



Media release

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 09.30 HOURS
THURSDAY, 25 AUGUST 2022**

GCSE results reflect planned grading arrangements for first summer exams in three years

Today, the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) publishes the 2022 Wales results for GCSEs. 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. Overall outcomes are higher than 2019, when exams were last sat.

Working closely with Welsh Government and Qualifications Wales, awarding bodies have introduced a package of measures to support the transition back to exams. This has included adaptations and advance information in relation to assessments to mitigate the disruption to teaching and learning caused by the pandemic. Measures were developed in consultation with key stakeholders, including school and college staff. In addition, Qualifications Wales confirmed that results will broadly reflect a midway point between 2021 and 2019.

Comparisons to any previous years' results should be approached with caution due to the differing methods of assessments and circumstances.

Highlights:

- 311,072 total entries - down by 5.4% from 2021
- Overall outcomes for female entries remain higher than for male entries
- No change from 2021 in rank order of the top ten highest entry subjects, except for Art and Design related subjects, this has moved down from 8th into 10th position
- Most popular subject choices are unchanged from 2021
- Health & Social Care sees biggest increase of entries (+32.8%)
- Growth in separate sciences continues with Biology (+6.1%), Chemistry (+4.0%) and Physics (+4.2%)

Results compared with 2019 and 2021

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

- A*/9 - A/7 increased by 6.7 percentage points (pp)
- A*/9 – C/4 increased by 5.8pp
- A*/9 – G/1 increased by 0.1pp

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

- A*/9 - A/7 decreased by 3.6pp
- A*/9 - C/4 decreased by 5.0pp
- A*/9 – G/1 decreased by 1.2pp

GCSE overall performance

The GCSE results for Wales show that 25.1% of candidates have been awarded the top grades A*/9- A/7, whilst 68.6% of candidates have been awarded a C/4 grade or above.

The total number of GCSE examination entries in Wales this year was 311,072, a decrease of 5.4% from 2021.

Outcomes for females are higher than males at A*/9 - A/7, A*/9 – C/4, and A*/9 – G/1 grades by 8.1 percentage points, 7.1 percentage points, and 0.6 percentage points, respectively.

Mathematics

In Wales, students have the opportunity to take either GCSE Mathematics or GCSE Mathematics - Numeracy, with the majority taking the opportunity to study both subjects.

This year's figures show that 18.0% of candidates achieved A*/9 – A/7 grades for GCSE Mathematics, whilst 56.8% of candidates have been awarded a grade C/4 or above.

Meanwhile, 18.7% of candidates achieved A*/9 – A/7 grades for GCSE Mathematics – Numeracy, whilst 59.6% of candidates have been awarded a grade C/4 or above.

English and English Literature

19.5% of all grades awarded to GCSE English Language candidates were A*/9 – A/7 this year, whilst 65.7% of candidates achieved a grade C/4 or above.

For GCSE English Literature, 21.9% of candidates achieved grades A*/9 – A/7, and 71.0% of candidates have been awarded a grade C/4 or above.

Welsh First Language and Welsh Second Language

22.1% of candidates achieved A*/9 – A/7 grades in GCSE Welsh First Language, whilst 76.3% of candidates have been awarded a grade C/4 or above.

Meanwhile, 22.9% of GCSE Welsh Second Language candidates have achieved A*/9 – A/7 grades, and 64.4% of candidates have been awarded a grade C/4 or above.

Entries for GCSE Welsh First Language and for GCSE Welsh Second Language have decreased by 0.5 and 1.9 percent respectively from 2021.

Separate sciences and double award

The proportion of candidates achieving A*/9 – A/7 in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics is 52.3%, 53.8% and 53.8%, respectively.

92.3% (Biology), 93.5% (Chemistry), and 93.8% (Physics) have achieved a grade C/4 or above.

For GCSE Science Double Award, 11.0% of candidates have been awarded A*/9 – A/7 grades, and 57.0% of candidates have achieved a grade C/4 or above.

The Double Award qualification and the separate science qualifications are of the same academic standard, however, the separate science subjects continue to attract the highest proportion of the most able students.

Kath Thomas, Interim Chief Executive Officer of JCQ said:

“Congratulations to all the students receiving their GCSE results today after lots of hard work and all the challenges of the pandemic.

“I’m glad that exams are back as they’re the fairest way to assess students and give everyone the chance to show what they know. This is the first time in three years that results have been based on formal exams and coursework, so it’s a welcome step back towards normality.

“As planned - and as with last week’s A-level results - 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.”

FURTHER INFORMATION

For information about the results in Wales, contact:

Jonathan Thomas, PR Manager, WJEC on 029 2026 5102 or jonathan.thomas@wjec.co.uk.

For information about the UK results, contact JCQ^{CIC}'s press office on 020 7227 0671, or 07905 683816 or at pressoffice@jcq.org.uk

Further statistical details on the results for the UK, Wales, England and Northern Ireland may be found at www.jcq.org.uk

NOTES FOR EDITORS

General

1. The data provided in the main body of this media release represent the aggregate information for Wales across all awarding organisations, and are provisional, in the sense that they represent the position at the time that results are issued.
2. These results are provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ^{CIC}), representing awarding organisations in the UK, and presented in Wales on behalf of JCQ^{CIC} by WJEC.
3. The qualifications framework is common across Wales, England and Northern Ireland. Comprehensive data for entries and results on a country-by country basis (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) are provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications – www.jcq.org.uk - and may be accessed from 9.30 am on Thursday 25 August 2022.
4. All awarding organisations are answerable to the qualification regulators – Qualifications Wales, Ofqual (England) and CCEA (Northern Ireland) – for examinations standards. The qualification regulators monitor the awarding organisations’ 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.

5. In comparing the results of individual schools and colleges with any aggregate totals, it should be borne in mind that substantial variations are to be expected. A number of social, economic and educational factors have a bearing on the performance of pupils in examinations, of which the effectiveness of the school or college is only one.

Data Analysis

- There is a small number of candidates, mainly from the independent sector, who sit the reformed GCSE 9-1 examinations. Their overall outcomes are included in the headline figures, however, their outcomes are not included in the subject analysis which is A* - G only. Their data is available from the JCQ website www.jcq.org.uk.

Summer 2022: Approach to assessment and grading

The information below relates to the following Qualifications Wales approved qualifications:

- *WJEC GCSE, AS and A level qualifications*
- *Skills Challenge Certificates*
- *Level 2 and Level 3 Health and Social Care: Principles and Contexts*
- *Level 2 and Level 3 Children's Care, Play, Learning and Development*

In March 2021, Qualifications Wales confirmed that approved qualifications would be assessed via exams and non-examination assessments as normal, but with adaptations to account for the disruption to teaching and learning.

In support, WJEC published adaptations for each qualification, which included:

- streamlined content that would be subject to assessment in 2022
- reduced NEA requirements
- introduced optionality to assessments either via a choice of units or a choice of questions within a unit.

Advance Information was published for a small number of qualifications.

WJEC supported schools and colleges through the provision of additional guidance, training and resources. Examples of this support is available from the [WJEC Summer 2022 website](#).

Qualifications Wales confirmed in October 2021 that for 2022, results will broadly reflect a midway point between 2021 and 2019. WJEC has worked to implement this policy directive as part of their awarding process.

Please note schools and colleges delivering Ofqual regulated GCSE and AS/A levels followed arrangements as [outlined here](#).