



Strictly Embargoed until 09.30 HRS on Thursday 23 August 2018

Northern Ireland GCSE Results 2018

- **A strong performance from Northern Ireland students.**
- **Overall gender performance gap continues to widen.**
- **STEM subjects remain popular.**

Figures released this morning by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ^{CIC}) show Northern Ireland students continuing to perform well in GCSE examinations.

The proportion of entries awarded A* - C grades¹ has risen by 0.7 percentage points, this year, to 81.1%. The number of entries achieving the A* grade is 9.9%, a small increase of 0.4 percentage points on the previous year.

GCSE entries in Northern Ireland have decreased by 0.4% from 171,060 to 170,348.

There has been a slight improvement in GCSE English Language and Mathematics. In English Language, the percentage of entries achieving A* - C grades increased by 0.6 percentage points to 80.2%. In Mathematics, the percentage of entries achieving A* - C grades has increased by 1.7 percentage points to 68.1%.

Females achieving A*- C grades increased to 85.1%, by 0.9 percentage points. The proportion of male entries achieving A*- C grades rose by 0.5 percentage points to 76.9%. The gap between female and male performance at A*- C grades has widened from 7.8 to 8.2 percentage points.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects now account for 43% of all GCSE entries in Northern Ireland, with an increase of 2.4% on the previous year.

The number of female entries for STEM related subjects increased by 4.9%. Male entries in STEM subjects increased by 0.1%. Entries have also increased in subjects such as Drama, Construction and Business Studies.

The proportion of overall entries for languages remains broadly stable, with a 0.2 percentage point decrease on the previous year.

This is the second year of the 9-1 grade scale offered by English based Awarding Organisations. A small percentage of students in Northern Ireland (1.7%) will receive a 9-1 grade, with the vast majority (98.3%) of students continuing to take A* - G graded GCSEs.

Standards remain anchored at grades A/7, C/4 and G/1. Comparisons across years, subjects and jurisdictions, are possible at these anchor points.

**Media enquiries to Ruth Hobson on (028) 9026 1216, Mobile 07718 424373;
Email rhobson@ccea.org.uk
or John Boyle on (028) 9026 1217; Mobile, 07796 947989, Email
jboyle@ccea.org.uk**

Notes to Editors

¹ This year's results are a combined figure of A*- C with 9- 4 from the new numerical 9-1 grading. 9-1 grades were awarded to 1.7% (2,914 grades) of students in Northern Ireland.

98.3% (167,434) of GCSE students in Northern Ireland sat A* - C qualifications.

Further information on the GCSE grade changes is available
http://ccea.org.uk/regulation/gcse_grading

The statistics below represent the provisional Northern Ireland GCSE results from five JCQ awarding organisations: - AQA, CCEA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC

Table 1: Northern Ireland GCSE entries and provisional results – all scales (A*-G / 9-1)

	2018	2017
Entries	170,348	171,060
%A* - A/7	29.4	29.2
%A* - C/4	81.1	80.4
%A* - G/1	99.1	99.0

Table 2: Northern Ireland GCSE provisional results by gender (combined A*-G/9-1)

2018 Provisional	Males		Females	
	2018	2017	2018	2017
%A* - A/7	23.2	23.4	35.3	34.8
%A* - C/4	76.9	76.4	85.1	84.2
%A* - G/1	98.8	98.8	99.4	99.3

1. The JCQ^{CIC} is a membership body and comprises AQA, CCEA, City & Guilds, NCFE, OCR, Pearson, SQA and WJEC – the eight largest providers of qualifications in the UK.
2. Media contacts: The JCQ's press office can be contacted on: 020 7227 0671/020 7638 4132/07905 683 816
3. Detailed tabulations of the GCSE Full Course, GCSE Short Course, GCSE Double Award, Entry Level Certification, Level 1 and Level 2 Project are published separately, with the STRICT EMBARGO OF 09.30 HOURS THURSDAY 23 AUGUST 2018 and will be available on the JCQ website from 0930 on 23 August – www.jcq.org.uk
4. These results are for qualifications taken by students across the UK but predominantly in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
5. All awarding organisations are answerable to the regulatory authorities - Ofqual (England), Welsh Government (Wales) and CCEA (Northern Ireland) – for examinations standards. The regulatory authorities monitor the awarding bodies' standards. In addition, the awarding organisations themselves conduct a number of comparability studies to compare standards. Maintaining standards within and across all qualifications in order to ensure fairness to all candidates is the paramount concern of the awarding bodies.