

15 October 2010

Tony Hirst

BY E-MAIL: request-130349-d42b03ca@whatdotheyknow.com

Our Ref : F/142

Your Ref :

Office of Qualifications
and Examinations Regulation
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Dear Mr Hirst

I refer to your recent request for information, made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) and received by Ofqual on 17 September 2012. You requested the following information:-

The General Dataset download page that claims to make available "data, by qualification, for the last two years" does not appear to have been updated for some time.*

** <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/standards/statistics/general-data/>*

- 1) *Please may I have a copy of this data in electronic form as a CSV or XLS/XLSX data file please.*
- 2) *The regulated qualifications activity dataset for vocational qualifications** lists each qualification explicitly (qualification name AND exam board that awarded the qualification). If the dataset requested in 1) does not include an equivalent level of information (that is, the number of qualifications broken down at the level of qualification by exam board) please may I have a copy of any data you hold relating to the number of qualifications awarded by subject by each exam board.*

*** <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/standards/statistics/vocational-data/>*

- 3) *Evidence provided by Ofqual to the Commons Education Committee as recorded in the Annex to <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmeduc/141/141ii.pdf> describes market share by Award Board at GCSE and A'level. If you hold information at the level of market share by subject area and level (for example, GCSE English, or GCSE Mathematics) please may I have a copy of this data in electronic form as CSV data or in a spreadsheet file.*



Under the Act, public authorities have two duties to individuals requiring information: firstly to confirm whether or not they hold the information requested, and secondly to provide a copy of that information unless one of the exemptions under the Act applies.

I confirm that information of the type you request is held by Ofqual.

Questions (1) and (2)

Ofqual is currently in the process of updating the general datasets that you have asked for at parts (1) and (2) of your request. As the information is intended for future publication the exemption under section 22 of the act, is being invoked. The exemption under section 22 of the act is a qualified exemption and as such subject to the public test. Ofqual has considered whether in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. In reaching our decision we have considered the following factors in favour and against disclosure:-

factors in favour of disclosing the information are:-

- to promote transparency; and
- to allow public debate of current issues

factors against disclosure are:-

- Ofqual has committed to publish this information;
- work is underway to publish this information in the near future, accelerating this work to meet FOI timescales would divert resources from away from other priorities;
- this data proposed date of publication (by 19 October 2012) is reasonable; and
- It is fair that this information should be disclosed to all interested parties at the same time, rather than provided in advance to a single individual

In the circumstances of the case we have therefore reached the decision that the public interest in withholding the information is greater than disclosing it immediately.

Ofqual's statistics team have indicated that they would be happy to provide you with the datasets directly once they are finalised and if you provide an e-mail address to statistics@ofqual.gov.uk they will send these to you.

Question 3

Ofqual holds data on the proportion of GCSE Qualifications awarded by each awarding organisation by qualification. The data is contained in the dataset requested at part (1) of your request. The data is derived from data published by JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) which is also available to view online at

http://www.jcq.org.uk/national_results/index.cfm . In addition Awarding Organisations routinely publish results information on their websites after the awarding season is complete:-

AQA - http://store.aqa.org.uk/over/stat_pdf/AQA-GCSE-FC-STATS-JUNE11.PDF

OCR - http://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/results/results_stats/

WJEC - <http://www.wjec.co.uk/index.php?nav=51>

Edexcel - <http://www.edexcel.com/results/Pages/default.aspx> and
<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/gcse-stats.aspx>

CEA -

http://www.rewardinglearning.org.uk/microsites_other/statistics/sections_10_11/section_four.asp

Because this information is already accessible to you from JCQ and Awarding Organisations it is exempt from disclosure under Section 21 of the Act because the information is already in the public domain. However, as explained above, Ofqual will be publishing this data shortly and Ofqual's statistics team has indicated that they would be happy to provide you with the datasets once they are finalised. If you provide an e-mail address to statistics@ofqual.gov.uk they will send this directly to you.

You may also be interested to look at Ofqual's annual market report that includes similar information to that requested. The report can be viewed at <http://www2.ofqual.gov.uk/downloads/category/99-market-reports?download=1401%3AAnnual-qualifications-market-report-2012> .

If you are unhappy with the way in which your request has been handled you have the right to request an internal review. You can request an internal review by contacting:-

Alison Townsend
Board Secretariat Manager
Ofqual
Spring Place
Coventry Business Park
Herald Avenue
Coventry, CV5 6UB
(alison.townsend@ofqual.gov.uk).

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal review, you can apply to the Information Commissioner. Complaints to the Information Commissioner should be sent to:-

FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Townsend". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

Alison Townsend
Board Secretariat Manager

Direct line 024 7671 6726