

Press Release

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'A' Grade Glut Takes Shine off Results

With an expected increase in the latest A-level pass rates, the Institute of Directors (IoD) today called on the Government to restructure the grading system for the qualification.

The IoD said that while employers respect A-levels, with over one in five students now achieving an 'A' grade it is becoming difficult for businesses -and universities - to discern who are the very best students.

There may be a case for altering the examination to ensure that a smaller proportion of students achieve an 'A'. This would also help to ensure that passes at grades 'B' and 'C' continue to command respect.

James Walsh, Policy Adviser at the IoD, said:

"Employers and universities are finding it increasingly difficult to select the very best candidates from A-level students. With an ever-growing number of 'A' grade passes being awarded the brightest students are not shining through."

However, the IoD made it clear that business still has faith in the qualification itself. A-levels may not be perfect, but employers continue to value them. There is certainly no need to subsume A-levels into a multi-tiered diploma, as advocated by Mike Tomlinson's Committee, the IoD said.

Sounding a note of concern for education in general, James Walsh, added:

"As far as employers are concerned, the main problem with the examination system is not A-levels but rather the fact that too many children leave school with low levels of literacy and numeracy. These problems develop in primary and early secondary school, not post-16 study."

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