



Standards
& Testing
Agency

2022 maladministration report

National curriculum assessments

May 2023

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Introduction

The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) has a statutory duty to investigate any matter concerning the accuracy of results of statutory assessments, including the:

- reception baseline assessment (RBA)
- key stage 1 (KS1), including phonics screening check, national curriculum tests and assessments
- key stage 2 (KS2) national curriculum tests and assessments, including the multiplication tables check (MTC)

We investigate any concerns alongside local authorities, in accordance with the [‘Maladministration investigation procedures’](#)¹.

Maladministration refers to any act that could jeopardise the integrity, security or confidentiality of the national curriculum assessments and could lead to results that do not reflect the unaided abilities of pupils.

This could refer to a range of actions, including:

- failure to notify STA of the use of a scribe or word processors
- failure to notify STA of the use of other technical or electronic aids
- failure to remove or cover room displays appropriately
- early opening of assessment materials without permission
- test administrators over-aiding pupils
- schools allowing pupils to resit an assessment
- making changes to pupils’ test scripts outside of test conditions
- schools reporting pupils’ phonics screening check scores incorrectly
- unauthorised additional time or timetable variation
- inconsistencies of teacher assessment judgements, such as inflation or deflation

This report is the first maladministration report since 2019, as most assessments were cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic. It details the numbers, sources and types of allegations of maladministration reported to STA throughout the 2022 test cycle across RBA, KS1 and KS2. It presents the numbers of amendments and annulments to results made in 2022 and provides comparisons with the maladministration data from 2019 and 2022.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stages-1-and-2-investigating-allegations-of-maladministration

National curriculum assessments in 2022

Number of schools participating in 2022

The number of schools participating in each individual assessment varies slightly. In 2022:

- 16,439 schools participated in the RBA
- 16,438 schools participated in the phonics screening check
- 16,546 schools participated in end of KS1 assessments
- 16,290 schools participated in the MTC
- 16,343 schools participated in the end of KS2 assessments

Changes to maladministration procedures in 2022

In 2022, STA introduced the process of informing headteachers if there had been a maladministration investigation raised for their school regardless of the outcome. In previous years the school may not have been aware if there was no case to answer or if STA determined only minor maladministration had occurred.

From 2022 STA now provide Ofsted with information on maladministration investigations.

The case categories provided are:

- DfE number
- school name
- allegation type
- case status
- key stage
- outcome
- outcome category
- assessment
- local authority name

Maladministration investigations in 2022

Main findings from 2022

The main findings were as follows:

- there were 25 allegations for RBA, of which none resulted in an investigation. As RBA was not yet statutory in 2019 there are no comparative figures for that year
- there was a decrease in the number of KS1 maladministration allegations in 2022 compared with 2019 – there were 66 cases in 2022, which led to 39 investigations, compared with 172 cases which led to 157 investigations in 2019 (see Table 1)
- there was a decrease in the number of KS2 maladministration allegations in 2022 compared with 2019 – there were 394 cases in 2022, which led to 224 investigations, compared with 628 cases which led to 586 investigations in 2019 (see Table 1)
- there was a decrease in the number of cases at KS1 resulting in amendment or annulment of results for 2022 compared with 2019 – there were 6 cases in 2022, compared with 13 in 2019
- there was a decrease in the number of cases at KS2 resulting in amendment or annulment of results for 2022 compared with 2019—there were 22 cases in 2022, compared with 73 in 2019
- there were 9 Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) allegations which did not result in an investigation. As MTC was not yet statutory in 2019 there are no comparative figures for that year.
- the main source for all KS2 allegations were anonymous —this made up 57% of investigations (224 of 392) compared with 50% (293 of 586) in 2019
- the main type of KS2 allegation was a test administrator over-aiding—this made up 32% of all investigations (126 of 392) compared with 35% (260 of 743) in 2019.

Breakdown of maladministration cases in 2022

The table below details the number of maladministration investigated by STA at each key stage from 2022 compared with 2019.

Table 1: details the number of cases of maladministration investigated by STA at each key stage from 2022 compared with 2019 (not including MTC at KS2 in 2022 as these were only allegations)

Year	Total number of KS1 investigations	Total number of KS2 investigations	Total number of KS1 and KS2 investigations
2019	157	586	743
2022	39	224	263

Sources of reported maladministration cases in 2022

Cases of alleged maladministration are reported to STA from several different sources. Across both KS1 and KS2 – but not RBA as those allegations did not lead to an investigation – schools self-reported 49% (128) of cases. Local authorities reported 13% (34) of cases, including those reported following local authority monitoring visits.

Table 2: Sources of all reported allegations in 2022

Sources	Count	Percentage
Anonymous	224	46%
School	128	26%
Marker	41	8%
Teacher	29	6%
Local Authority	22	5%
Parent	17	4%
Other*	25	5%
Total	486	

*Other sources of reported maladministration in 2022 included:

- governing body
- parent of another child
- secondary school
- referrals from Ofqual
- referrals from Ofsted
- family member of child

Key stage 1 maladministration investigations

In 2022:

- 33 allegations were made about the administration of the phonics screening check
- 33 allegations were made about KS1 tests

The table below gives a breakdown of allegations by type.

Table 3: Allegation types at KS1

Allegation	Count	Percentage
Test administrator over-aiding pupils	17	26%
Inappropriate storage of tests	8	12%
Coaching of pupils	7	11%
Test security breach	4	6%
Wrongly opened test packs	4	6%
Displays not covered	1	1.5%
Teacher assessment	1	1.5%
Other*	24	36%

*Other allegations of maladministration at KS1 in 2022 included:

- incorrect papers given to pupils
- incorrect storage of completed test papers
- inappropriate room for the test or check
- administering the test/check outside the test/check window

Key stage 2 maladministration investigations

There were a total of 403 maladministration allegations received for KS2 in 2022.

Table 4: Allegation types at KS2

Allegation	Count	Percentage
Test Administrator over-aiding pupils	89	22%
Unauthorised test timetable variation	80	20%
Wrongly opened test packs	62	15%
Changes to paper in another hand	43	11%
Unauthorised additional time	18	4%
Displays not covered	15	4%
MTC	9	2%
Other*	87	22%

*Other allegations of maladministration at KS2 in 2022 included:

- incorrect papers given to pupils
- test packs damaged on arrival
- incorrect time allocation
- lost test materials
- coaching of pupils
- early opening without permission
- test administered to a child working below the level
- resitting the test
- consignment note or distribution issues
- test administered early

Amendments and annulments to test results

Following an investigation, if STA finds that the accuracy of a pupil's test/check results is in doubt, a senior manager makes a decision whether to amend or annul results or not. STA communicates this decision to the school.

Where a school believes a pupil has gained an advantage as a result of cheating, the headteacher notifies STA of the incident. In doing this, they agree to either the removal of marks for the specific questions where the pupil has gained an advantage or the annulment of the pupil's paper.

Amendment and annulment at key stage 1

6% of all KS1 cases in 2022 resulted in an amendment or annulment of results. In summary, 4 schools had their phonics screening check results annulled, 1 for the whole cohort, 1 for a partial cohort and 2 for an individual pupil. These schools were advised that they would need to re-administer the phonics screening check in 2023 to the pupils affected.

Table 5: Number of schools with amendments or annulments to KS1 results and PSC for 2019 and 2022

Year	Teacher assessment	National curriculum tests	Phonics screening check	% of all cases at KS1
2019	2	6	5	12%
2022	0	0	4	6%

Amendment and annulment at key stage 2

In summary, for KS2 in 2022:

- 19 schools had pupils' results amended or annulled, as a result of maladministration
- of the 19 schools with amended or annulled results, 15 schools had an annulment for an individual pupil and 4 for more than 1 pupil
- 20 schools had pupils' test results amended or annulled after notifying STA of a single pupil cheating

Table 6: Number of schools with amendments or annulments to KS2 results for 2019 and 2022

Year	Schools with whole cohort annulments of at least one subject	Schools with individual pupil annulments or partial cohort in at least one subject	Total of schools with amendments or annulments to their results	% of all cases at KS2
2019	8	65	73	12%
2022	0	19	15	7%

In 2022, less than 1% of all schools that participated in the KS2 assessments had their results amended.

No annulments were made for MTC or teacher assessment at KS2.



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