subject entries and 2.2 million GCE subject entries. At unit level, there were 8.0 million GCSE unit entries and 5.3 million GCE unit entries (see figure 1 and table 1).

Figure 1: Total entries for GCSE and GCE, summer examinations series 2006/10

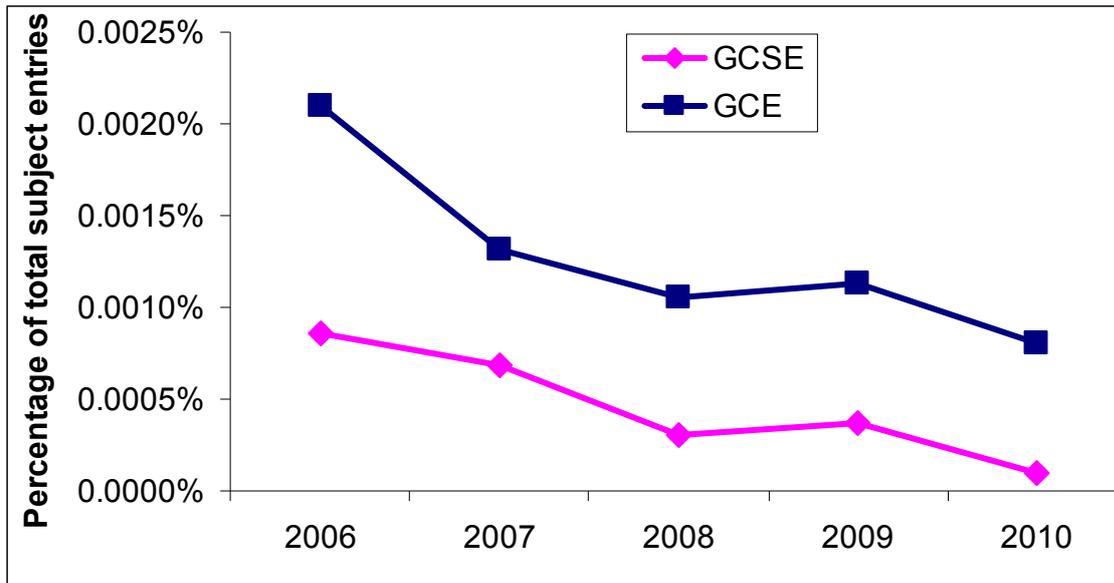


Following the summer 2010 examinations series, appeals were received as shown below.

	GCSE appeals	GCE appeals
Stage 1 (review)	139	194
Stage 2 (appeals panel)	11	18

In total, 24 subject grades were changed as a result of an appeal, representing 0.0003 per cent of all subject grades. For GCSE, six subject grades were changed as a result of an appeal, and for GCE, 18 subject grades were changed (see figure 2 and table 2). All grade changes occurred at Stage 1 of the appeals process.

Figure 2: Appeals that resulted in a subject grade change as a percentage of total subject entries, summer examinations series 2006/10



Stage 1 and Stage 2 appeals

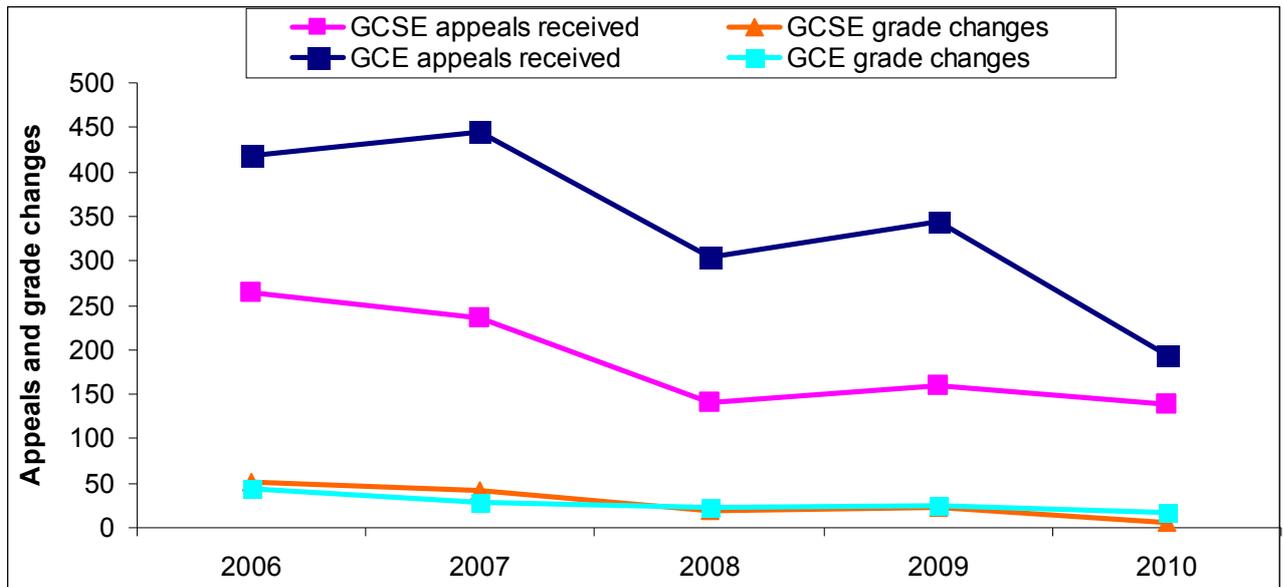
(See figure 3 and tables 3 and 4)

Following the summer 2010 examinations series, there were 333 Stage 1 appeals made against results – a decrease of 34 per cent from 2009.

Of these Stage 1 appeals, 29 proceeded to a Stage 2 appeal – a decrease of 29 per cent from 2009.

Of the Stage 2 appeals, 97 per cent were completed within the guideline of 50 working days from receipt of the appeal.

Figure 3: Appeals received and grade changes, summer examinations series 2006/10



Tables

Table 1: Total entries for GCSE and GCE, summer examinations series 2006-2010

England, Wales & Northern Ireland							
	Year	Number of entries					Total
		AQA	Edexcel	OCR	CCEA	WJEC	
GCSE (subject entry)	2006	2,869,500	1,319,500	1,202,200	173,000	480,200	6,044,500
	2007	2,870,400	1,354,300	1,228,700	177,600	520,100	6,151,100
	2008	2,951,100	1,365,500	1,224,000	163,700	564,000	6,268,200
	2009	2,800,900	1,372,100	1,313,500	168,900	581,800	6,237,100
	2010	2,708,000	1,383,700	1,256,400	175,200	602,200	6,125,600
GCE (subject entry) ¹	2006	874,800	555,100	542,400	43,900	101,500	2,117,700
	2007	868,400	549,600	570,600	46,900	110,900	2,146,300
	2008	885,000	571,000	558,700	48,500	125,100	2,188,300
	2009	913,400	518,600	570,500	57,100	157,800	2,217,400
	2010	942,900	470,300	596,100	58,000	182,500	2,249,700
Total subject entries	2006	3,744,300	1,874,600	1,744,700	216,900	581,800	8,162,300
	2007	3,738,700	1,903,900	1,799,300	224,500	631,000	8,297,400
	2008	3,836,100	1,936,500	1,782,600	212,200	689,100	8,456,500
	2009	3,714,300	1,890,600	1,884,000	226,000	739,700	8,454,600
	2010	3,650,900	1,854,000	1,852,500	233,200	784,600	8,375,200
GCSE (unit entry)	2006	1,269,000	1,840,100	1,812,600	54,900	29,800	5,006,300
	2007	1,567,800	1,991,400	2,405,300	66,100	83,700	6,114,400
	2008	2,973,800	2,442,900	2,737,800	72,200	169,000	8,395,800
	2009	2,826,800	1,700,900	2,494,000	88,800	167,500	7,278,000
	2010	2,948,800	2,166,200	2,544,900	108,600	229,100	7,997,600
GCE (unit entry) ¹	2006	2,730,600	2,026,400	1,774,700	144,900	342,400	7,019,100
	2007	2,692,400	1,856,800	1,720,900	137,100	364,900	6,772,000
	2008	2,684,700	1,874,100	1,697,700	138,800	391,100	6,786,300
	2009	2,348,300	1,473,400	1,546,900	150,100	409,200	5,927,900
	2010	2,103,600	1,231,800	1,429,000	134,500	412,400	5,311,400
Total unit entries	2006	3,999,600	3,866,500	3,587,300	199,800	372,200	12,025,400
	2007	4,260,200	3,848,200	4,126,200	203,200	448,600	12,886,400
	2008	5,658,400	4,317,000	4,435,500	211,000	560,100	15,182,100
	2009	5,175,000	3,174,300	4,040,900	238,900	576,600	13,205,800
	2010	5,052,400	3,398,100	3,973,900	243,100	641,500	13,309,100

Source: EPG exams monitoring data

Notes:

1. GCE figures for 2006 include VCEs.
2. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.
3. All figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
4. Figures have been rounded independently so may not sum to the total.

Table 2: Appeals that resulted in a grade change for GCSE and GCE, summer examinations series 2006-2010

England, Wales & Northern Ireland

		Number of grade changes ¹			Percentage of subject entries where grade changed following appeal
	Year	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total	
GCSE	2006	49	3	52	0.0009%
	2007	39	3	42	0.0007%
	2008	19	0	19	0.0003%
	2009	20	3	23	0.0004%
	2010	6	0	6	0.0001%
GCE	2006	41	3	44	0.0021%
	2007	24	4	28	0.0013%
	2008	22	1	23	0.0011%
	2009	24	1	25	0.0011%
	2010	18	0	18	0.0008%
Total	2006	90	6	96	0.0012%
	2007	63	7	70	0.0008%
	2008	41	1	42	0.0005%
	2009	44	4	48	0.0006%
	2010	24	0	24	0.0003%

Source: EPG exams monitoring data

Notes:

1. Grades may go up or down following an appeal.
2. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.
3. GCE figures for 2006 include VCEs.

Table 3: Appeals against results for GCSE and GCE by appeal type, summer examinations series 2006-2010

England, Wales & Northern Ireland

		Number of appeals			% of Stage 2 appeals completed within 50 days of receipt
Year	Stage 1 appeals received	Stage 2 appeals received	Stage 2 appeals completed within 50 days of receipt ¹		
GCSE	2006	265	17	7	41%
	2007	236	23	12	52%
	2008	140	11	9	82%
	2009	159	22	17	77%
	2010	139	11	11	100%
GCE	2006	418	25	15	60%
	2007	444	32	15	47%
	2008	305	28	24	86%
	2009	345	19	14	74%
	2010	194	18	17	94%
Total	2006	683	42	22	52%
	2007	680	55	27	49%
	2008	445	39	33	85%
	2009	504	41	31	76%
	2010	333	29	28	97%

Source: EPG exams monitoring data

Notes:

1. 50 days is the guideline for completion, however there are circumstance where this may not be possible or appropriate.
2. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.
3. GCE figures for 2006 include VCEs.

Table 4: Total appeals against results by awarding organisation, summer examinations series 2006-2010 (also showing total enquiries received)

England, Wales & Northern Ireland						
	Year	Enquiries		Appeals		
		Total enquiries received ¹	Stage 1 appeals received	Stage 2 appeals received	Appeals that resulted in a change to an overall grade ²	Percentage of subject entries where grade changed following appeal
AQA	2006	51,400	128	7	13	0.0003%
	2007	58,700	126	14	10	0.0003%
	2008	69,800	77	5	6	0.0002%
	2009	71,300	75	18	2	0.0001%
	2010	73,800	60	12	4	0.0001%
Edexcel	2006	30,400	230	13	37	0.0020%
	2007	33,300	288	13	30	0.0016%
	2008	38,800	272	17	26	0.0013%
	2009	43,600	314	10	32	0.0017%
	2010	41,900	165	7	15	0.0008%
OCR	2006	28,900	310	22	42	0.0024%
	2007	32,900	257	28	26	0.0014%
	2008	38,300	85	17	9	0.0005%
	2009	38,000	106	11	12	0.0006%
	2010	38,200	96	10	2	0.0001%
CCEA	2006	5,400	14	0	4	0.0018%
	2007	5,700	8	0	4	0.0018%
	2008	6,400	8	0	1	0.0005%
	2009	6,200	7	1	2	0.0009%
	2010	7,600	12	0	3	0.0013%
WJEC	2006	3,200	1	0	0	0.0000%
	2007	4,100	1	0	0	0.0000%
	2008	6,200	3	0	0	0.0000%
	2009	8,300	2	1	0	0.0000%
	2010	10,200	0	0	0	0.0000%
Total	2006	119,300	683	42	96	0.0012%
	2007	134,600	680	55	70	0.0008%
	2008	159,600	445	39	42	0.0005%
	2009	167,400	504	41	48	0.0006%
	2010	171,700	333	29	24	0.0003%

Notes:

Source: EPG exams monitoring data

1. Figures for Enquiries cover all services, and have been rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. Grades may go up or down following an appeal.
3. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.
4. Figures for 2006 include VCEs.
5. Figures have been rounded independently so may not sum to the total.

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First published by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation in 2011

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Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation
Spring Place
Coventry Business Park
Herald Avenue
Coventry CV5 6UB

Telephone 0300 303 3344

Textphone 0300 303 3345

Helpline 0300 303 3346

www.ofqual.gov.uk

Helen Jones – Head of Statistics

Chris Harvey – Policy Lead