

SDR 170/2012

4 October 2012

EXAMINATION RESULTS IN WALES, 2011/12 (PROVISIONAL)

This Statistical Release provides the earliest results of external examinations taken by pupils aged 15 or 17 in schools in Wales in 2011/12, as well as final information for previous years. Schools are currently checking this latest information and therefore the figures are subject to change. English Language GCSE results have been re-graded by the WJEC for pupils in Wales and these new results are included. For further information about the re-grading, including how the results were affected and for definitions of the performance measures used in this release please see the "Notes" section.

Key results for 2011/12:

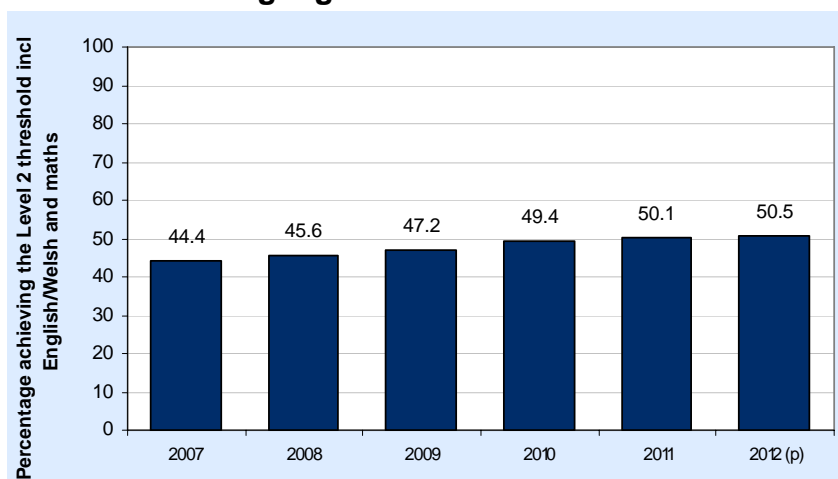
15 year olds

- 50.5 per cent achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and mathematics, slightly higher (0.4 percentage points) than in 2010/11 (Table 1 and Chart 1). The rate of increase has slowed in recent years;
- 91.3 per cent achieved the Level 1 threshold, an increase of 1 percentage point compared with 2010/11 (Table 1);
- 70.8 per cent achieved the Level 2 threshold, 3.5 percentage points higher than in 2010/11 (Table 1);
- The average capped wider points score was 319.6, 8 points higher than in 2010/11 (Table 1);
- 1.2 per cent achieved no recognised qualification, a decrease of 0.6 percentage points compared with 2010/11 (Table 1).

17 year olds

- 96.5 per cent of those entering a volume equivalent to 2 A levels achieved the Level 3 threshold, a slight increase (0.2 percentage points) compared with 2010/11 (Table 2);
- The average wider points score was 737, 62 points lower than in 2010/11 (Table 2).

Chart 1: Percentage of pupils aged 15 who achieved the Level 2 threshold including English or Welsh first language and mathematics



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Llywodraeth Cymru
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Table 1: Pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year (a) (b)

	Number of pupils aged 15	Percentage of pupils aged 15 who...						
		achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	achieved the Core Subject Indicator (c)	Average wider points score	Average capped (d) wider points score	achieved no recognised qualification (e)
2001/02	37,116	84.8	50.5	..	36.9	4.7
2002/03	37,993	85.1	51.1	..	37.5	4.6
2003/04	39,212	85.3	51.4	..	37.7	324.7	..	4.4
2004/05	38,495	85.2	52.2	..	38.4	327.7	..	4.3
2005/06	38,859	86.0	53.8	..	39.7	335.4	..	3.9
2006/07	39,576	86.0	55.0	44.4	40.0	343.9	..	3.9
2007/08	39,027	86.8	58.0	45.6	44.4	356.0	..	2.5
2008/09	37,607	88.2	60.7	47.2	46.0	378.9	..	1.9
2009/10	37,072	89.7	63.8	49.4	48.0	394.3	305.1	1.4
2010/11	36,088	90.3	67.3	50.1	48.7	422.9	311.6	1.8
2011/12 (p)	35,409	91.3	70.8	50.5	48.2	442.6	319.6	1.2

(a) Up to 2005/06, includes GCSEs, GCSE Short Course, GNVQs and NVQs. From 2006/07, includes all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales.

(b) Ages at the start of the academic year. Includes results for 15 year old pupils, in maintained schools and independent schools, achieved during the academic year and any examinations taken at earlier age.

(c) Core Subject Indicator: achieved GCSE grade A*-C in each of English or Welsh first language, mathematics and science.

(d) Average capped wider point scores are calculated using the best 8 results.

(e) Up to 2006/07, based on pupils who achieved no Entry Level Qualification, GCSE short course, GCSE or equivalent. 2007/08 onwards is based on the wider definition.

Table 2: Pupils aged 17 at the start of the academic year (a) (b)

	Number of pupils aged 17 entering a volume equivalent to 2 A levels	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold		Number of pupils aged 17	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17
2001/02	9,486	94.4		11,201	..
2002/03	9,848	93.9		11,568	..
2003/04	10,041	94.9		11,822	..
2004/05	10,373	94.4		12,072	..
2005/06	10,731	93.9		12,507	..
2006/07	10,592	93.9		12,418	618.5
2007/08	10,943	94.2		12,653	630.9
2008/09	11,367	96.0		13,241	687.7
2009/10	11,653	94.9		13,586	747.9
2010/11	11,512	96.3		13,615	798.9
2011/12 (p)	11,470	96.5		13,632	736.9

(a) Up to 2005/06, includes A levels, AS levels and Advanced Vocational Certificates of Education (AVCE). From 2006/07, includes all qualifications approved for use in Wales.

(b) Includes independent schools, but excludes further education institutions.

Notes

1. Context

1.1 Related Publications

Equivalent data for England and Northern Ireland can be found at the links below. Note that the data produced by these administrations are based on pupils at the end of Key Stage 4, whereas we publish on the basis of pupils aged 15. Although the statistics are calculated on a slightly different basis the differences resulting from this are likely to be small. Comparisons cannot be made with Scotland because their examination system and qualifications are sufficiently different.

Developments are underway in Wales in moving towards producing indicators based on pupils at the end of Key Stage 4.

For further information or advice on the constraints of international comparisons please e-mail school.stats@wales.gsi.gov.uk.

For reference, examination results for the other UK countries can be found by following the links below:

England

[SFR30/2011 GCSE and Equivalent Results in England, 2010/11 \(Revised\)](#)

[SFR01/2012 GCE and Equivalent Results in England, 2010/11 \(Revised\)](#)

Northern Ireland

[Qualifications and Destinations of Northern Ireland School Leavers 2010/11 \(revised\)](#)

Scotland

<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58060.html>

We also publish information on teacher assessments in core and non core subjects at foundation phase and key stages 2 and 3, which can be found here:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/schools2012/?lang=en>

The figures differ from those published by Awarding Organisations in August. The Awarding Organisations' figures related to the outcome of the individual subject areas for all candidates in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, regardless of their age. The figures published in this Statistical First Release focus on the overall performance of candidates aged 15 and 17 taking these examinations in Wales only. These figures are here:

http://www.jcq.org.uk/about_us/newsreleases/2012/

The re-grades are not included in these figures (On 28th September 2012)

2. Data source

The statistics are collated from a number of awarding organisations over the summer. The following awarding organisations provided data for this release: AQA, ASDAN, City and Guilds, CCEA, CACHE, EMTA Awards Ltd (EAL), EDI, EDEXCEL, ICAA, IFS School of Finance, IMI Awards Ltd (IMIAL), National Open College Network (NOCN), OCR and WJEC.

3. Definitions

3.1 Coverage

The statistics in this release cover all maintained and independent schools in Wales. Only results for pupils aged 15 and 17 received from the awarding organisations listed above are included. Examinations taken at an earlier age are also included. Any examinations achieved before the age of 15 will be held back and included in the school year in which the pupil turns 15.

The information in this release relates to all schools for Wales figures and to maintained secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units for LA figures.

Only qualifications awarded up to the 31 August are included. New awards after that date, as well as any resits or re-marks after that date, are not included. The re-grading of WJEC GCSE English language is included in this release.

Up to 2005/06, the statistics include GCSEs, GCSE short course, GNVQs and NVQs only. From 2006/07, the statistics include all qualifications approved for pre-16 or 16-18 use in Wales. The introduction of the wider definition has meant the inclusion of a larger range of qualifications and thus an increase in the headline indicators of performance. An explanation of the different types of qualifications can be found at: <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/QualificationsExplained/index.htm>

3.2 Threshold indicators and points

Indicators showing threshold equivalencies were published (as provisional indicators) for the first time in 2007 and are now the headline indicators of performance in secondary schools. Thresholds represent a volume, or 'size', of qualifications at a specific level on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Three thresholds have been established: Level 1 – a volume of qualifications at Level 1 equivalent to the volume of 5 GCSEs at grade D-G; Level 2 – a volume of qualifications at Level 2 equivalent to the volume of 5 GCSEs at grade A*-C; Level 3 – a volume of qualifications at Level 3 equivalent to the volume of 2 A levels at grade A-E.

The average capped wider points score is calculated using the best 8 results for each pupil. Further information on how the capped points score is produced can be found in the technical document at the link below:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/schools2010/1011301/?lang=en>

The average wider points score includes all approved qualifications.

3.3 Discounting

An examination is discounted when a pupil achieves a higher grade or higher level qualification in the **same subject group**. If a qualification is discounted then **it does not** count towards the statistics published in this release, or in any other official statistics published by the Welsh Government. We discount similar qualifications within the following subject groups:

Group 1: Entry level qualifications, GCSE short course, full GCSE, vocational double award GCSEs

Group 2: AS level, vocational double AS level, A levels, vocational double A level, AS Vocational Certificate of Education, Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education, Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education double award

Group 3: free standing maths qualifications

Group 4: key skills

Group 5: the Award in Digital Applications (AiDA), the Certificate in Digital Applications (CiDA), the Extended Certificate in Digital Applications (CiDA+) and the Diploma in Digital Applications (DiDA).

Group 6: NVQs

Group 7: BTECs and other qualifications

Group 8: the Welsh Baccalaureate

4. Rounding and symbols

In tables where figures have been rounded to the nearest final digit, there may be an apparent discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total shown.

The following symbols have been used throughout the publication:

(p) provisional

- percentages less than 0.5 but not zero

. not applicable

.. not available

~ not yet available

* figure is less than 5, or is based on a figure less than 5.

5. Key Quality Information

This section provides a summary of information on this output against five dimensions of quality: Relevance, Accuracy, Timeliness and Punctuality, Accessibility and Clarity, and Comparability. It also covers specific issues relating to quality of 2012 data, and describes the quality management tool applied to this area of work. Between September and November 2010 we conducted a public consultation on our Education Statistics outputs, in which we asked for feedback on the quality of the outputs. A summary of responses has been published and is available here:

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/statistics/education/?lang=en>

5.1 Relevance

The statistics are used both within and outside the Welsh Government to monitor educational trends and as a baseline for further analysis of the underlying data. Some of the key users are:

- Ministers and the Members Research Service in the National Assembly for Wales;
- The Department for Education and Skills in the Welsh Government;
- Other government departments;
- The research community;
- LAs and schools;
- Students, academics and universities;
- Individual citizens, private companies and the media.

These statistics are used in a variety of ways. Some examples of these are:

- General background and research;
- Inclusions in reports and briefings;
- Advice to Ministers;
- The all-Wales education core data packs (the replacement for the National Pupil Database);
- LA and school comparisons and benchmarks;
- To inform the education policy decision-making process in Wales including school reorganisation;
- Development of a national banding system for Wales;
- To inform ESTYN during school inspections;

- The education domain of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation;
- To assist in research in educational attainment.

5.2 Accuracy

The data are labelled as provisional because during October they will be sent to schools for checking. The data may be revised if schools provide factual evidence of errors in the data or of additional qualifications obtained with awarding organisations that we have not approached.

In a typical year we would expect the final indicators, to be published in November, to differ from these provisional statistics by up to half a percentage point.

Following the issuing of exam results in August 2012, and a review of the results of results of the English Language GCSE in Wales (<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/120910gcseen2012en.pdf>), the WJEC re-graded its English language results for pupils in schools in Wales. This affected over 2,000 pupils in Wales.

This release includes the results of the re-grading of WJEC English language. The effect of the re-grading on this output was to increase most of the key performance indicators for Wales by up to 0.6 percentage points (although the effect in individual schools could be much larger).

Effects of re-grading WJEC English GCSE

Pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year

	Number of pupils aged 15	Percentage of pupils aged 15 who...					
		achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	achieved the Core Subject Indicator	Average wider points score	Average capped wider points score
Before Regrading	35,409	91.3	70.5	49.8	47.6	442.2	319.3
After Regrading	35,409	91.3	70.8	50.5	48.2	442.6	319.6
Difference	0	0.0	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.3
	(people)	(% points)	(% points)	(% points)	(% points)	(points)	(points)

- 2,203 or 6.2% of pupils aged 15 had their grades changed.
- 1,105 or 3.1% of pupils aged 15 had their grade changed from a D to a C.

5.3 Timeliness and Punctuality

The data relate to all qualifications achieved between 1 September 2011 and 31 August 2012.

5.4 Accessibility and Clarity

This Statistical First Release is pre-announced and then published on the Statistics section of the Welsh Government website. It is accompanied by more detailed tables on [StatsWales](#), a free to use service that allows visitors to view, manipulate, create and download data.

5.5 Comparability

See section 1.2.