

News Release

Strict embargo: 09.30 hours Tuesday 24 August 2010

Increased entries for separate sciences and improved performance in English and mathematics

The GCSE results for 2010 show continued movement into separate sciences, with biology up 28.3 per cent (from 100,905 in 2009 to 129,464), chemistry up 32.2 per cent (from 92,246 in 2009 to 121,988) and physics up 32.1 per cent (from 91,179 in 2009 to 120,455).

Performance in English and mathematics has improved. Grades A*-C are up by 2.0 per cent (from 62.7 per cent to 64.7 per cent) in English and by 1.2 per cent (from 57.2 per cent to 58.4 per cent) in mathematics.

Overall, performance improved by 1.0 percentage point at grades A*-A (from 21.6 to 22.6 per cent) and 2.0 percentage points at grades A*-C (from 67.1 to 69.1 per cent).

There were 5,374,490 grades published for GCSE this year, down 1.7 per cent (5,469,260 in 2009), in line with the estimated reduction in the 16-year-old cohort.

Entries in modern foreign languages continue to decline with French down by 11,070 or 5.9 per cent (from 188,688 to 177,618). However, French still remains the most popular language choice. German is down by 3,300 or 4.5 per cent (from 73,469 to 70,169), but entries in Spanish are up by 0.9 per cent (from 67,070 to 67,707).

Other modern languages are also down by 414 or 1.3 per cent (from 33,111 to 32,697) reversing a long-term trend. However, entries in Chinese are up by 5.2 per cent (from 3,468 to 3,648), Portuguese up by 9.6 per cent (from 1,671 to 1,832) and Polish up by 12 per cent (from 3,649 to 4,087).

Information and communication technology has further declined by 12,497 or 17.0 per cent (from 73,519 to 61,022). Design and Technology is also down by 18,108 or 5.9 per cent (from 305,809 to 287,701).

However, religious studies and history reverse the recent downward trend in entries for humanities subjects, with increases of 6,416 or 3.5 per cent (from 182,288 to 188,704) and 1,472 or 0.7 per cent (from 219,809 to 221,281) respectively.

GCSE Short Course

The Short Course entries have decreased by 21,062 or 4.1 per cent (from 509,218 to 488,156). Four subjects – religious studies (57.3 per cent of total entries), citizenship studies (19.4 per cent), information and communication technology (9.2 per cent) and physical education (6.0 per cent) – together comprise 91.9 per cent of all entries.

The Short Course results show an improvement of 0.3 percentage points at grades A*-C (from 54.2 per cent to 54.5 per cent).

Applied GCSE Double Award

Entries for the Applied GCSE Double Award continue to decline, down 19,798 or 20.6 per cent (from 96,117 to 76,319). Overall, the achievement in these double award qualifications shows an improvement of 4.1 per cent at grade A*A*-CC (from 49.2 to 53.3 per cent).

Applied GCSE Single Award

Entries for the Applied GCSE Single Award decreased by 2,287 or 10.9 per cent and remain very small in comparison to other qualifications (from 20,950 to 18,663).

Foundation and Higher Diploma

These are the first awards for the Diploma courses that were completed over two years.

There were 633 grades issued for the Foundation Diploma in 2010 (121 in 2009) and 3,069 grades issued for the Higher Diploma (91 in 2009).

Entry Level Certificate

The number of entries fell again this year by 9,576 or 8.3 per cent (from 115,206 to 105,630).

Commenting on the 2010 GCSE results, Dr Jim Sinclair, Director, Joint Council for Qualifications, said:

“Students and their teachers can be proud of their achievements.

“The increased entries in biology, chemistry and physics, coupled with improved performance in English and mathematics, is very good news indeed.”

Notes to editors

1. ‘Results 2010’- detailed tabulations of the GCSE Full Course, GCSE Short Course, Applied GCSE Double Award, Applied GCSE Single Award and Entry Level Certificate examinations are published separately, also with the STRICT EMBARGO: 09.30 hours Tuesday 23 August 2010.

2. Details of the National Curriculum in England can be obtained from National Curriculum online www.nc.uk.net. Although not part of the National Curriculum, Religious Studies is a statutory requirement of the Education Act, 1996.

3. The JCQ consists of AQA, CCEA, City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR, SQA and WJEC, the seven largest providers of qualifications in the UK, offering GCSE, GCE, AEA, Entry Level, Vocational and vocationally-related qualifications.

4. The JCQ was established in January 2004 and superseded the Joint Council for General Qualifications (JCGQ, 1998-2003). The JCQ was formed to enable member awarding bodies to act together in:

- providing, wherever possible, common administrative arrangements for the schools and colleges and other providers which offer their qualifications;
- dealing with the regulators; in responding to proposals and initiatives on assessment and the curriculum;
- dealing with the media on issues affecting all member Bodies.

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