



Rt Hon Ed Balls MP
Secretary of State

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Kathleen Tattersall
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4 July 2008

Dear Kathleen,

Thank you for your letter of today concerning the delivery of National Curriculum Key Stage 2 and 3 tests.

Jim Knight, the Minister of State for Schools and Learners, has been informed by Ken Boston, the Chief Executive of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, that it will not be possible to release a complete set of KS2 and KS3 results to schools on 8 July. On this basis we propose to release results in the week of 15 July.

I am grateful for the reassurance in your letter that the quality of the marking in the current year is at least as good as in previous years. We had also expected to be able to release the results to schools earlier this year than in previous years such as 2007. I am disappointed at the need for a delay in releasing the results to schools from our planned date.

I therefore welcome your proposal for an independent individual of national standing to chair an inquiry into these matters. Regulation of the process of National Curriculum assessment falls clearly within Ofqual's remit, and the inquiry should therefore report directly to you on these matters.

There are additional matters that fall outside Ofqual's remit, such as the responsibilities of the QCA and National Assessment Agency for discharging the Department's remit to them, into which I also intend to ask the independent person to inquire and report to me. My officials will be available to discuss matters of scope and timing of the inquiry in the coming days with you and with the independent reviewer.



department for
children, schools and families

My primary concern is that the process of marking and returning results should now be completed in an orderly manner as soon as possible. I welcome the independent role that Ofqual is able to play in securing standards in assessment and qualifications, and I look forward to your continued support in this important task.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Balls,' with a comma at the end. The signature is written in a cursive style.

ED BALLS MP