



Joint Council for  
Qualifications<sup>CIC</sup>

## Press Notice

STRICTLY EMBARGOED

Until 09:30 BST, Thursday 18 August 2022

Produced on behalf of:



# Summer 2022 A and AS level results mark successful return to exams for the first time since 2019

Today, the Joint Council for Qualifications has published the 2022 UK results for A and AS levels and congratulates students who have been part of this year's exams, despite some very tough circumstances created by the pandemic. This is the first time students have taken summer exams marked and graded by exam boards since 2019, after two years of grades being determined by schools and colleges. In line with the objective set out by Ofqual, overall outcomes are higher than 2019, when exams were last sat, but lower than 2021 outcomes.

Awarding bodies worked closely with the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofqual, to introduce a package of support for students including more lenient grading, advance information, adaptations and exam aids to support the transition back to exams. This was put in place to support students, schools and colleges through another challenging year due to Covid.

## Highlights:

- A level entries have increased by 2.9%, compared to an increase of 2.4% in the 18-year-old population in 2022
- Outcomes at A\*-E up by 0.8 percentage points (pp) from 2019
- Overall outcomes for female entries are higher than for male entries at all grades
- Mathematics remained the most popular A level subject
- Geography continues to rise in popularity, and is one of the top 10 most popular subjects

## Results compared with 2019 and 2021

Overall outcomes are higher than 2019, when exams were last sat

- A\* increased by 6.9pp from 7.7% to 14.6%
- A\*-A increased by 11pp from 25.4% to 36.4%
- A\*-E increased by 0.8pp from 97.6% to 98.4%

Overall outcomes are lower than 2021, when there was a different method of assessment

- A\* decreased by 4.5pp
- A\*-A decreased by 8.4pp
- A\*-E decreased by 1.1pp

## Update on gender patterns

### Female entries accounted for 54.7% of all A level entries for summer 2022

- Overall outcomes at all grades were slightly higher for female entries than for male entries

- Outcomes for female entries at A\* are 14.8%, whereas outcomes for male entries are 14.4%
- Outcomes for female entries at A\*-A are 37.4%, whereas outcomes for male entries are 35.2%
- Outcomes for female entries at A\*-E are 98.7%, whereas outcomes for male entries are 98.1%
- There are variations within subjects: A level Mathematics, and the modern foreign languages are examples of subjects where outcomes for male entries are higher at A\* compared to outcomes for female entries

### **Subjects growing in popularity**

There has been an increase in entries in other subjects, for example Political Studies (+11%), Psychology (+10.5%) and Geography (+6.2%). Having seen a dip in entries since 2019, Geography is again one of the top 10 most popular subjects in 2022.

### **Mathematics**

**Mathematics remains the most popular subject, accounting for 11.3% of all entries at A level.** However, entries decreased by 2.1% from 97,690 in 2021 to 95,635 in 2022.

Outcomes for male entries continue to be higher than outcomes for female entries in Mathematics in 2022 compared to 2019. This year, 24.2% of male entries achieved A\* grades compared with 22.1% of female entries. However, outcomes for female entries are higher overall, with 98.3% achieving A\*-E, compared with 97.6% of outcomes for male entries.

### **English**

**There was a decrease in entries in all A level English subjects compared to 2021.** The largest decline in these subjects was in English Literature, where there was a decrease of 9.4%. English Language and English Literature entries decreased by 5.8% and English Language by 0.4%.

### **Modern Foreign Languages**

**Spanish remains the most popular** modern foreign language despite a slight decline in entries of 0.6% from 9,139 to 9,088. French entries decreased by 5.4% from 8,383 to 7,929 while German entries increased by 3.5% to 2,803. Outcomes for male entries are higher at A/A\* in French, German and Spanish than for female entries.

### **AS Levels**

**AS entries in England are up 8.5% from 2021, after several years when entries were in decline.** Overall, AS entries in the UK remain stable at 135,598 compared to 135,397 from 2021. There was an overall increase at grade A (8.9pp) and an increase at grade A-E (3.8pp) compared to 2019.

**Kath Thomas, Interim Chief Executive Officer of JCQ said:**

“Congratulations to all the students receiving their results today. Not only is it the culmination of two years of hard work, but these students are the first to have taken formal summer exams in three years, so we should all celebrate this achievement.

“Exams are the fairest way to assess students, as they give everyone the chance to show what they know. Today’s results therefore represent a huge milestone in our recovery from the pandemic and are testament to the diligence and resilience of young people and school staff across the country.

“As intended, these results are higher than the last set of summer exams in 2019, but lower than last year’s teacher-assessed grades. This reflects the special arrangements that were put in place to support students, schools and colleges through another challenging year due to Covid.”

**END**

**Notes to Editors**

1. Detailed tabulations of the GCE AS and A-level, Applied GCE AS and A-level are published separately, also with the STRICT EMBARGO of 09.30 Thursday 18 August 2022 and will be available on the JCQ CIC website from 09.30 on 18 August 2022 – [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)
2. These results are for qualifications taken by students across the UK but predominantly in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
3. Other modern languages are: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Dutch, Gujarati, Italian, Japanese, Modern Greek, Modern Hebrew, Panjabi, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Turkish, and Urdu.
4. More details about Ofqual’s [Extra support for Summer 2022 GCSE, AS and A levels](#)
5. All awarding organisations are answerable to the regulatory authorities - Ofqual (England), Qualifications Wales (Wales) and CCEA (Northern Ireland). 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.
6. The JCQ CIC comprises AQA, CCEA, City & Guilds, NCFE, OCR, Pearson, SQA and WJEC – the eight largest providers of qualifications in the UK.
7. The JCQ CIC is a membership organisation and enables member awarding bodies to act together in providing, where possible, common administrative arrangements for the schools and colleges and other providers which offer their qualifications; and

responding to proposals and initiatives in assessment and the curriculum.

8. Media contacts: The JCQ's press office can be contacted on: 020 7227 0671/020 7638 4132/07399 870 337