



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

## **Press Notice**

**STRICTLY EMBARGOED**

**Until 09:30 BST, Thursday 22 August 2024**

## **JCQ publishes GCSE and Level 1 and 2 Vocational and Technical Qualification results for biggest ever assessment series**

Today, the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) publishes 2024 results for the biggest ever assessment series in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. More than 6.5 million results (6,559,779) have been issued across a broad range of GCSE, and Level 1 and 2 vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs).

The approach to grading returned to pre-pandemic arrangements in England last year, and this year Northern Ireland and Wales completed their transition to pre-pandemic arrangements.

Entries for GCSE have increased by 4.8% to 6,186,879, compared with 5,905,000 in 2023 and 5,547,447 in 2019. Students are opting for a wide range of subjects, with music, art and design subjects, history, Spanish, business studies, computer science and statistics all recording increases in entries.

Results for GCSE students are in line with previous years - with 21.8% of grades at 7/A and above (compared with 22.0% in 2023 and 20.8% in 2019), and 67.6% of grades at 4/C and above (compared with 68.2% in 2023 and 67.3% in 2019).

Today's results also show the range and quality of achievements of those studying for VTQs. Awarding organisations have awarded 372,900 Level 2 and 1/2 VTQ results in over 100 different qualifications – including, for the first time, new Tech Awards, which account for the vast majority of these results today. The largest sector subject area is leisure, travel and tourism.

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

“What I love about this time of year is seeing the huge variety of qualifications that our young people are mastering, whether GCSE or Vocational and Technical Qualifications. Today's results give them the basis for their next steps in education or training and I am sure this resilient generation will go on to even greater successes in the future.

“This year's students have a lot to be proud about and I'd like to congratulate them all for what they have achieved. We're seeing a record number of results issued today, and every one of them represents a student's hard work, as well as that of their teachers, parents, and support staff.”

### **Margaret Farragher, JCQ's Chief Executive, said:**

“Well done to students across the UK receiving GCSE, vocational and technical qualification results today. These achievements are hard-earned and students should feel justly proud to have reached this important milestone in their educational journey. We wish them every success as they take their next steps.

“I speak for everyone at JCQ when I say how grateful we are to school and college leaders, teachers and exams officers who have supported students and worked tirelessly to deliver a smooth exam series this year.”

### **Vocational and Technical Qualifications:**

- 372,900 VTQ results have been issued today, across nine sector subject areas.
- 360,200 results were for Tech Awards – awarded for the first time this year.

- 12,700 were Tech Certificates.
- Leisure, travel and tourism is the most popular sector subject area.
- Over 13,000 (3.5%) of awards were at the top grade.

## GCSEs:

### Overall entries

- GCSE entries up 4.8% to 6,186,879 compared with 5,905,000 in 2023.
- The 16-year-old population increased by 4.6%. Most entries for GCSE subjects were from 16-year-olds, totalling 91.4% of all entries, which is down 0.7 percentage points (pp) from 2023.
- The average number of GCSE entries for 16-year-olds remains stable at 7.76 (7.78 in 2023).
- Entries from students aged 17 and over are up 20.5% to 430,377 compared with 357,207 in 2023.
- In 2024, students aged 17 and over represent 7.0% of all entries compared with 6.0% in 2023.

### Subject entries

Top 10 subjects with highest number of entries remain unchanged:

- Science Double Award†† 980,786 (up 4.8% on 2023, and +16.9% since 2019)
- Mathematics 878,165 (up 6.9% on 2023, and +12.8% since 2019)
- English language 845,834 (up 7.2% on 2023, and +10.5% since 2019)
- English literature 655,905 (up 4.5% on 2023, and +11.7% since 2019)
- History 325,437 (up 4.6% on 2023, and +16.7% since 2019)
- Geography 297,411 (up 1.4% on 2023, and +12.2% since 2019)
- Religious studies 245,019 (up 0.5% on 2023, and -1.6% since 2019)
- Art and design subjects 208,934 (up 5.4% on 2023, and +6.6% since 2019)
- Biology 194,925 (up 1.9% on 2023, and +9.8% since 2019)
- Chemistry 185,274 (up 0.7% on 2023, and +9.0% since 2019)

Since 2023, there have been big increases in subjects with more than 100,000 entries:

- English language +7.2% from 788,780 to 845,834
- Mathematics +6.9% from 821,322 to 878,165
- Spanish +6.2% from 125,651 to 133,395
- Business studies +9.7% from 123,166 in 2023 to 135,090 - the biggest increase in the proportion of entries.

Subjects with under 100,000 entries which have also increased in popularity include:

- Statistics +19.9% from 26,559 to 31,844
- Music +8.7% from 32,980 to 35,861
- Computer science +5.8% from 90,558 to 95,841

## Results

Overall GCSE results in comparison with 2023 (all ages – cumulative percentages by grade):

- 7/A down 0.2 pp from 22.0 to 21.8% (1,348,975 grades awarded in 2024, +50,311)
- 4/C down 0.6 pp from 68.2% to 67.6% (4,182,343 grades awarded in 2024, +152,240)
- 1/G down 0.1 pp from 98.0% to 97.9% (6,059,514 grades awarded in 2024, +274,455)

Overall GCSE results in comparison with 2019 (all ages – cumulative percentages by grade):

- 7/A up 1.0 pp from 20.8% to 21.8% (1,348,975 grades awarded in 2024, +192,492)
- 4/C up 0.3 pp from 67.3% to 67.6% (4,182,343 grades awarded in 2024, +448,593)
- 1/G down 0.4 pp from 98.3% to 97.9% (6,059,514 grades awarded in 2024, +606,389)

Overall results for 16-year-olds at all GCSE grades (7/A, 4/C, 1/G) remain higher for female students compared to male students. However, there has been a slight reduction in the difference:

- At 7/A the difference between females and males results has reduced 0.2pp compared with 2023.
- At 4/C the difference between females and males has reduced 0.1pp compared with 2023.
- At 1/G the difference remains the same as in 2023.

**END**

### Notes to Editors

†. The approach to grading returned to pre-pandemic arrangements in England last year, and this year Northern Ireland and Wales have completed their transition to pre-pandemic arrangements.

†† Science Double Award: two grades are awarded.

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 22 August 2024 and will be available on the JCQ CIC website from 09.30 on 22 August 2024 [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. All awarding organisations are accountable to UK qualification regulators - Ofqual (England), Qualifications Wales (Wales) and CCEA Regulation (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.