

# Born to Fail? How Influential was Class in the Examination System in Scotland in the 1970s?

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To this day, young people born to parents who belong to a higher social class have better educational outcomes, despite initiatives to widen participation. In an age where few young people went to university, school examinations were often the highest qualifications most young people would ever achieve. However, they were designed for only the most able of pupils and young people could choose to leave school before they even attained the age at which they could sit them. Due to historic inequality in the access to education and socio-economic factors which affect the decision to leave education, in the early 1970s, were children from certain social classes born to fail? Using quantitative analysis of the entries and results from

Scottish Ordinary and Higher grade qualifications for a sample of pupils, this paper presents evidence that after accounting for ability, social class had no effect on Ordinary grade results,