

RPO/OFMT/53214/3cns

NFER No: 2258



January 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian

Trial of the Key Stage 4 National Reference Tests

The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) has been asked by Ofqual* to develop and carry out the administration of the National Reference Tests at GCSE level. The aim of the tests is to provide evidence on changes in performance over time in GCSE English language and mathematics. We have invited students from schools across England to help us to develop the tests for use by other students in the future. I am writing to you because your son/daughter has been chosen, through random selection, to trial these tests at school with up to 47 other students randomly selected from the year group. The Headteacher is fully aware of the trial and supports the students' participation.

The trial will be carried out on one day during the period **7 to 15 March**. All of the randomly selected students will be asked to take one test, in either mathematics or English, which we anticipate will take 60 minutes to complete. The test will have a look and feel that is similar to the current GCSEs which students are familiar and comfortable with. The trial will give students an opportunity this spring to practise a test that is similar in style to the actual GCSEs they will be taking in the summer of 2016.

Please be assured that your son's/daughter's participation in this trial will not affect his or her grades or assessment results in school. The marking of the tests will be carried out by staff at NFER and the results will be kept confidential. The results will not be provided to any of the students' current or future schools. In addition, the results from this test will not be used for school accountability or performance tables. They will not be provided to Ofsted or local authorities and no individual school or student will be identified in any report that is written about the trial.

All students that participate in the trial will be entered into a draw for the prize of an iPad mini. **If you are happy for your son/daughter to take part then you do not need to do anything further.** If you have any concerns about your son/daughter participating in this trial we recommend that you contact the school regarding this. If, after discussing with the school, you do not wish for your son/daughter to take part, please fill in the brief form on the other side of this letter and return it to the school. We would like to encourage all selected students to take part to ensure the results of the trial are nationally representative of the student population.

We very much appreciate your son's/daughter's participation in this trial. Further information about the trial is available at <https://ofqual.blog.gov.uk/2015/06/01/the-national-reference-test/>. If you have any questions regarding the trial, or if anything needs clarification, please do not hesitate to contact NFER researchers, David Hereward, Sofia Farid on 01753 637383 or by email to NRTkeystage4@nfer.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'D. Hereward'.

David Hereward
Research Manager
Research and Product Operations

*The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England and vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>

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Trial of the National Reference Tests for GCSE English and Mathematics

IF YOU APPROVE OF YOUR SON'S/DAUGHTER'S PARTICIPATION IN THIS TRIAL IT IS
NOT NECESSARY FOR YOU TO RETURN THIS FORM TO THE SCHOOL

I have been informed of the nature of the Trial and ***object to my son's/daughter's participation.***

Print student's name: _____

Parent/Guardian's signature: _____ Date: _____

Please would you briefly outline your reasons for not wishing your son/daughter to participate in this trial:

Please return this form to the member of staff who is coordinating this Trial at school: **Mr David Chew**

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