# Teachers say results day anxiety is a shared burden — and offer practical ways to cope



On GCSE results day in London, the moment of truth is felt as acutely by teachers as it is by pupils. The BBC live update captured one such reality through the eyes of Niki Tailor, Head of Year 11 at EGA School, who admitted she “almost feels sick to my stomach on results day” after a decade in the role. The emotional charge comes from more than personal nerves: teachers invest years in their students, and many are watching not just a class but a longer journey come to a close. BBC Teach’s later feature on the day reinforces this shared vulnerability, noting that staff often describe themselves as nervous alongside their pupils, underscoring a professional sense of duty that blends care with accountability.

The weight of results day extends beyond the moment of concerted celebration or disappointment. A Guardian piece from 2019 foregrounded the highs and lows felt by teachers across schools, detailing sleepless nights, the responsibility of safeguarding students’ futures, and the two-year arc of effort that culminates on results day. The emotional stakes are reinforced in official guidance from Ofqual, which in 2019 normalised the stress surrounding results and offered practical steps to manage it—planning for different outcomes, confiding plans to trusted people, and seeking support when needed. A similar thread runs through Ofqual’s 2021 advice, which emphasises social support, appropriate timing, and breathing techniques as part of a broader strategy to preserve mental well-being and enable sound decision-making during and after the moment of receipt.

Practical guidance for managing feelings on results day sits alongside the day’s organisational tasks. Wellbeing resources from BBC Bitesize advocate normalising a spectrum of emotions and adopting calm, concrete steps before, during, and after opening envelopes. The guidance points to talking with trusted adults, practising self-care, and planning next steps as essential components of resilience. Taken together, these perspectives—from frontline classroom experience to well-being frameworks—paint a picture of results day as a shared emotional milestone. Teachers, families, and pupils are all invited to acknowledge nerves, apply practical strategies, and collaborate on constructive next steps, whatever the outcome.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/live/cy08y5zxe0lt), [[4]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/teacher-support/articles/zvch6g8)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/live/cy08y5zxe0lt), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/aug/20/i-cried-and-he-cried-the-highs-and-lows-of-exam-results-day-for-teachers), [[5]](https://ofqual.blog.gov.uk/2019/08/13/feeling-stressed-about-results-day/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z29nhcw), [[6]](https://ofqual.blog.gov.uk/2021/07/27/managing-worries-around-results-day-some-strategies-that-might-help/)

## Source Panel

1. BBC News Live – Nerves in the pit of my stomach: Results day through the eyes of a teacher, with quotes from Niki Tailor (EGA School)
2. The Guardian – I cried and he cried: The highs and lows of exam results day for teachers (2019)
3. BBC Bitesize – Wellbeing/Managing feelings on GCSE or Nationals results day (wellbeing guidance)
4. BBC Teach – GCSE Results Day 2021 feature (teacher perspectives, post-result tasks)
5. Ofqual – Feeling stressed about results day (2019 blog offering practical steps)
6. Ofqual – Managing worries around results day: some strategies that might help (2021)
7. BBC Bitesize – Managing feelings on GCSE or Nationals results day (zpmpk2p)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.com/news/live/cy08y5zxe0lt> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/aug/20/i-cried-and-he-cried-the-highs-and-lows-of-exam-results-day-for-teachers> - Opening GCSE and A‑level results day, the Guardian piece foregrounds the emotional intensity for teachers as well as students. It gathers voices from teachers at several schools who describe sleepless nights, the weight of accountability, and the urge to support and bolster their pupils regardless of the outcome. The piece conveys how teachers invest in two years of preparation, celebrate success with students, and share heartbreak when results fall short. It also shows how the day can personalise professional identity, with teachers acknowledging that their pupils’ futures reflect on them and that the day marks a meaningful, if stressful, milestone in teaching careers.
3. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z29nhcw> - BBC Bitesize’s wellbeing guide recognises that results day can trigger nerves for students and, by extension, their teachers and families. It offers practical guidance for staying calm: choosing supportive company, planning the moment of opening results, writing down essential numbers, and seeking trusted adults for help. The guidance emphasises normalising emotions, validating a range of feelings from anxiety to relief, and highlights that there are options whatever the outcome. The piece reinforces that preparation, dialogue, and self‑care help maintain perspective and resilience, underscoring the supportive role of teachers and carers on results day.
4. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/teacher-support/articles/zvch6g8> - BBC Teach’s GCSE Results Day 2021 feature offers a teacher perspective, with staff describing themselves as nervous alongside their students. It gathers educators who have invested years in their classes, emphasising accountability, care, and pride in pupils’ progress. The piece frames results day as a moment of shared emotion—whether joy, relief, or disappointment—and stresses that teachers see their pupils’ futures in the outcomes. It also notes the practical duties that follow results, such as post‑result guidance and planning for next steps, illustrating the day’s emotional stakes and teachers’ professional duties.
5. <https://ofqual.blog.gov.uk/2019/08/13/feeling-stressed-about-results-day/> - Ofqual’s 2019 blog normalises the stress many feel on results day, acknowledging worry, disappointment, and embarrassment as common emotions. It offers practical steps: plan for different outcomes, share plans with trusted people, decide where and with whom to view results, and consider contingency options. The post stresses that talking can ease anxiety and that support from family, friends, or professionals is available. By normalising emotions and providing actionable strategies, it aims to helpStudents and teachers alike approach results day with greater composure and agency, reducing distress on a pivotal educational moment.
6. <https://ofqual.blog.gov.uk/2021/07/27/managing-worries-around-results-day-some-strategies-that-might-help/> - Ofqual’s 2021 post supplies strategies to manage worries around results day, emphasising social support, timing, and breathing techniques. It highlights the value of talking with peers and trusted adults, and of planning practical responses for multiple outcomes. The article notes that, in disrupted times, seeking help is appropriate, with signposted mental‑health resources. It recognises that results day can be stressful yet provides actionable steps—breathing exercises, staying active, and avoiding unhealthy coping—to preserve health and support sound decision‑making during and after the moment of receipt.
7. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zpmpk2p> - BBC Bitesize’s guidance on managing feelings on GCSE or Nationals results day outlines five coping strategies for students facing exam outcomes. It stresses that results matter but wellbeing matters more, and outlines practical steps: set realistic expectations, choose who to open results with, meet afterwards with someone supportive, remember self‑worth beyond grades, and resist panic. The article also points readers toward available support and next steps, reflecting a youth‑centred approach to emotional health and resilience on results day, while reinforcing that help is available regardless of the outcome.