

## NASUWT Briefing on Access to GCSE Scripts

1. This briefing on access to GCSE scripts is in response to the proposed changes to the availability to schools of GCSE scripts during the summer holidays. The Union is concerned about the potential impact on teacher workload, as well as the possibility that in some schools there may be an expectation that teachers will review scripts during the school holiday.
2. Below is a summary of the position for this year's examinations and advice for school leaders.

### Current position

3. Since 1999, A level papers have been, and will continue to be, available for schools to request from results day (18 August 2016) in order to inform any decision about enquiries about results (EARs).
4. GCSE scripts have been, and will continue to be, available to schools in order to support teaching and learning. This year, from 21 September 2016, i.e. after the date for EAR applications, schools have had to decide whether to make an enquiry without having seen the candidates' work. This is said to have led to a high number of speculative enquiries being made at a cost to the school, which is only refunded if there is a change of mark.
5. Less than a fifth of all EARs result in a grade change.

### Ofqual's changes to EAR and appeals process regarding early access to GCSE scripts

6. In order to allow schools to make more informed decisions about whether to make EARs, Ofqual has decided that, from the summer 2017 examination series, awarding bodies can opt to make GCSE scripts available to schools on results day.
7. The WJEC made this service available for GCSE scripts in English language, Welsh language and mathematics last year but does not intend to offer other subjects this year.
8. Pearson Edexcel has decided to offer the service to schools this year, a year ahead of other major awarding bodies, who are still considering the possible impact of making GCSE scripts available earlier than current practice.
9. An awarding body's decision will make no difference to a school's or a private candidate's right to apply for an EAR.

### NASUWT advice

School leaders need to consider this issue in consultation with teachers before the start of the summer holiday. This year, the deadline for GCSE EARs is 20 September so there should be no need for teachers to lose holiday time reviewing scripts.

Where there is a need for teachers to review scripts due to an unexpected result, school leaders should make time available within directed time to enable this to be carried out.

*Briefing*