

The NSEAD Raw Marks Survey

To identify the impact on teachers and learners of giving centre-assessed raw marks to art and design GCSE and GCE candidates

Impacts; Recommendations; Questions for review

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Impacts

Giving all marks to art and design candidates is impacting most on learners and teachers.

Learners

Wellbeing

92% indicated that the process is causing undue stress on students.

Stress before and during exams

The process and its timing, mean that raw marks are often given out just before or even during students' other public exams:

‘Students are going into their written exams just after receiving their art raw mark, crying and trying to make sense of it.’

Teachers

Wellbeing

95% indicated that the process is causing undue stress on teachers.

‘Having taught for 40 years, it’s making me rethink whether teaching is worth doing anymore due to the stress it is putting me under, affecting both my mental and physical health!’

Timing and moderation

Many respondents said that the process had reduced the time for marking, standardisation and for coursework.

Impacts

Online grade boundaries and grade anxiety

Candidates receiving their marks are comparing their 'final' grade to others; now easily finding grades online (making assumptions about grade boundaries from previous years). Survey respondents described that some of their students experienced a high-level of anxiety.

Demoralising; disruptive on revision; demotivating; students felt angry, upset; disheartened, causing stress and unnecessary confusion and misunderstanding.

Additional workload for teachers

'I had an appeal last year at my centre which created so much additional work and stress for me. This year I have been asked to check for another school. Again, very stressful.'

'I am in an independent school and had six out of 24 pupils wanting to appeal despite being predicted for the past year exactly what the received.'

Impacts

A breakdown of trust between students and teachers; teachers and parents

‘It has broken many working relationships with students and potentially affecting A level numbers because parents and pupils blame me.’

‘Parents have complained about the undue stress caused to their children while in the exam season.’

Impact on subject recruitment

The process impacts on the up-take of art and design at A level

‘It has broken many working relationships with students and potentially affecting A level numbers because parents and pupils blame me.’

Predicted grades and moderation are ample assurance

Respondents questioned the benefits of providing raw marks when external moderation is there to identify any inaccuracies with marking.

‘If the moderation process is robust, this should offer adequate reassurances for students.’

One hundred percent Non-Examination Assessment (NEA)

‘No other subject is expected to hand out marks for the whole course. I can appreciate why marks are given out for Coursework. It is a really unique situation.’

‘The ESA [externally set assessment] is still conducted as an exam, in exam conditions. That mark should not be shared.’

Impacts

The cost of the process and review is carried by schools, teachers and in some cases parent(s) and carer(s):

From 2017 onwards the process of giving marks is formally required and carried out by schools and teachers. The process is not always charged but usually takes place in the teachers' own time.

Others noted that there is indeed a cost to parent(s) and carer(s). How do parent/carers who cannot afford the review fees, pay for a review?

The system of raw marks to students could be exacerbating inequities across the sector

Has data been collected to provide reassurances that there are no inequities in the review system?

NSEAD recommendations:

- JCQ and Ofqual: **an independent consultation and impact study** of the requirement that teachers give raw marks to art and design candidates.
- The proposed impact study would **consult with art and design teachers from across the sector.**
- It would examine relevant **subject-specific data** to identify **if the process is meeting the needs of all young people regardless of school or background,** and how the **process, guidance, training and the procedure itself is impacting on teachers and learners.**

Questions

The impact study of the process would answer a series of questions:

- In 2016 Ofqual noted they would need more information to **assess the impact of this proposal** (Raw Marks, p 1, v.). What information has Ofqual and JCQ gathered to ensure the process of giving raw marks to students is fit for purpose.
- Has the process been reviewed with a specific focus on teacher workload and teacher wellbeing?
- Are the benefits to students at this pivotal time worth the stress, confusion and potential disappointment during their final examinations?
- Art and design is 100 percent teacher marked and externally moderated. Does this process mitigate the need to give raw marks to students?
- The process has reduced the time for the art and design externally set assignments (ESA), and the time available for internal standardisation. Are there any adjustments that could give back time for teaching?
- Is the process harder to manage and less viable in small centres?
- Is subject-specific raw marks guidance and/or training materials, using consistent instructions and accessible language?
- Could a change in the process help maintain teacher-learner working relationships?
- Does the giving of marks before GCSEs impact on student uptake to AS to A level art and design subjects?
- Have fees for reviews been passed on to parent(s); does this deter or prohibit assessment and marking reviews from taking place?
- What is the variability in the number of marking appeals across protected characteristics of students and their parent(s) and carer(s) across the sector?