

OFFICIAL STATISTICS

# Entries and late entries for GCSE, AS and A level: 2017 to 2018 academic year

Background information accompanying the  
statistical release

**22 November 2018**

**ofqual**

# Contents

<b>Contents</b> .....	2
<b>Information about the statistics</b> .....	3
<i>Purpose</i> .....	<b>3</b>
<i>Geographical coverage</i> .....	<b>3</b>
<i>Description</i> .....	<b>3</b>
<i>External influences</i> .....	<b>3</b>
<i>Data source</i> .....	<b>4</b>
<i>Limitations</i> .....	<b>5</b>
<i>Quality assurance</i> .....	<b>5</b>
<i>Revisions</i> .....	<b>5</b>
<i>Confidentiality and rounding</i> .....	<b>5</b>
<i>Status</i> .....	<b>5</b>
<i>Related publications</i> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Useful links</b> .....	6
<b>Feedback</b> .....	6

## Information about the statistics

### Purpose

This statistical release presents data on entries and late entries for GCSE, AS and A level exams during the 2017/18 academic year.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), a membership organisation comprising eight providers of qualifications in the UK, including those awarding GCSEs and A levels, publishes [deadlines](#) by which entries should be made on behalf of the exam boards. If an entry is made after the deadline it is classed as late and may be subject to an additional charge.

### Geographical coverage

This report presents data on entries, late entries and certifications for GCSEs, AS and A levels in England.

### Description

Five exam boards offer GCSE and AS/A level qualifications in England:

- AQA Education (AQA)
- Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), until 2015
- Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR)
- Pearson Education Ltd. (Pearson)
- WJEC-CBAC Ltd. (WJEC)

Schools and colleges are responsible for submitting entries to exam boards for GCSEs, AS and A levels on behalf of their students. Entries are counted separately for each unit (modular qualifications) or component (linear qualifications) that makes up a qualification. An entry, therefore, is counted as a student being put forward for an individual assessment, whereas certifications refer to the overall qualification.

### External influences

There are various factors which might have influenced the entries for GCSE, AS and A levels in recent years:

#### **AS and A level**

Reformed A levels in England are different from the legacy qualifications in that the results of the AS qualification do not count towards a student's final A level grade. As such, there is no requirement for students to enter the AS components or certificate at AS in a given subject, even if they intend to study the full A level.

These structural changes have resulted in a substantial decline in AS entries (and therefore total AS/A level entries) since the introduction of reformed AS and A levels from 2016 onwards ([click for the complete timetable](#)).

## **GCSE**

Reformed GCSEs started to be phased in from 2015 with the first results issued for English language, English literature and mathematics in 2017. In 2018, [there were 23 reformed GCSEs available](#), including computer science, geography, history, biology, chemistry, physics and combined science.

As GCSEs have been reformed, Level 1/Level 2 Certificates in equivalent subjects no longer count in school performance tables. The biggest impact of this is in English language, English literature and mathematics where, since 2017, there has been a continuing fall in the entries to Level 1/Level 2 Certificates and a shift in the cohort back to GCSEs.

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a school performance measure relating to attainment in core academic subjects. From 2018, the measure has calculated a school's average points score for students taking reformed EBacc eligible GCSE subjects. This includes English literature, English language and mathematics, history or geography, a specified combination of science GCSEs and a language.

In 2016, the Progress 8 measure was introduced. It is a key school accountability measure that is based on students' progress from key stage 2 in eight GCSE subjects. [Progress 8 is made up of four elements](#):

1. A double-weighted mathematics element
2. A double-weighted English element based on the highest point score in English language or English literature qualification
3. An element which includes the three highest point scores from EBacc qualifications
4. An element including three qualifications from the remaining EBacc subjects and/or other GCSEs or other qualifications included on the Department for Education approved list for performance tables

Since August 2015, full time students who have not achieved a grade 4 (prior to 2017 a grade C) or above in English language or English literature and mathematics GCSEs must continue studying these subjects in order to be funded post-16.

## **Data source**

Exam boards submit data to Ofqual for GCSEs, AS and A levels they have awarded as well as entries and late entries in England (as well as Wales, Northern Ireland, other UK regions and overseas).

Exam boards send data to Ofqual for each exam series.

Data was collected for AS and A level separately for the first time in 2016. Therefore, in this publication, pre-2016 data are reported combined for AS and A level and from 2016 onwards AS and A level numbers are reported separately within tables.

## Limitations

There is potential for error in the information provided by exam boards, therefore Ofqual cannot guarantee that the information received is correct. Ofqual compares the data over time and checks for systematic issues. Summary data are sent back to exam boards for checking and confirmation.

## Quality assurance

Quality assurance procedures are carried out as explained in the [Quality Assurance Framework for Statistical Publications](#) published by Ofqual to ensure the accuracy of the data and to challenge or question it, where necessary. Publication may be deferred if the statistics are not considered fit for purpose.

## Revisions

Once published, data are not usually subject to revision, although subsequent releases may be revised to insert late data or to correct an error.

Revised data for previous years (2013 to 2017) submitted by two exam boards has been published in this release. The revisions were submitted by WJEC to reflect the correct definition of 'late entries' and by CCEA to correctly classify centres in the Channel Islands (earlier included in England data by error).

## Confidentiality and rounding

To ensure confidentiality of the published accompanying data, figures have been rounded to the nearest 5. If the value is less than 5, it is represented as 0~ and 0 represents zero entries.

As a result of rounded figures, the percentages (calculated on actual figures) shown in any tables may not necessarily add up to 100.

## Status

These statistics are classified as Official Statistics.

## Related publications

A number of other statistical releases relate to this one, including:

- [Entries for GCSE, AS and A level: summer 2018 exam series](#) (published by Ofqual).

- [GCSE and equivalent results: 2017 to 2018 \(provisional\)](#) and [GCSEs \(key stage 4\) collection](#) (published by the Department for Education).
- [16 to 19 attainment collection](#) (published by the Department for Education).

For any related publications for qualifications offered in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland please contact the respective regulators - [Qualifications Wales](#), [CCEA](#) and the [Scottish Qualifications Authority \(SQA\)](#).

## Useful links

- [Report and data tables](#) accompanying this release
- [Definitions](#) of important terms used in this release
- [Policies and procedures](#) that Ofqual follows for production of statistical releases

## Feedback

We welcome your feedback on our publications. Should you have any comments on this statistical release and how to improve it to meet your needs please contact us at [statistics@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:statistics@ofqual.gov.uk).



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