9 July 2018

The Lord Storey CBE
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Lord Storey,

Parliamentary Question HL1689: To ask Her Majesty’s Government what action they are taking to prevent schools from entering students for more than one public examination in the same subject at the same time.

The Lord Agnew of Oulton DL has asked Ofqual to respond to you directly regarding your recent parliamentary questions. A copy of this response will be placed in the House of Lords library.

The exam boards are responsible for the scheduling of their examinations. They choose to align their respective timetables through their representative body, the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). They schedule exams so that their individual qualifications in a subject are scheduled to take place at the same time.

The regulations that schools and colleges must follow when making entries for examinations and for when conducting examinations are published on the JCQ website. Its regulations are clear that a centre ‘must not vary the published starting time for an examination if there is a clash between papers of different awarding bodies or specifications in the same subject’. In other words, a student’s timetable cannot be altered to allow the student to take the same qualification with two different exam boards.

Such practice would be regarded as a breach of the exam board regulations and therefore may be subject to malpractice investigation. Where malpractice is proved, Ofqual expect the exam boards to take appropriate action.

Yours sincerely

Sally Collier
Chief Regulator