

The marking of this year's examination papers has now reached an appropriate stage for the five largest awarding bodies providing GCE and GCSE qualifications to provide an update on actions on the errors in this year's questions. Below is their statement.

As the bodies responsible for setting GCSE and A-level examination questions this summer, we take our responsibilities extremely seriously.

This summer, ten examination questions contained an error. Although this is a small proportion of the more than 60,000 questions set across over 5,000 papers, we know that any error in such a vital process is unacceptable. We regret that these errors have occurred and we apologise to all students affected.

Our aim in recent weeks has been to protect students' interests and ensure they receive the results they deserve. As individual awarding bodies, we have been sharing our planned approach with the teachers of the students affected and we are grateful for their support in communicating this to students.

We have also published information on our individual websites and ensured JCQ (which represents all awarding bodies) has responded to media enquiries on a joint basis.

We have discussed in detail with exam board regulators our approach to protecting students' interests. Now that marking has reached an appropriate stage we are able through this statement to provide an update.

The actions taken by awarding bodies will vary according to the specific error but may include, for example:

- giving all students full marks for the problem question
- removing the problem question from the marking
- adjusting the marks for other questions so that the maximum mark remains the same
- taking into account the impact on the performance of all students taking the paper when setting the grades

A specific concern is where an individual student may have been so put off by an error that their answers to other questions were affected. We are handling this in a number of ways:

- In our communication to schools and colleges immediately after the errors occurred we urged teachers and students to apply for Special Consideration for anyone who was affected in this way. Special Consideration is a tried and tested system, well known to schools and colleges, for dealing with a wide variety of events that can impact candidates' performance.
- Additionally, as part of the awarding processes, we will be using a range of statistical techniques to seek to identify students whose performance deteriorated in questions. Our most senior examiners will draw together all the available information and take it into account so we can ensure we protect students' interests.

Further information will be provided after grading has been completed.

We are aware that for a number of students these errors occurred on papers they are using to aggregate for a full A-level this summer and potentially to form part of their university application.

We will inform UCAS prior to the results being issued of all the students aggregating for A-level this summer who took one of the impacted papers.

Each awarding body's website will contain further information. The links are below:

[AQA](#)
[CCEA](#)
[Edexcel](#)
[OCR](#)
[WJEC](#)

We are all carrying out our own internal investigations which will bring to light the lessons learnt and we will share this information. We are also supporting fully Ofqual's inquiry.

We deeply regret these errors and the distress they have caused students and their families. We are grateful for the support we have received from teachers and also the input from Teacher Associations and student representative bodies on a broader basis.

Andrew Hall
Chief Executive
AQA

Gavin Boyd
Chief Executive
CCEA

Ziggy Liaquat
Managing Director
Edexcel

Mark Dawe
Chief Executive
OCR

Gareth Pierce
Chief Executive
WJEC

13 July 2011