

Alex Mayer  
Member of Parliament for Dunstable  
and Leighton Buzzard  
House of Commons  
Westminster  
London  
SW1A 0AA

2 May 2025

Ref: PQ 44200

Sent by email only to:  
[alex.mayer.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:alex.mayer.mp@parliament.uk)

Dear Ms. Mayer,

**Re: PQ 44200 To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment her Department has made of the adequacy of exam marking for public qualifications.**

Minister McKinnell has asked Ofqual to respond directly to your recent Parliamentary Question. A copy of this response will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Ofqual is the regulator for qualifications in England. It is responsible for ensuring that regulated qualifications reliably indicate the knowledge, skills and understanding students have demonstrated and that public confidence in regulated qualifications is maintained.

The marking of exams is a fundamental part of ensuring fairness in qualifications and securing public confidence. It is vital that users of the qualifications – including students, employers and higher education – can trust the marks and grades which are awarded.

Ofqual takes the quality of marking of public qualifications very seriously. We have invested significantly into a deep understanding exam marking in England, focussing particularly on GCSEs, AS and A levels.

We know, firstly, that marking is conducted every year by tens of thousands of highly experienced examiners recruited by the exam boards. Based on [research published by Ofqual in 2023](#), on average, examiners have 10 years' examining experience and 20 years' teaching experience. Every year, Ofqual monitors the exam boards' recruitment of examiners and tracks the progress of marking each summer to ensure that marking is completed on time.

Ofqual has [undertaken considerable research in the area of marking quality](#), including analysis to evaluate the marking consistency of the 4 exam boards offering GCSEs, AS and A levels in England. We have published research which provides an insight into these marking consistency metrics. Our research confirms that marking is generally good across the system, and it demonstrates that marking consistency in England is comparable to other systems internationally. Where we find there is room for improvement in specific areas, we expect exam boards to make appropriate changes to question design and mark schemes for future series.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Bauckham'.

**Sir Ian Bauckham CBE**  
Chief Regulator, Ofqual