



Media release

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 09.30 HOURS
THURSDAY, 20 AUGUST 2026**

Wales Level 1/2 Results issued today

Today, the Joint Council for Qualifications has published the 2026 Wales results for GCSEs, alongside the release of Level 1 and 2 vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs).

GCSE Highlights:

- 289,506 total entries - down by 5.7% (17,583 entries) compared with 2025
- Overall outcomes show stability
- 19.6% candidates awarded the top grades A*/9 – A/7
- Top 10 subjects by entry remains unchanged compared with 2025
- English Literature has seen a 30.5% decrease in entries (-8,981) and Mathematics Numeracy a 22.5% decrease in entries (-5,355). The reduction in entries are due to the ongoing GCSE reform in Wales.
- Changes in entries for English, Mathematics and Welsh can be attributed to the introduction of new GCSEs in Wales.

This year's GCSE results compared with 2025

- A*/9 - A/7 up by 0.1 percentage points (pp)
- A*/9 – C/4 down by 0.2pp
- A*/9 – G/1 down by 0.1pp

GCSE overall performance

The GCSE results for Wales show that 19.6% of candidates have been awarded the top grades A*/9- A/7, whilst 62.3% of candidates have been awarded a C/4 grade or above.

The total number of GCSE examination entries in Wales this year was 289,506, a decrease of 5.7% (17,583 entries) on 2025.

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 is the final year where students can be entered for both qualifications, due the ongoing GCSE reform.

This year's figures show that 13.9% of candidates achieved A*/9 – A/7 grades for GCSE Mathematics, whilst 48.3% of candidates have been awarded a grade C/4 or above.

Meanwhile, 11.9% of candidates achieved A*/9 – A/7 grades for GCSE Mathematics – Numeracy, whilst 49.4% 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

	2024/25	2025/26
Grade		
A	18.2%	19.1%
C	56.8%	56.2%
G	94.9%	94.4%
Entries	33,006	33,336

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

	2024/25	2025/26
Grade		
A	16.4%	17.4%
C	56.9%	57.3%
G	95.7%	95.2%
Entries	32,253	32,423

English and English Literature

11.8% of all grades awarded to GCSE English Language candidates were A*/9 – A/7 this year, whilst 54.3% of candidates achieved a grade C/4 or above.

For GCSE English Literature, 21.4% of candidates achieved grades A*/9 – A/7, and 75.1% 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

	2024/25	2025/26
Grade		
A	13.8%	13.5%

C	59.2%	58.6%
G	98.3%	98.3%
Entries	33,139	33,564

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

	2024/25	2025/26
Grade		
A	19.4%	20.1%
C	72.2%	72.4%
G	98.6%	98.7%
Entries	28,953	29,327

Welsh First Language and Welsh Second Language

14.8% of candidates achieved A*/9 – A/7 grades in GCSE Welsh First Language, whilst 69.4% 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 64.1% 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

	2024/25	2025/26
Grade		
A	14.8%	15.2%
C	69.7%	71.2%
G	97.3%	97.1%
Entries	6,126	6,226

Separate sciences and double award

The proportion of candidates achieving A*/9 – A/7 in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics is 43.2%, 44.7% and 46.5%, respectively.

86.8% (Biology), 89.1% (Chemistry), and 89.4% (Physics) have achieved a grade C/4 or above.

For GCSE Science Double Award, 7.8% of candidates have been awarded A*/9 – A/7 grades, and 50.8% 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.

Margaret Farragher, JCQ's Chief Executive, said:

"Congratulations to all students across England, Northern Ireland and Wales who are receiving their results today. And a really big thank you to everyone who has supported them, especially their schools, colleges, parents and carers.

We have continued to make Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQs) an integral part of our data and today we have published 445,349 VTQ results alongside results for GCSEs and other Level 1_2 qualifications. JCQ members are delighted that this has helped transform the language that people use to describe results days in August, so as to recognise and celebrate the achievements of young people across the many pathways they take.

We wish all staff in schools and colleges an enjoyable rest of the summer and look forward to working with them again in the new term."

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, 07534 156213 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 20 August 2026 and will be available on the JCQ CIC website from 09.30 on 20 August 2026 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, Cambridge OCR, CCEA, City & Guilds, NCFE, Pearson and WJEC – the seven largest providers of qualifications in the UK.
5. JCQ's mission is to provide clear and consistent administration arrangements for qualifications, supporting our member awarding organisations streamlining processes for schools, colleges and other educational establishments.
6. Media contact: The JCQ's press office can be contacted on 07534 156213

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.