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Guidance

Scaled scores at key stage 2

Information for headteachers, teachers, governors and local authorities about scaled scores and the expected standard for the 2018 national curriculum tests.

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Scaled scores

National curriculum tests at the end of key stage 2 (KS2) (often referred to as SATs) are administered in mathematics, English reading and English grammar, punctuation and spelling.

We use scaled scores to report the results of these tests to ensure we can make accurate comparisons of performance over time.

What is a scaled score?

A pupil's scaled score is based on their raw score. The raw score is the total number of marks a pupil scores in a test, based on the number of questions they answered correctly.

Tests are developed each year to the same specification, however, because the questions are different, the difficulty of tests may vary each year. This means we need to convert the raw scores pupils get in the tests into scaled scores, to ensure we can make accurate comparisons of performance over time.

A scaled score of 100 will always represent the expected standard on the test. Pupils scoring at least 100 will have met the expected standard on the test. However, given that the difficulty of the tests may vary each year, the number of raw score marks needed to achieve a scaled score of 100 may also change. For example, if the overall difficulty of a test decreases compared to previous years, the raw score required to meet the expected standard will increase. Similarly, if the test is more difficult, the raw score required to meet the expected standard will decrease.

In 2016, [panels of teachers](#) set the raw score required to meet the expected standard on each test. We have used data from trialling the test materials and the live administration to maintain the standards for the 2017 tests onwards.

Calculating raw scores

The raw scores for each test are calculated by adding the scores from each paper for a subject.

Test	Number of marks available in the paper	Total number of marks available for the test – highest raw score
English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 1: questions	50 marks	70 marks
English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 2: spelling	20 marks	
English reading	50 marks	50 marks
Mathematics Paper 1: arithmetic	40 marks	110 marks
Mathematics Paper 2: reasoning	35 marks	
Mathematics Paper 3: reasoning	35 marks	

Range of scaled scores

The range of scaled scores available for each KS2 test is the same as set in 2016 and is intended to stay the same in future years. 80 is the lowest scaled score that can be awarded, 120 is the highest scaled score.

Pupils scoring at least a scaled score of 100 will have met the expected standard of the test.

A pupil awarded a scaled score of 99 or below has not met the expected standard in the test.

Pupils need a minimum raw score before they can be awarded the lowest scaled score. Pupils who do not achieve the lowest scaled score have not demonstrated sufficient understanding of the KS2 curriculum in the subject. Where this is the case the scaled score field for the pupil in the 'Pupil results' section of [NCA tools](#) will be 'N'. The outcome of the test for the pupil will be 'NS', expected standard not achieved.

Understanding test outcomes

KS2 tests are externally marked and marks are returned to schools in the 'Pupil results' section of [NCA tools](#). To receive a scaled score, pupils must take each test paper for the subject. For those pupils, schools will receive:

- a raw score
- a scaled score (except where a pupil has too few marks to be awarded the lowest scaled score)
- either 'NS' (expected standard not achieved) or 'AS' (expected standard achieved)

Raw score to scaled score conversion tables

Schools can use the test [conversion tables](#) to understand the relationship between the raw scores and scaled scores for each test.

The conversion tables show that sometimes 2 or more raw scores convert to the same scaled score. This is because data showed that the attainment of pupils who scored these total marks was not very different.

There are also times when it is not possible to achieve a particular scaled score. This is due to the number of questions in the test, although these scores may be possible on previous or future tests.

Where to get help

Standards and Testing Agency

Email

assessments@education.gov.uk

National curriculum assessments helpline

0300 303 3013

For general enquiries about national curriculum tests.

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