



Media release

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 09.30 HOURS
THURSDAY, 21 AUGUST 2025**

GCSE results show an increase in students awarded top grades

Today, the Joint Council for Qualifications has published the 2025 Wales results for GCSEs, alongside the release of Level 1 and 2 vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs).

Highlights:

- 307,089 total entries - down by 3.0% (9,499 entries) compared with 2024
- Overall outcomes show an increase in students awarded top grades
- 19.5% candidates awarded the top grades A*/9 – A/7
- Top 10 subjects by entry remains unchanged compared with 2024
- Religious Studies has seen a 12.7% decrease in entries (-1,319)
- French and Spanish have both risen in popularity, with entries up 6.7% (+143) and 17.1% (+232) respectively

This year's results compared with 2024

- A*/9 - A/7 up by 0.3 percentage points (pp)
- A*/9 – C/4 up by 0.3pp
- A*/9 – G/1 up by 0.3pp

GCSE overall performance

The GCSE results for Wales show that 19.5% of candidates have been awarded the top grades A*/9- A/7, whilst 62.5% of candidates have been awarded a C/4 grade or above.

The total number of GCSE examination entries in Wales this year was 307,089, a decrease of 3.0% (9,499 entries) on 2024.

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 13.4% of candidates achieved A*/9 – A/7 grades for GCSE Mathematics, whilst 49.0% of candidates have been awarded a grade C/4 or above.

Meanwhile, 13.6% of candidates achieved A*/9 – A/7 grades for GCSE Mathematics – Numeracy, whilst 52.1% of candidates have been awarded a grade C/4 or above.

For GCSE Mathematics and GCSE Mathematics-Numeracy, entries and outcomes are most appropriately reflected in the best outcome obtained by 16 year olds across both the November and summer series.

Figure 1: GCSE Mathematics – cumulative best grade distributions WJEC only for 16 year olds

	2023/24	2024/25
Grade		
A	18.3%	18.2%
C	57.3%	56.8%
G	93.9%	94.9%
Entries	33,688	33,006

Figure 2: GCSE Mathematics - Numeracy – cumulative best grade distributions WJEC only for 16 year olds

	2023/24	2024/25
Grade		
A	16.5%	16.4%
C	58.0%	56.9%
G	95.7%	95.7%
Entries	32,758	32,253

English and English Literature

12.2% of all grades awarded to GCSE English Language candidates were A*/9 – A/7 this year, whilst 55.6% of candidates achieved a grade C/4 or above.

For GCSE English Literature, 20.5% of candidates achieved grades A*/9 – A/7, and 72.2% of candidates have been awarded a grade C/4 or above.

Similarly to GCSE Mathematics, for GCSE English and GCSE English Literature, entries and outcomes are most appropriately reflected in the best outcome obtained by 16 year olds across both the November and summer series.

Figure 3: GCSE English Language – cumulative best grade distributions WJEC only for 16 year olds

	2023/24	2024/25
Grade		
A	12.9%	13.8%
C	58.2%	59.2%
G	98.2%	98.3%
Entries	33,680	33,139

Figure 4: GCSE English Literature – cumulative best grade distributions WJEC only for 16 year olds

	2023/24	2024/25
Grade		
A	19.7%	19.4%
C	72.5%	72.2%
G	98.6%	98.6%
Entries	29,595	28,953

Welsh First Language and Welsh Second Language

13.9% of candidates achieved A*/9 – A/7 grades in GCSE Welsh First Language, whilst 66.3% of candidates have been awarded a grade C/4 or above.

Meanwhile, 22.0% of GCSE Welsh Second Language candidates have achieved A*/9 – A/7 grades, and 63.0% of candidates have been awarded a grade C/4 or above.

Entries and outcomes for GCSE Welsh (1st) Language are most appropriately reflected in the best outcome obtained by 16 year olds across the whole academic year.

Figure 5: GCSE Welsh (1st) Language – cumulative best grade distributions WJEC only for 16 year olds

	2023/24	2024/25
Grade		
A	15.4%	14.8%
C	72.8%	69.7%
G	98.5%	97.3%
Entries	6,233	6,126

Separate sciences and double award

The proportion of candidates achieving A*/9 – A/7 in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics is 41.8%, 42.1% and 44.4%, respectively.

86.7% (Biology), 88.7% (Chemistry), and 90.0% (Physics) have achieved a grade C/4 or above.

For GCSE Science Double Award, 7.5% of candidates have been awarded A*/9 – A/7 grades, and 50.0% 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.

Jill Duffy, Chair of JCQ Board of Directors and Chief Executive of OCR, said:

“Looking at these results, it is hard not to be impressed by students’ breadth of skills and knowledge.

What I find most exciting about results day is seeing the diverse range of qualifications achieved, from maths to art to hospitality – and what that means to hundreds of thousands of young people. The subjects may be very different, but every single qualification issued today is a passport to future success and opportunities.

These students have shown resilience and determination throughout their school years; they now have the chance to thrive in their next endeavours, whether that is in education, training or apprenticeships. Congratulations to you all on what you have achieved today."

Margaret Farragher, JCQ's Chief Executive, said:

"Well done to students across the UK who are today receiving their results. Marking their achievements in GCSE and vocational and technical qualifications is an important moment for them and those who have supported them throughout their education. We wish them every success as they build on these results.

As ever these results are enabled by the dedication of every leader, teacher, exams officer and all staff in schools and colleges who supported these students. On behalf of JCQ and our members, I thank them for their continued hard work."

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. 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, also with the STRICT EMBARGO of 09.30 Thursday 21 August 2025 and will be available on the JCQ CIC website from 09.30 on 21 August 2025 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. All awarding organisations are answerable to the regulatory authorities - Ofqual (England), Qualifications Wales (Wales) and CCEA (Northern Ireland). The regulatory authorities monitor the standards of qualifications within their jurisdiction.
4. The JCQ CIC is a membership organisation, comprising AQA, CCEA, City & Guilds, NCFE, OCR, Pearson, SQA and WJEC – the eight largest providers of qualifications in the UK.
5. JCQ 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 to respond to proposals and initiatives in assessment and the curriculum.

6. Media contact: The JCQ's press office can be contacted on: 020 7227 0671/07399 870 337

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.