



Standards
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Agency



Statistical First Release

2014 key stage 2 national curriculum tests review outcomes

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- 1,626,088** Number of key stage 2 levels 3-5 tests taken. This comprises 3,253,604 individual scripts for the key stage 2 levels 3-5 tests in mathematics, English reading and English grammar, punctuation and spelling, that were marked in 2014. This is a 4 percentage point increase from 1,563,761 tests in 2013.
- 0.5** The percentage of the total number of levels 3-5 tests that were marked which had a review application made against them. That is 8,576 tests. This is an increase of 2,370 (38%) from 2013 where the percentage of tests with a review application was 0.4.
- 1,966** Levels 3-5 results where there was an overall subject level change (to a higher or lower level) as a result of a review application. This represents 0.1% of the total number of levels 3-5 tests marked. This was the same proportion as in 2013.
- 22.9** The percentage of review applications for levels 3-5 test scripts that resulted in a level change, down from 24.0 in 2013.
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- 274,504** Number of key stage 2 level 6 tests taken. This comprises 545,337 individual scripts for the key stage 2 level 6 tests in mathematics, English reading and English grammar, punctuation and spelling, that were marked in 2014. This is an increase from 206,948 tests in 2013.
- 0.4** The percentage of the total number of level 6 test scripts that were marked which had a review application made against them. That is 1,009 tests. This percentage was the same in 2013.
- 221** Level 6 test results where there was an overall subject level change (to a higher or lower level) as a result of a review application, representing less than 0.1% of the total number of level 6 tests marked, which was the same proportion in 2013.
- 21.9** The percentage of review applications for level 6 test scripts that resulted in a level change, an increase from 20.4 in 2013.

1. Introduction

This report provides provisional information on the outcomes of clerical reviews and reviews of marking for the 2014 key stage 2 national curriculum tests.

This report is published by the Standards and Testing Agency (STA), an executive agency of the Department for Education (DfE). STA is responsible for developing and delivering all statutory assessments from early years to the end of key stage 2.

Children were assessed at levels 3-5 in English reading, English grammar, punctuation and spelling, and mathematics. Where schools opted to register them, children could also be assessed at level 6 in the same subjects.

Reviews

A review is when a child's test script is checked to ensure that the original application of the mark scheme was appropriate and that no clerical errors were made. A request for a review for the levels 3-5 tests should be considered when, in the opinion of school staff, a child has been awarded a national curriculum level above or below the level that their work is entitled to, according to the published mark scheme. A request for a level 6 review should be considered when, in the opinion of school staff, the review would result in a change to the child's level 6 test outcome, according to the published mark scheme.

2. Key figures for 2013 and 2014 (Tables 1-7)

Table 1 below shows the cohort numbers for the 2013 and 2014 key stage 2 tests. These numbers were used as the denominator to calculate the types of review as a percentage of the cohort in tables 2 to 7. Cohort numbers have increased in 2014 which contributed to the increase in volume of review applications.

Levels 3-5 tests: a count of children with national curriculum level 2, 3, 4, 5 or an award of 'N', ie the number of children who sat the test and were subsequently awarded one of these levels.

Level 6 tests: a count of children with a pass or fail result, ie the number of children who were registered for and then subsequently sat the test.

Table 1: Cohort numbers

Cohort numbers for 2013 and 2014 key stage 2 tests

	Test	English reading	Mathematics	English grammar, punctuation and spelling
2013	Levels 3-5	520,288	522,028	521,445
	Level 6	69,821	78,361	58,766
2014	Levels 3-5	541,318	542,768	542,002
	Level 6	88,515	101,145	84,844

Cohort sizes vary year on year due to school entry decisions. Other variances may be due to:

- fluctuations in the population;
- take up of the tests by independent schools;
- absenteeism; or
- the rate at which children make progress and complete the relevant programme of study.

Level 6 tests were introduced in 2012. The English grammar, punctuation and spelling test was introduced as a new subject in 2013. School entry decisions for level 6 affect cohort numbers between years and subjects.

Review applications are split into clerical reviews and individual reviews. A clerical review is made to correct a transcription or addition error, and an individual review is made to check the application of the mark scheme to the test script. See technical information in section 9 for more detail.

Levels 3-5 tests

Table 2: key stage 2 levels 3-5 English reading test – review requests and outcomes

	Levels 3-5 English reading	Schools	Reviews requested ¹	Outcome: lower level ²	Outcome: higher level ²
2013	Clerical review	202	257 0.0%	20 7.8%	202 78.6%
	Individual review	1,507	3,423 0.7%	1 0.0%	669 19.5%
2014	Clerical review	209	312 0.1%	19 6.1%	196 62.8%
	Individual review	2,101	5,174 1.0%	2 0.0%	797 15.4%

In 2014 there was an increase in review requests, which could be due in part to a larger cohort, but changes to levels were proportionally lower in 2014.

Table 3: key stage 2 levels 3-5 mathematics test – review requests and outcomes

	Levels 3-5 mathematics	Schools	Reviews requested ¹	Outcome: lower level ²	Outcome: higher level ²
2013	Clerical review	156	210 0.0%	9 4.3%	144 68.6%
	Individual review	1084	1,647 0.3%	0 0.0%	240 14.6%
2014	Clerical review	177	265 0.0%	8 3.0%	159 60.0%
	Individual review	811	1,082 0.2%	2 0.2%	316 29.2%

In 2014 there was a proportional drop in clerical reviews resulting in a level change. There was an increase in the number of individual reviews resulting in a level change, although the number of reviews requested was lower.

Table 4: key stage 2 levels 3-5 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test – review requests and outcomes

	Levels 3-5 English grammar, punctuation and spelling	Schools	Reviews requested ¹	Outcome: lower level ₂	Outcome: higher level ²
2013	Clerical review	0	0 0.0%	0 -	0 -
	Individual review	426	669 0.1%	2 0.3%	200 29.9%
2014	Clerical review	1	2 0.0%	1 50.0%	1 50.0%
	Individual review	1,022	1,741 0.3%	2 0.1%	463 26.6%

In 2014 there was an increase in individual review requests, which could be due in part to a larger cohort. However, of the reviews requested a smaller proportion resulted in a level change.

Level 6 tests

Table 5: key stage 2 level 6 English reading test - review requests and outcomes

	Level 6 English reading	Schools	Reviews requested ¹	Outcome: lower level ²	Outcome: higher level ²
2013	Clerical review	0	0 0.0%	0 -	0 -
	Individual review	185	294 0.4%	0 0.0%	75 25.5%
2014	Clerical review	0	0 0.0%	0 -	0 -
	Individual review	284	450 0.5%	0 0.0%	80 17.8%

In 2014 there was an increase in the number of reviews requested but a drop in the proportion of reviews resulting in a level change.

Table 6: key stage 2 level 6 mathematics test - review requests and outcomes

	Level 6 mathematics	Schools	Reviews requested ¹	Outcome: lower level ²	Outcome: higher level ²
2013	Clerical review	0	0 <i>0.0%</i>	0 -	0 -
	Individual review	72	81 <i>0.1%</i>	0 <i>0.0%</i>	26 <i>32.1%</i>
2014	Clerical review	1	1 <i>0.0%</i>	0 <i>0.0%</i>	0 <i>0.0%</i>
	Individual review	150	172 <i>0.2%</i>	0 <i>0.0%</i>	62 <i>36.0%</i>

In 2014 there was an increase in both review requests and changes to levels.

Table 7: key stage 2 level 6 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test - review requests and outcomes

	Level 6 English grammar, punctuation and spelling	Schools	Reviews requested ¹	Outcome: lower level ²	Outcome: higher level ²
2013	Clerical review	0	0 <i>0.0%</i>	0 -	0 -
	Individual review	255	398 <i>0.7%</i>	1 <i>0.3%</i>	56 <i>14.1%</i>
2014	Clerical review	1	1 <i>0.0%</i>	0 <i>0.0%</i>	0 <i>0.0%</i>
	Individual review	251	385 <i>0.5%</i>	0 <i>0.0%</i>	79 <i>20.5%</i>

In 2014 there were fewer review requests but an increase in changes to levels.

Key to tables 2-7:

¹ The percentage figures given in the 'Reviews requested' column use the cohort as the denominator in the calculation.

² The percentage figures given in the 'Outcome' columns use the value in the 'Reviews requested' column as the denominator in the calculation.

- A percentage cannot be calculated as the denominator is zero.

Any test papers annulled due to maladministration that also had a review application have been excluded from the Reviews requested figures.

Headteachers were advised to consider a child's expected attainment before entering them for the level 6 tests as they should be demonstrating attainment above level 5 in the relevant subject. To be awarded a level 6, a child would have to achieve both a level 5 in the levels 3-5 test and pass the corresponding level 6 test in the same year. If the child did not pass the level 6 test they would be awarded the level achieved in the levels 3-5 test. Reviews for the levels 3-5 and level 6 tests were processed independently, and so it was possible for a school to request a review for both tests for the same child. In 2014 there was one case of a review in both the levels 3-5 test and the level 6 test for English reading, two cases for English grammar, punctuation and spelling and one case for mathematics.

Population of interest

The population of interest, or cohort, for each of the levels 3-5 and level 6 tests includes all schools in England with children participating in the relevant key stage 2 test. Also included are a small number of Service Children's Education schools that are located overseas and have children eligible for the tests.

Children are not included if they did not sit the tests because they were:

absent;

withdrawn (level 6 test only);

working below the level of the test (levels 3-5 test only); or

working at the level of the tests but unable to access them, eg because of long term absence or disability (levels 3-5 test only).

In addition children are not included if they sat the level 6 test but were not registered by their school by the pupil registration deadline. A reviews service was not offered for children that had not been registered to participate but took a level 6 test using the spare test papers which are provided to schools.

Reviews upheld

For the key stage 2 levels 3-5 tests, only reviews where the level for the subject changed as a consequence of the review are included in the totals for outcomes in tables 1-3. For the level 6 tests, only reviews where the overall test outcome changed as a consequence of the review are included in the totals for outcomes in tables 4-6.

Any amendments to results outside the reviews process are not counted.

Comparability

Valid comparisons between the 2014 statistics and previous years are difficult to make for a number of reasons:

- In 2014 schools could only apply for a review of testing by using the NCA tools website. Previously schools had applied for reviews for the levels 3-5 tests on a paper-based form which they returned to STA's test operations agency for processing. Schools had applied for reviews for the level 6 tests using the website where they accessed images of their marked level 6 test scripts.
- The publication of the 'good level 4' performance measure tables from 2013 may influence schools' decisions about applying for a child whose level would not change as a result of a review, but whose sub-level may change to (or from) a 4b.
- Since 2008, the marking and/or reviews process has differed slightly each year.
- In 2014 there was a change in the marking provider for the level 6 tests.
- In 2013 the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test was introduced. Review application decisions by schools in 2013 and 2014 may therefore vary as teachers become more familiar with the nature of the test and mark scheme content. The results for the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test were not aggregated with those for the English reading test, so schools' decisions about making review applications for each test should be independent.
- Level 6 test outcomes are aggregated with a child's levels 3-5 test result in the same subject, to generate an overall level. This can mean a child's outcome in one test for a subject influences a school's decision as to whether to apply for a review for the other test for the same subject.
- In 2014 schools were no longer charged for a clerical review, if a clerical error was found but the level did not change.

Due to the introduction of new tests in 2013, STA does not believe comparisons can be made between the 2014 tests and those prior to 2013. Comparisons can be made to 2013 but should be made with caution due to the reasons mentioned above.

STA does not believe that the number of review applications received, or the outcomes of reviews of marking, can be used to draw conclusions about the quality of marking in any year due to:

- the changing nature of the reviews services offered;
- the population of children sitting the tests; and
- varying factors influencing application decisions made by schools.

3. Background and context

The levels 3-5 test reviews service is managed by STA's test operations agency. The 2014 levels 3-5 test reviews service remained unchanged from the service offered in 2013 for the levels 3-5 English reading, English grammar, punctuation and spelling, and mathematics tests.

The levels 3-5 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test was introduced in 2013 as an onscreen marked test; the English reading and mathematics tests continued to be marked on paper. The reviews services offered were the same for each, apart from the method by which the review marking was completed reflecting the method by which the test script had originally been marked.

Level 6 tests in English reading, English grammar, punctuation and spelling, and mathematics were available as part of the suite of key stage 2 tests in 2014. Schools could choose whether to administer them in addition to the levels 3-5 tests. The level 6 tests were externally marked. STA directly managed the associated reviews service in 2013. Although the process was managed by STA's test operations supplier in 2014, the service mirrored the 2013 level 6 and the 2014 levels 3-5 review services.

The figures in this report are produced from the data feed provided by STA's test operations agency on Monday 29 September 2014. Data is provisional because a small number of maladministration investigations are outstanding, thus further review applications may be received following any release of results to these schools. In addition, STA's test operations agency has received a small number of process review applications for the levels 3-5 tests. The outcomes of these will not be released until November 2014 so are not incorporated in the data.

4. Data source

The data sets used by STA and its predecessors are supplied by the contracted test operations agency and the onscreen marking supplier for each test cycle. For the 2012 and 2013 level 6 tests, STA received the data from its separate onscreen marking supplier. This was then merged with the levels 3-5 test data by the test operations agency before it was returned to STA.

In 2014 the test operations agency collected all levels 3-5 test data and level 6 test data for all tests, regardless of whether they were marked on paper or on screen. The data set analysed in this report was Data feed 6 and was supplied to STA on Monday 29 September 2014.

5. List of tables

The following tables are available in excel format from GOV.UK at www.gov.uk/government/statistics.

Cohort numbers for key stage 2 tests, 2010-2014

- 1 Levels 3-5 tests: a count of children with national curriculum level 2, 3, 4, 5 or an award of 'N', ie the number of children who sat the test and were subsequently awarded one of these levels. Level 6 tests: a count of children with a pass or fail result, ie the number of children who were registered for and then subsequently sat the test.

Data sets for key stage 2 tests, 2010-2014

- 2 Data sets for levels 3-5 key stage 2 tests, 2010-2014, and level 6 tests, 2012-2014.
- 3 Data sets for single level tests (SLTs) in December 2009 and June 2010.

Summary of number of reviews in 2010-2014

- 4 Number of schools requesting clerical and individual reviews for key stage 2 tests, 2010-2014.
- 5 Number of clerical and individual reviews requested for key stage 2 tests, 2010-2014. Percentages calculated using the cohort numbers in table 1.
- 6 Number of levels lowered after a clerical or individual review for key stage 2 tests, 2010-2014. Percentages calculated using the number of reviews requested in table 5.
- 7 Number of levels increased after a clerical or individual review for key stage 2 tests, 2010-2014. Percentages calculated using the number of reviews requested in table 5.

When reviewing the tables, please note the following:

Cohort numbers affected by school entry decisions	<p>In 2010, due to industrial action, 4,005 of the 15,515 maintained schools expected to administer the key stage 2 tests did not do so. Therefore, the population of schools from which review applications was submitted was 74.2% of the expected national cohort of schools.</p> <p>Year 6 children in 225 schools who were participating in the SLT pilot in 2010 did not sit a key stage 2 mathematics test, but did sit key stage 2 tests in English. This further reduced the mathematics cohort from which review applications could have been received.</p>
Changes to the review service	<p>In 2010 the individual review service was widened to include a review of the child's entire test script.</p> <p>From 2011 schools had the option to highlight specific concerns about the marking of their test scripts. The entire test script was still reviewed but this slightly altered the nature of the individual review service offered.</p>
Single level test (SLT) data	<p>The data reported for SLTs includes year 6 children only. However, test entries and review applications were also permitted from children in years 3, 4 and 5 as part of the SLT pilot.</p>
Exclusions to the data	<p>For 2010 to 2014 any review marks annulled due to malpractice during the review process have been excluded from the reviews requested figures.</p>

6. Background on the data

When reviewing the tables, please note the following:

We preserve confidentiality	The Code of Practice for Official Statistics requires we take reasonable steps to ensure that our published or disseminated statistics protect confidentiality.
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So we round numbers	Because of this rounding, totals in text and in tables may not always equal the sum of their component parts. Similarly, differences quoted in text may not always be the same as differences shown in tables.
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And adopt symbols to help identify this	Symbols are used in the tables as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Cannot be calculated as denominator is zero
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7. Want more?

Want previously published figures?	For last year's equivalent report, visit https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/2013-key-stage-2-national-curriculum-tests-review-outcomes-prov
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8. National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

The department has a set of [statistical policies](#) in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

9. Technical Information

Key stage 2 test review services in 2014

Schools could apply for either of the following types of review service:

- clerical review
- individual review

Guidance for schools interested in applying for a marking review is published on GOV.UK at www.gov.uk/key-stage-2-tests-how-to-apply-for-a-review-of-key-stage-2-results.

The levels 3-5 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test and the level 6 tests (in all subjects) were marked on screen; as a result, the clerical review service for these tests differed from that offered for the levels 3-5 English reading and mathematics tests which were marked on paper. Transcription or addition errors (which would lead to a clerical review application for the levels 3-5 English reading or mathematics tests) could not arise for the onscreen marked tests. There was however a small risk that a child's test script image could have been incorrectly matched to another child's data record. A clerical review service was therefore available for the onscreen marked tests so that schools could highlight any instances of test results being incorrectly assigned to the wrong child. There were also some exceptional test scripts which had to be marked on paper as they were not suitable for onscreen marking, for example braille test scripts. The clerical review service for these scripts mirrored the service for other tests marked on paper.

Since 2010, an individual review service has involved a review of marking of the entire test script. This checks that the published mark scheme was applied to the agreed national standard throughout the test script. The review marker reviews the mark awarded for each item or question against the mark scheme to confirm it has been correctly applied. Since 2011, schools have been provided with the option to highlight any specific item(s) or question(s) they wish to bring to the review marker's attention. This gives schools the opportunity to highlight specific concerns. Both practices continued in 2014 for both the levels 3-5 and level 6 individual review services.

For all tests marked on paper, an individual review also includes a clerical check of the addition of marks on all test scripts submitted for review. If an individual review request is unsuccessful because the mark scheme had been applied appropriately by the original marker but a clerical error is detected, the review is reported as a clerical review rather than an individual review.

Schools that participated in the 2014 key stage 2 tests received their marked test scripts and results for the levels 3-5 and level 6 tests by the published deadline of Tuesday 8 July 2014. The deadline for requesting a review was Friday 18 July 2014.

In 2014 schools could only apply for a review of testing by using the NCA tools website. All applications were processed by our test operations agency. This was a change from 2013. Previously schools had applied for reviews for the levels 3-5 tests on a paper-based form which they returned to STA's test operations agency for processing. Schools had applied for

reviews for the level 6 tests using the website where they accessed images of their marked level 6 test scripts.

For the levels 3-5 English reading and mathematics tests, the system of collecting national results data was consistent with the 2012 and 2013 approach. Individual markers transferred component scores from marked test scripts to an online mark capture system. Once the component scores had been entered, the system automatically:

- aggregated the component scores for each child's test script;
- calculated a total mark for each test;
- applied level thresholds to award a test level.

For the level 6 tests and levels 3-5 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test, test scripts were marked on screen by a pool of 880 markers. Tests were split into sections before they were marked, meaning a test could be marked by up to:

- 24 markers for levels 3-5 English grammar, punctuation and spelling;
- 15 markers for level 6 English grammar, punctuation and spelling;
- 24 markers for level 6 mathematics; and
- 22 markers for level 6 English reading.

Markers entered item level marks into the onscreen marking software as part of the marking process. All item level marks for a child's test script were automatically aggregated to create a total mark for the test. The agreed level thresholds were later applied to the data feed by STA's test operations agency.

The level 6 tests and levels 3-5 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test scripts that could not be marked on screen (eg modified test papers) were reviewed in hard copy by a review marker. Their item level marks were then keyed into the onscreen marking system by a processing member of staff at the test operations agency. Item level marks were automatically aggregated and the level thresholds applied in line with the test scripts marked on screen.

Review fees and process reviews

Schools were informed that they would be charged for any individual review applications that did not result in a change to the test level reported for the child for the levels 3-5 tests, or the test outcome for the child for the level 6 tests. The individual review fee has remained unchanged since 2010 at £9. This fee applied to both the levels 3-5 and level 6 test reviews.

In 2014 the charge for a clerical review where the level did not change, but a clerical error was found, was removed. Schools were still charged if a clerical error was not found. The clerical review fee has remained unchanged since 2010 at £5, and applies to both the levels 3-5 and level 6 test reviews.

Schools could request a process review if they were not satisfied that the correct procedures had been followed in the conduct of an individual review. The outcome of a process review is final and there is no right of appeal. At the time of writing, three process review applications had been received.

10. Got a query? Like to give feedback?

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