

THE WEST AFRICAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

PRESS STATEMENT

The attention of the West African Examinations Council has been drawn to allegations circulating in sections of the media and on social media suggesting that candidates from private schools who sat for the BECE for School Candidates, 2026 were deliberately awarded poor grades. These allegations are false, and misleading, and have no factual basis.

WAEC wishes to assure all stakeholders, parents, guardians, school proprietors, educational authorities, and the general public that the Council's assessment and grading processes are guided by internationally accepted principles of fairness, objectivity, consistency, and integrity. Under no circumstances does WAEC discriminate against candidates on the basis of whether they attended private or public schools.

HOW BECE SCRIPTS ARE MARKED

The Council employs rigorous quality assurance procedures throughout the entire marking process. We ensure that there is anonymity between the examiners and the scripts they mark. This is done by swapping the scripts of candidates across regions, coding and packaging of scripts, and random allocation of scripts to examiners among others. Scripts are marked strictly according to approved standard marking schemes developed by experts in the various subject areas and all examiners (from both private and public schools) are made to acquaint themselves with it before the marking process commences. The Council does not operate different marking schemes or grading systems for public and private schools. This misconception has been addressed repeatedly by the Council over the years.

GRADING SYSTEM

The Council uses the Stanine also known as Standard Nine Grading System. It is a statistical method of reporting Candidates' performance relative to the overall performance of all candidates in a particular subject. The stanine scale ranges from 1 to 9. The entire population of examination candidates is considered one cohort. Out of this lot the first four 4% scores grade one. The next 7%, grade two, the next 12%,

grade three, the next 17%, grade four, the next 20%, grade five, the next 17%, grade six, the next 12%, grade seven, the next 7% grade eight and the last 4%, grade nine.

The grades are interpreted as follows:

- Grade 1 - Highest performance
- Grade 2 - Higher performance
- Grade 3 - High performance
- Grade 4 - High average
- Grade 5 - Average
- Grade 6 - Low average
- Grade 7 - Low performance
- Grade 8 - Lower performance
- Grade 9 - Lowest performance

Unlike the system that assigns grades based on fixed percentage score ranges, the stanine system considers the overall distribution of candidates' performance in each subject. Consequently, the grade award reflects a candidate's relative standing among all candidates who sat the examination. This approach promotes fairness by accounting for variations in the difficulty of examination papers from year to year and ensures that standards remain consistent over time.

Accordingly, a candidate's grade is determined solely by his or her performance in relation to established grading standards and not by the type of school attended.

WAEC'S COMMITMENT TO FAIRNESS

The Council remains firmly committed to preserving the credibility of its examinations. Every candidate is given an equal opportunity to demonstrate his or her ability, and every script is treated impartially throughout the assessment process. The West African Examinations Council therefore urges members of the public to ignore claims that it deliberately disadvantaged candidates from private schools. Such allegations undermine public confidence in the examination system and are not supported by evidence.

The Council encourages stakeholders who have genuine concerns regarding examination results to utilize the established channels for seeking clarification rather than relying on speculation or misinformation.

CONCLUSION

The Council appreciates the continued confidence reposed in it by the government of Ghana, the Ministry of Education, the Ghana Education Service, school authorities, parents, and the general public that the Council will continue to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, transparency, and integrity in the conduct of public examinations.