

Corrections pending

The record of Portugal's 2026 national-exam breakdown

Chronology, figures and an assessment of official statements. Information checked through 5.50pm WEST on July 21st 2026.

LISBON -- Portugal's first nationwide use of digital classification for secondary-school examinations produced late lists, suspended results and thousands of corrected grades. The record contains faults in paper handling, scanning, distribution, marker allocation, automatic answer keys, quality control, export and school publication. Several systems and public bodies shared the work.

EduQA released results on July 17th while about 1,400 of 290,351 examinations were undergoing additional validation. Three days later a faulty automatic key changed 12,613 Physics and Chemistry A grades. Geografia A required another correction; authorities had yet to say how many pupils were affected. On July 21st the education minister, Fernando Alexandre, acknowledged that pupils awaiting grades or corrections had missed the ordinary second phase and had already been disadvantaged.

On June 29th Mr Alexandre said marking was on schedule and every pupil would be protected. By July 21st deadlines had moved, available markers had waited for assignments and suspended entries had followed his declaration that every examination was classified.

Findings

EduQA authorised publication at about 7.30pm on July 17th with 1,400 examinations under complementary validation. ENES represented grades awaiting completion as **-3**, meaning suspended. Validation continued on Saturday and replacement files reached schools from Sunday.

An automatic answer key for question 7.1, version two, of Physics and Chemistry A was configured wrongly. Reprocessing changed 12,613 grades: 11,496 rose and 1,117 fell. Two Geografia A items, 1.3 and 4.3 in version two, also carried faulty settings. JNE reprocessed them and extended registration for that subject's second phase.

Problems began before software classified an answer. Recorded incidents included staples over QR codes, folded and cropped pages, omitted continuation sheets, scripts missing secure transport, delayed credentials, repeated marking and assignments arriving after deadlines. A security weakness prompted maintenance. A separate export defect later placed suspended or incorrect values in school files.

Published contracts cover a limited part of the system. Two Blat-related agreements for PCS/SCOI total €49,455 before tax. A €1.499m replacement called GAEBS was under development during the 2026 examinations. A search of the contract register through July 21st found no entry identifying the fee or remit for Deloitte's reported emergency assistance. EduQA also had authority to buy up to €500,000 of technical support. Published expenditure under that authority was still awaited.

The ministry said about 227,000 digital examination copies had reached more than 100,000 pupils by the night of July 20th. Subtracting that rounded figure from roughly 290,000 scripts gives an estimated 63,000 copies awaiting distribution. These were documents; the ministry supplied no corresponding pupil count.

How the system worked

Pupils wrote on paper. Schools prepared scripts for collection and secure transport. Scanners turned the pages into images; software divided each script into answers; a preparation system sent those answers to teachers; PCS/SCOI displayed them for marking. Classifications then passed through quality checks and the National Examinations Jury. ENES files carried results to schools, whose staff signed and published the lists. Schools also managed the delivery of PDF copies to pupils.

Published reporting places preparation, processing and distribution within EduQA's operation. Blat developed versions of PCS/SCOI, the interface used by teachers. The firm's stated remit covered that interface and excluded scanning, image quality, users, assignments and upstream processing. Schools controlled the final publication step and much of the delivery of digital copies.

Faults surfaced differently at each stage. A folded page produced a cropped image; a QR error affected distribution; a corrected image triggered repeat marking. A late assignment resembled a shortage of teachers, while an export defect became a wrong value on a school list. The audit must identify the component, operator and time of each incident.

Figures

Measure	Figure	Meaning
Secondary examinations processed	290,351	EduQA's results-day count of examinations.
Digitised items	2,059,974	EduQA figure reported by ECO/Lusa.
Pupils awaiting first-phase results before release	More than 166,000	National pupil population reported before publication.
Examinations under validation at release	About 1,400	EduQA figure; the number of unique pupils may be lower.
Physics and Chemistry A grades changed	12,613	11,496 rose and 1,117 fell.
Geografia A grades changed	Figure pending	Items 1.3 and 4.3, version two.
Copies distributed by the night of July 20th	About 227,000	Sent to more than 100,000 pupils.
Copies awaiting distribution, estimated	About 63,000	Derived from rounded totals; document count.
Published Blat-related contracts	€49,455 before VAT	€30,375 in 2017 and €19,080 in 2023.
GAEBS contract	€1,499,324	Future system contracted in 2025.
Emergency procurement authority	Up to €500,000	Maximum purchasing authority delegated to EduQA.
Reappraisal deposit	€25 per examination	Refunded when the grade improves; regulatory exceptions apply.

Chronology

Before the examinations

2016 -- SCOI was reportedly created within IAVE. Blat later developed parts of the classification interface.

December 29th 2017 -- IAVE signed a €30,375-plus-VAT contract with Blatstudio-MAF-Serviços for a practical-test module and SCOI upgrades. Work was due by February 28th 2018.

February-April 2023 -- IAVE awarded and signed a €19,080-plus-VAT contract with Blat-Creative Powerhouse for a further SCOI update.

2025 examination season -- A pilot used digital classification for Philosophy. Luís Duque de Almeida, then president of JNE, later said it exposed serious problems. Mr Alexandre said his predecessor left office without a report. A secretary of state said officials had received information about the pilot in another form. The contents and recipients remained undisclosed on July 21st.

July 16th 2025 -- IAVE signed a €1,499,324 contract with Axianseu II Digital Consulting for GAEBS. Reporting places delivery in 2027. The system was under development during the 2026 incident.

Warnings and delays

June 16th-26th 2026 -- Pupils sat the first phase of secondary national examinations.

June 25th -- JNE acknowledged credential delays and technical difficulties. It adjusted intermediate dates while keeping July 10th for delivery of classifications and July 14th for publication. Teachers' representatives warned that phased assignments concealed unfinished workloads.

June 29th-30th -- Reports described about 112 teachers awaiting access, incomplete pages and suspect allocations. Mr Alexandre said marking was on schedule and promised protection for every pupil.

July 1st -- The minister dismissed most reports of failure as false. The ministry later confirmed several reported categories, including bad scans, missing sheets, scripts outside secure transport, repeated marking and QR-related distribution errors.

July 3rd -- The government moved publication from July 14th to the 17th and the second examination period from July 16th-22nd to July 20th-24th. The first major secondary paper under the revised schedule took place on July 21st.

July 6th-7th -- Maintenance followed a reported security weakness. Teachers continued to report errors. Public explanations began to distinguish EduQA's preparation system from PCS/SCOI.

July 8th -- Mr Alexandre authorised EduQA to procure up to €500,000 of emergency technical support. Blat described its role as development of the classification interface.

July 9th-10th -- Reporting said Deloitte had identified a security flaw in upstream processing. Official progress figures put distribution at 95% and completed marking at 75%.

July 13th -- A mathematics teacher received 160 items less than a day before the deadline. Other teachers described late batches and repeated work. The ministry acknowledged folded scans, omitted sheets, transport problems and corrections repeated during quality control.

July 14th-16th -- Marking continued through extensions. On July 16th Mr Alexandre said 99.3% was classified, attributed the balance to unavailable markers and accepted that Friday publication was at risk. Unions described willing teachers awaiting assignments.

Release and repair

July 17th, 10.19am -- Mr Alexandre told parliament that all secondary examinations were classified and JNE held every grade. Unions and CNN reported marking that morning.

After 5pm -- Schools were awaiting result files when ordinary offices closed. At 6.45pm every director contacted by CNN was still waiting.

About 7.30pm -- EduQA authorised release with about 1,400 examinations under complementary validation. ENES represented grades awaiting completion as -3. Schools then signed and published lists at different times.

Evening -- Mr Alexandre acknowledged that the process had gone badly. He said pupils could use local applications and pressed directors to publish that day. Grade-nine results moved to the following week.

July 18th-19th -- EduQA completed central validation on Saturday and supplied replacement files from Sunday. A separate export error required further updates.

July 20th -- Most schools posted grade-nine lists, one day before the Portuguese second-phase test. Authorities changed 12,613 Physics and Chemistry A grades and confirmed the Geografia A settings error. The government kept the admissions and ordinary examination calendars, retained the €25 deposit and announced a September sitting.

Parliament and phase two

July 21st, 9am -- EduQA's president told parliament that digitisation had been tested repeatedly and introduced gradually. He acknowledged unexpected computer faults and problems moving information between preparation and classification. Publication of a test plan or full-workflow results remained outstanding.

Morning -- The ordinary second phase began. September eligibility, registration and examination dates awaited publication. Expresso counted 300 university applications on opening day, compared with more than 10,000 on the equivalent day in 2025; the reasons for the difference were unspecified.

10am onwards -- Mr Alexandre appeared for more than three hours. He said "the state failed, but corrected", expected every pupil to have a final grade by the end of the week and called marker allocation badly organised. About 227,000 digital copies had reached more than 100,000 pupils, he said.

During the hearing -- The minister acknowledged that pupils awaiting a final grade or correction had already been disadvantaged because they missed the ordinary second phase. He promised full September information that day and said the September 14th closing date for second-round university applications would move.

Pilot evidence -- Mr Alexandre said his predecessor left the government no formal report from the 2025 Philosophy pilot. The secretary of state said services had received information. Mr Duque de Almeida said the ministry had never requested a report.

2.18pm -- The government published a notice repeating its pledge to protect every pupil. It gave 11,496 Physics and Chemistry increases; the 1,117 decreases, Geografia A and September rules were outside its account.

5.50pm -- A search of the government, EduQA, JNE/DGE and DGES sites found the September eligibility rules, registration dates, examination timetable and revised admissions calendar still awaiting publication.

Official statements and the record

Date	Statement	Record through July 21st
June 29th	Marking was on schedule; deadlines would hold; every pupil would be protected.	Publication and phase two moved. On July 21st the minister acknowledged that some pupils had already been disadvantaged.
July 1st	Most reports of failure were false.	The ministry later confirmed bad scans, missing sheets, scripts outside secure transport, repeated marking and QR-related distribution errors. The public record contains no complete count of the reports dismissed.
July 8th	Grades would be published on July 17th.	Files reached schools at about 7.30pm. Around 1,400 examinations were still under validation; grade-nine publication moved to the following week.
July 13th	Pupils would have classifications on Friday.	Delivery depended on each school and included suspended entries. Some pupils waited through the weekend.
July 16th	Unavailable markers caused the remaining delay.	The minister later described willing teachers waiting for assignments and called the allocation of 11,000 markers deficient.
July 17th, 10.19am	All examinations were classified; JNE held every grade.	Teachers were reportedly marking that morning. EduQA released about 1,400 examinations with final grades still under validation.
July 17th	Deadlines were being met; directors had to publish that day.	The original deadline had moved. Files arrived after ordinary closing time and included suspended entries.
July 17th	Pupils could see results in their applications.	Schools used different systems, login arrangements and publication times.
July 17th	Corrections would prevent recurrence in phase two.	Phase-two marking results fall outside the period covered here.
July 20th	Suspended classifications should be resolved; every pupil would be protected.	Some final grades were still pending on July 21st. The minister then acknowledged that pupils had missed the ordinary second phase.
July 21st	Every pupil should have a final grade by the end of the week.	The promised date lay ahead.
July 21st	The government held no report from the 2025 pilot; serious errors had not reached services.	Officials agreed that a formal report was absent. The secretary of state said services had received information in another form.
July 21st	Full September information would appear that day.	At 5.50pm the official notice still lacked eligibility, registration, examination dates and the revised admissions timetable.
July 21st notice	Every pupil would be protected.	The minister had acknowledged hours earlier that some pupils were already disadvantaged.
July 21st notice	Rapid Physics correction demonstrated the benefits of digital marking.	Reprocessing was fast. The original key had passed the checks; 1,117 grades fell; Geografia required another correction.

Pupils and admissions

First-round university applications opened on July 20th and close on August 6th. Reappraisal results are due on August 7th. Regulations permit updates to the Ficha ENES and give pupils a short period to alter course choices after a changed grade. A late correction can therefore preserve eligibility while leaving less time for advice and choices.

A formal reappraisal generally requires a copy of the script, a request within two working days and a €25 deposit for each paper. A higher grade triggers a refund. The ministry says central digitisation discrepancies will be corrected automatically and free of charge. The grade itself gives pupils little help in deciding whether the cause lies in scanning, an automatic key, export, data entry or an examiner's judgment.

The government says the September sitting will cover pupils who lacked enough information for the ordinary second phase and will count as their second phase. Mr Alexandre acknowledged that the second admissions round has fewer places. Existing law, he said, permits an extra place when a pupil suffers harm outside his or her control. Operational rules were pending at 5.50pm on July 21st.

Contracts and responsibility

The 2017 and 2023 Blat-related contracts concern PCS/SCOI development and updates. Their combined value and the gaps between them leave unanswered questions about maintenance, intellectual property and support. The contracts describe work on the marking interface. Other operators handled scanning, preparation, allocation and export.

One shareholder owns 5% of Blat-Creative Powerhouse and had worked on PSD campaigns and advised Lisbon's PSD mayor, Carlos Moedas. The procurement files record two small awards six years apart and contain no link between that political work, the contracts or the technical failures.

GAEBS, the €1.499m replacement, was under development during the incident. A search of the register found no contract for Deloitte's reported emergency work. The audit must identify each component, operator and supplier, then assign each failure to the organisation controlling that stage.

Questions for the audit

- How many unique pupils and schools were represented by the 1,400 examinations under additional validation, and when did each receive a final grade?
- How many Geografia A grades changed, and what is the reconciled official total for Physics and Chemistry A?
- Who configured, checked and approved each automatic answer key, and which test cases were used?
- Who owned and operated preparation, distribution, classification, export and PDF delivery?
- What information emerged from the 2025 Philosophy pilot, who received it and what repairs followed?
- How did marker registrations, eligibility, assignments and completed work compare by subject and date?
- Which component caused the first export defect, and which schools and pupils received affected files?
- What were Deloitte's remit, fee and procurement route, and what purchases used the €500,000 authority?

- What source-code rights, maintenance duties and support arrangements governed PCS/SCOI?
- How did publication time, digital-copy delivery and access to reappraisal differ by school?

Gaps in the record

Authorities had yet to publish the Geografia impact count, the final number of pupils waiting for grades, complete September rules, phase-two marking outcomes, Deloitte's contract, emergency spending, full system ownership and confirmation that corrected digital copies had reached every pupil.

The paper scripts were preserved and can be compared with digital images and grades. The audit must also reconstruct the administration's decisions.

Sources

EduQA release notice	Assembly hearing schedule
RTP/Lusa July 21st hearing record	Official Government notice, July 21st
ECO/Lusa: minister acknowledges disadvantage	EduQA testing claim
EduQA information-flow problems	Former JNE president on the 2025 pilot
Digital-copy distribution figures	September rules absent at phase-two opening
Physics and Chemistry and export errors	Geografia A correction
Official admissions calendar	Emergency purchasing authority
2017 Blatstudio contract	2023 Blat contract
ECO supplier investigation	Minister's July 17th interview
July 17th parliamentary chronology	