



# GCSE November 2020:

## English Language, Mathematics, Mathematics Numeracy and Welsh First Language

### Notes for users of the JCQ results tables

These notes should be read before consulting the results tables as they put the results in context and provide explanation for some changes in reporting and outcomes. These notes apply to the November 2020 series only, which is routinely available. JCQ results tables for the exceptional GCSE series put in place in response to the covid-19 pandemic are due to be published on 11 February 2021.

The notes do not however attempt to outline the detail of every change that may influence results or entries in some way. The relevant government and regulatory websites give a more extensive overview of the approach to examinations.

#### Regulator links:

England:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>

Wales:

<http://qualificationswales.org>

#### England

In response to the Global COVID-19 pandemic, the summer 2020 exam series was cancelled to help fight the spread of Coronavirus. Department for Education announced there would be an opportunity for students in England to sit the full suite of GCSE examinations in autumn 2020. Exam Boards were asked to carry forward the generosity from summer 2020 grades, the majority of which were based on centre assessment.

GCSE English Language and Mathematics are routinely available for assessment in an annual November exam series for post-16 students, however JCQ does not usually publish the results.

An exceptional feature of the November 2020 series was that students under 16 years of age on 31 August 2020, who had entered for the summer 2020 series or where exam boards believed they had intended to, could enter. Ordinarily, this cohort is not eligible to enter the November series, and this has been the case since 2017.

In addition to students who would normally be entitled to take GCSEs in English Language and Mathematics in November, students were able to enter the November 2020 series if they did not feel that the grade they received in the summer reflected their ability or if they were unable to receive a centre assessment grade.

In 2017, GCSE English language and GCSE Mathematics were reformed, and the 9-1 grade scale was introduced (9 denoting the highest passing grade and 1 denoting the lowest passing grade).

November 2017 was the first opportunity for students to re-sit those examinations, but they could re-sit them in summer 2018, and in November or summer of subsequent years.

Since August 2015 full time students, aged 16 to 18 and 19 to 25 with an education, health and care (EHC) plan, who have not achieved a GCSE grade C/4 or above in English Language/English Literature or Mathematics are required to continue studying these subjects as part of their 16-19 study programme. Students who have a prior attainment of GCSE C/3 grade must study GCSE only. From academic year 2019 to 2020, students with a grade 2 or below in English or Mathematics can study towards a pass in Functional Skills level 2 (legacy or reformed) or they can still study towards a GCSE grade 9 to 4.

## **Wales**

GCSE English Language, Mathematics, Mathematics Numeracy and Welsh First Language are routinely available in the November series. It should be noted, the November series in Wales is open to all candidates and is not just a resit series limited to post-16 learners.

The November 2020 series included those students for whom there was not enough evidence for a grade to be awarded in summer 2020.

Generosity from summer 2020 grades, the majority of which were based on centre assessment, was also carried forward to the November series.

GCSE Mathematics Numeracy is available alongside GCSE Mathematics. Candidates may take this or GCSE Mathematics, and most take both.

GCSE English Language, Mathematics, Mathematics Numeracy and Welsh First Language are awarded on a grade scale of A\*-G.

In both jurisdictions, the examinations were not adapted in any way as the series was predominantly aimed at learners who were ready for assessment in summer 2020.

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## **Interpreting the UK tables**

The November 2020 results should not be directly compared to November 2019 results because the profile of students entering this year was different.

Additionally, the 2019 results are based on final results, including review of marking and appeals data. The 2020 data is based on provisional data, as reviews of marking and appeals are not yet complete.

The JCQ tables calculate ages as of August 2021, the current academic year.

## Data Suppression

To protect candidate anonymity, data suppression (indicated by 0~) is applied to the results tables when the combined number of male and female candidates that sat a subject is fewer than 10. In this case all rows for the subject would be suppressed. Suppression is also applied to subjects when one of the gender breakdowns had fewer than 10 candidates sit. In this case the separate rows for male and female would be suppressed, but the combined 'male & female' row would not be suppressed.

The following are examples of unsuppressed, and suppressed data using this criterion.

### 1. Combined number of male & female candidates that sat a subject is fewer than 10

<b>1a. Unsuppressed</b>							
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGES by Grade</i>			
		<i>Sat</i>	<i>No. Sat</i>	<i>A/7</i>	<i>C/4</i>	<i>G/1</i>	<i>U</i>
Fictional Studies	Male	3	7.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Female	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Male & Female	3	3.7	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>1b. Suppressed</b>							
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGES by Grade</i>			
		<i>Sat</i>	<i>No. Sat</i>	<i>A/7</i>	<i>C/4</i>	<i>G/1</i>	<i>U</i>
Fictional Studies	Male	0~	0~	0~	0~	0~	0~
	Female	0~	0~	0~	0~	0~	0~
	Male & Female	0~	0~	0~	0~	0~	0~

### 2. One of the gender breakdowns had fewer than 10 candidates sit

<b>2a. Unsuppressed data</b>							
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGES by Grade</i>			
		<i>Sat</i>	<i>No. Sat</i>	<i>7/A</i>	<i>4/C</i>	<i>1/G</i>	<i>U</i>
Fictional Studies	Male	1	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
	Female	22	0.3	18.2	68.2	100.0	100.0
	Male & Female	22	0.1	0.0	68.2	100.0	100.0
<b>2b. Suppressed data</b>							
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGES by Grade</i>			
		<i>Sat</i>	<i>No. Sat</i>	<i>7/A</i>	<i>4/C</i>	<i>1/G</i>	<i>U</i>
Fictional Studies	Male	0~	0~	0~	0~	0~	0~
	Female	0~	0~	0~	0~	0~	0~
	Male & Female	22	0.1	0.0	68.2	100.0	100.0

## Limitations

JCQ carries out quality assurance checks to ensure that the data received is, to the best of our knowledge, accurate.

The results tables are provisional. Results are updated after this point to include changes such as reviews of marking. Whilst provisional, we do not anticipate significant changes to outcomes to occur.