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Official Statistics

Provisional entries for GCSE, AS and A level: summer 2023 exam series

Published 1 June 2023

Applies to England

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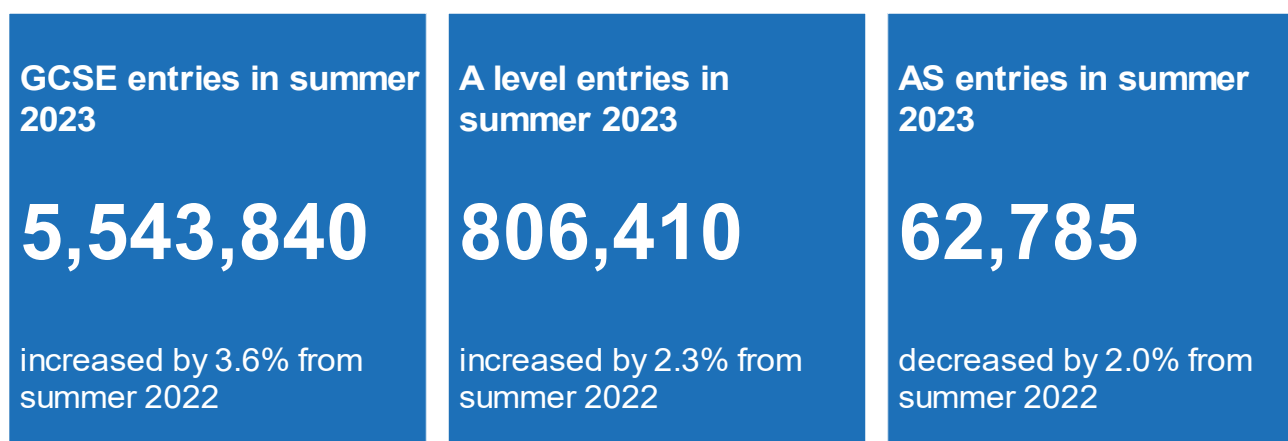
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1. Summer 2023 series

This report presents provisional figures for the number of entries for GCSEs, AS and A levels submitted by schools and colleges in England to exam boards by 20 April 2023 for qualifications which are to be awarded in summer 2023.

These figures reflect the information submitted to exam boards at that time but numbers for final entries are always expected to vary to some degree.

2. Key headlines



The key headlines in provisional entries for GCSEs, AS and A levels for the summer 2023 series are:

- GCSE entries have increased by 3.6% from 5,349,250 in summer 2022 to 5,543,840 in summer 2023
- The proportion of entries by tier in tiered GCSE subjects are broadly similar in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022
- A level entries have increased by 2.3% from 788,125 in summer 2022 to 806,410 in summer 2023
- AS entries have decreased by 2.0% from 64,080 in summer 2022 to 62,785 in summer 2023

3. GCSE entries

The overall entry for GCSEs has increased by 3.6% from 5,349,250 in summer 2022 to 5,543,840 in summer 2023. The overall entries for GCSEs have been slowly but steadily increasing for the past five years.

GCSE entries have increased by 3.6% in summer 2023

GCSE entries from summer 2019 to summer 2023

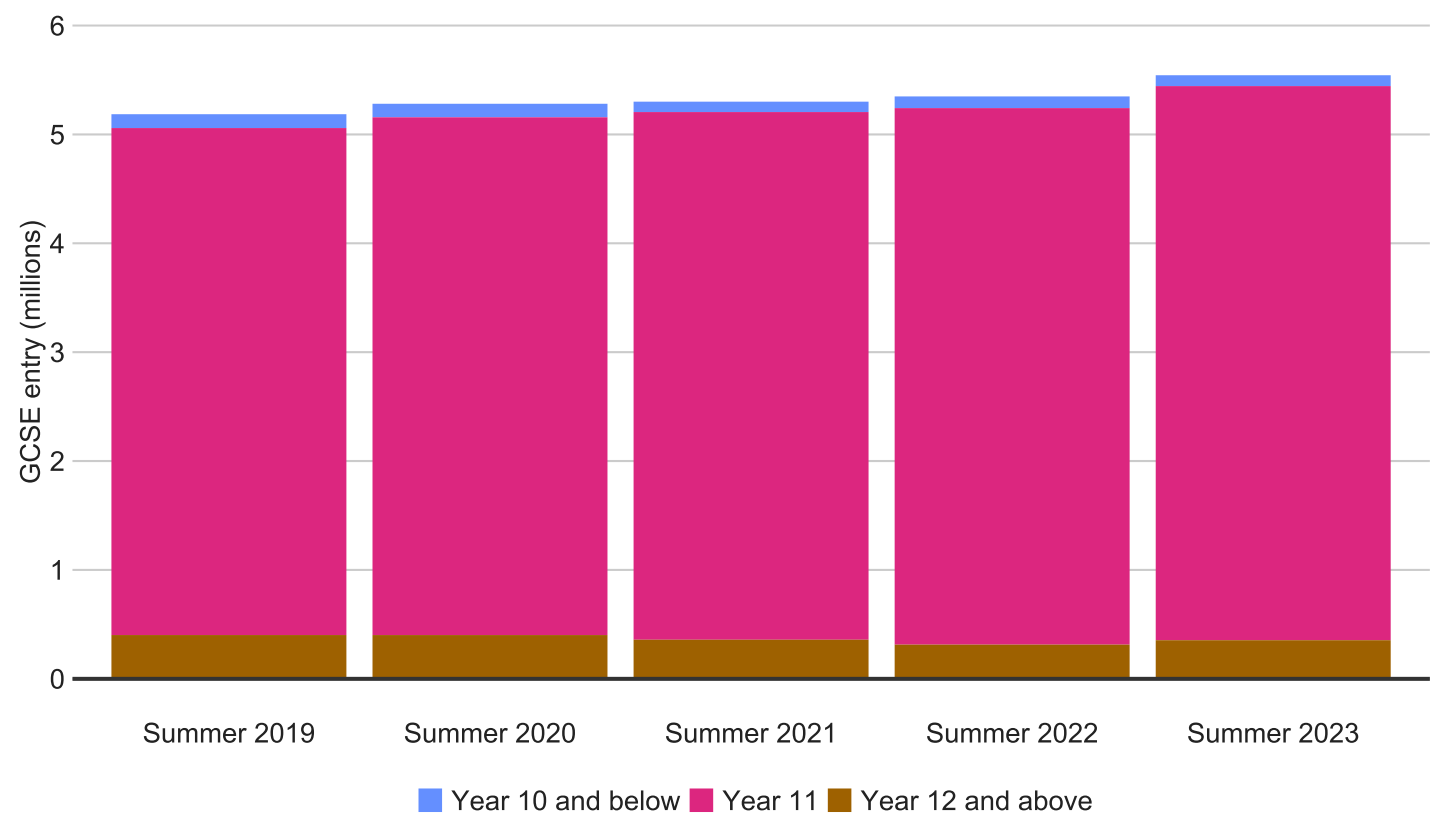


Table 1. GCSE entries from summer 2019 to summer 2023

Year group	Summer 2019	Summer 2020	Summer 2021	Summer 2022	Summer 2023
Year 10 and below	127,240	124,310	95,580	107,400	99,780
Year 11	4,657,115	4,756,135	4,847,140	4,928,640	5,090,115
Year 12 and above	401,480	401,300	358,350	313,210	353,940
All year groups	5,185,840	5,281,745	5,301,075	5,349,250	5,543,840

The majority of GCSE entries are from year 11 students. Entries from year 11 students are higher than at any time in the past 5 years. This can be partly due to a 10.4% increase in the size of the population of those aged 16 over the last five years, from 613,025 in 2019 to 676,773 in 2023 according to [ONS population estimates](#).

The increase of 3.6% for GCSE entries in summer 2023 is reflected in a rise in entries for both [EBacc subjects](#) and non-EBacc subjects.

The majority of GCSE entries are in EBacc Subjects

Percentage of GCSE entries from summer 2019 to summer 2023 for EBacc and non-EBacc subjects

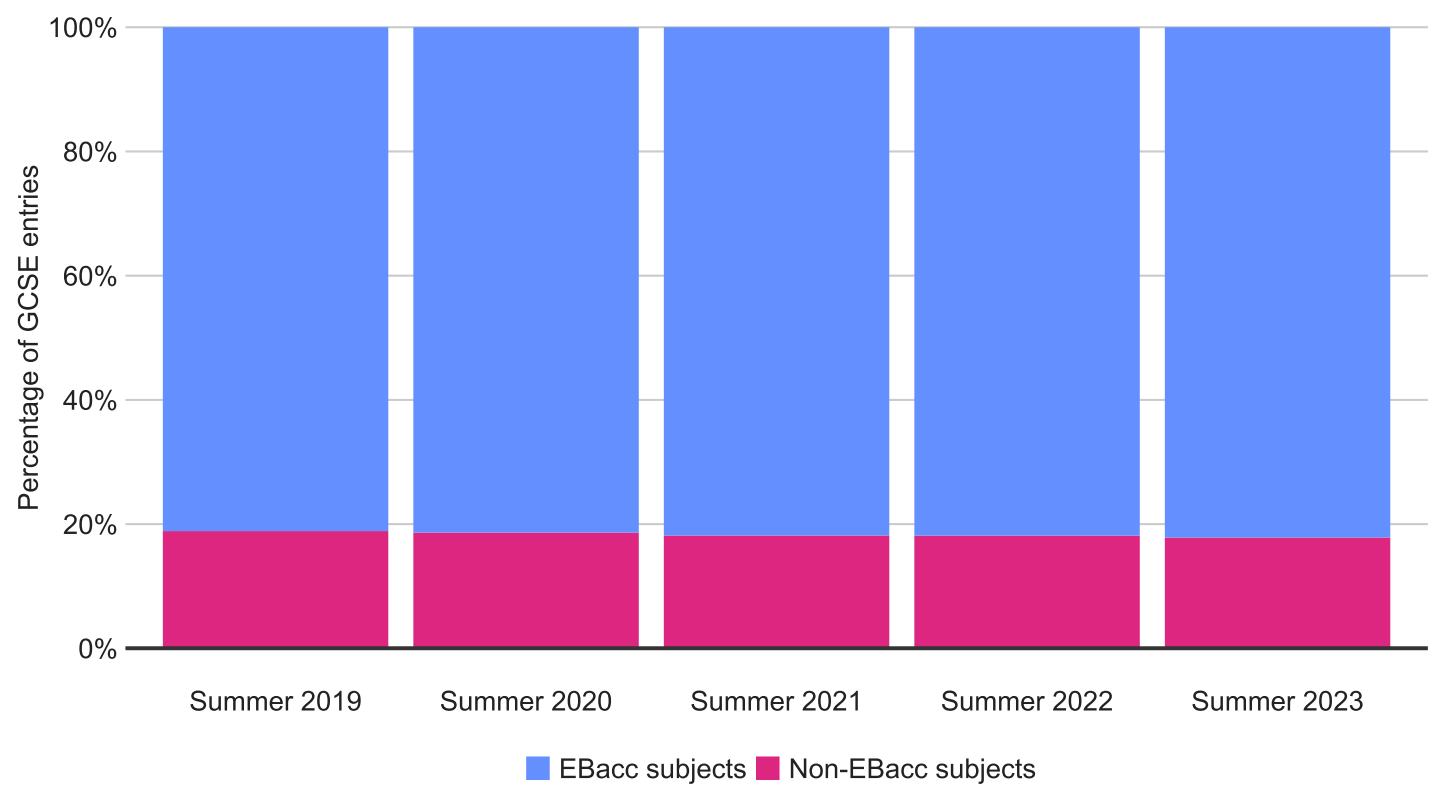


Table 2. GCSE entries for EBacc and non-EBacc subjects from summer 2019 to summer 2023

Subject grouping	Summer 2019	Summer 2020	Summer 2021	Summer 2022	Summer 2023
EBacc entries	4,206,700	4,297,100	4,337,685	4,378,110	4,554,415
Non-EBacc entries	979,140	984,645	963,390	971,140	989,430
Percent EBacc entries	81.1%	81.4%	81.8%	81.8%	82.2%
Percent non-EBacc entries	18.9%	18.6%	18.2%	18.2%	17.8%

3.1 Change from previous year in GCSE entries for EBacc subjects

The overall entry for EBacc subjects in summer 2023 has increased by 4.0% from 4,378,110 in summer 2022 to 4,554,415 in summer 2023.

Please note that entry in combined science is double counted because combined science is the equivalent of 2 GCSE grades. Please also note that ancient languages includes classical subjects as well as ancient languages.

Entries increased in many EBacc subjects

Percentage change in EBacc entries in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022

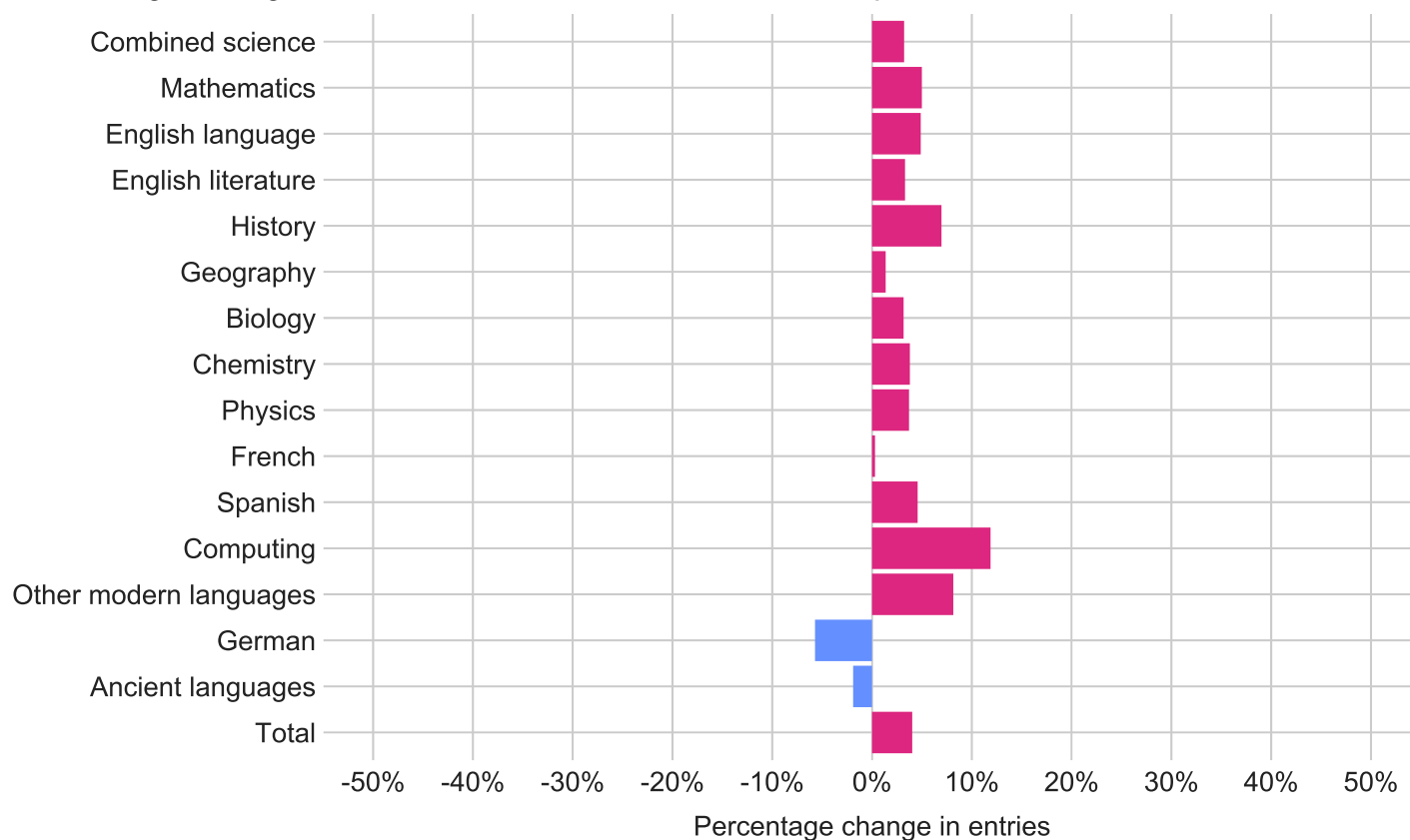


Table 3. Percentage change in EBacc entries in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022

Subject grouping	Entries in Summer 2022	Entries in Summer 2023	Percentage change in entries
Combined science	854,450	881,925	3.2%
Mathematics	749,390	786,815	5.0%
English language	719,790	754,910	4.9%
English literature	582,680	601,945	3.3%
History	278,750	298,155	7.0%
Geography	279,205	283,020	1.4%
Biology	174,605	180,125	3.2%
Chemistry	167,190	173,530	3.8%
Physics	166,550	172,725	3.7%
French	126,185	126,560	0.3%
Spanish	116,355	121,670	4.6%
Computing	79,135	88,530	11.9%
Other modern languages	36,310	39,270	8.1%
German	36,000	33,945	-5.7%
Ancient languages	11,510	11,290	-1.9%
Total	4,378,110	4,554,415	4.0%

There have been increases in entries for most EBacc subjects with the largest percentage increase in computing (11.9%). The increase in computing entries is larger than seen in [2022](#) where there was a 2.4% increase compared to 2021. There were decreases in entries for two subjects, German and ancient languages.

3.2 Entries in EBacc subjects over time and by year group

The growth in the population of those aged 16 in recent years' [ONS population estimates](#) is likely to explain the entries in Ebacc subjects. In the uptake of individual subjects, however, there are other factors at play, such as individual preferences and other existing trends.

Entries for combined science, English literature, geography and Spanish have increased each year for the past 5 years. German is the only subject where entries have decreased over the past 5 years.

Entries have continued to increase for combined science, English literature, geography and Spanish

Entries in EBacc subjects from summer 2019 to summer 2023

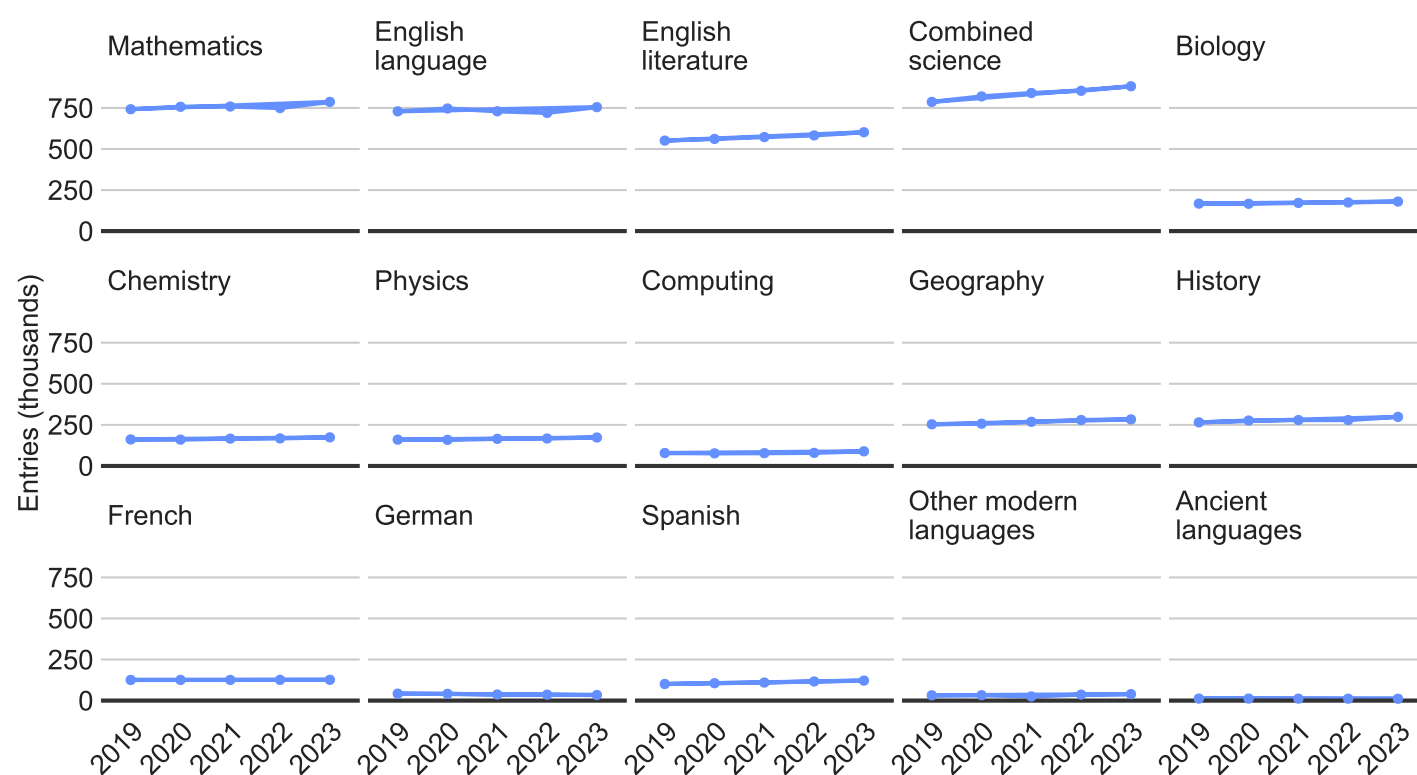


Table 4. Entries in EBacc subjects from summer 2019 to summer 2023

Subject	Summer 2019	Summer 2020	Summer 2021	Summer 2022	Summer 2023
Mathematics	742,245	757,235	758,755	749,390	786,815
English language	729,315	746,705	729,605	719,790	754,910
English literature	551,205	561,315	572,765	582,680	601,945
Combined science	786,830	820,270	840,955	854,450	881,925
Biology	167,525	166,635	171,835	174,605	180,125
Chemistry	160,980	159,760	165,710	167,190	173,530
Physics	159,555	158,395	164,330	166,550	172,725

Computing	78,080	76,180	77,245	79,135	88,530
Geography	253,125	256,805	268,180	279,205	283,020
History	264,680	275,910	278,880	278,750	298,155
French	125,700	125,770	125,655	126,185	126,560
German	42,175	41,320	37,035	36,000	33,945
Spanish	101,080	105,840	109,655	116,355	121,670
Other modern languages	32,035	32,755	25,225	36,310	39,270
Ancient languages	12,170	12,215	11,860	11,510	11,290

There are some slight changes to entry by year group in 2023 compared to previous years. In all subjects most entries are from candidates in year 11, but the proportion of entries from candidates in year 10 and below (“early entries”) in other modern languages is consistently higher than is observed in other subjects. Percentage of entries for mathematics, English language, and English literature have increased for year 12 and above in summer 2023 when compared to summer 2022. These figures are, however, in line with those shown in previous years.

The majority of entry is from year 11 candidates for EBacc subjects

Percentage of candidates by year group in EBacc subjects

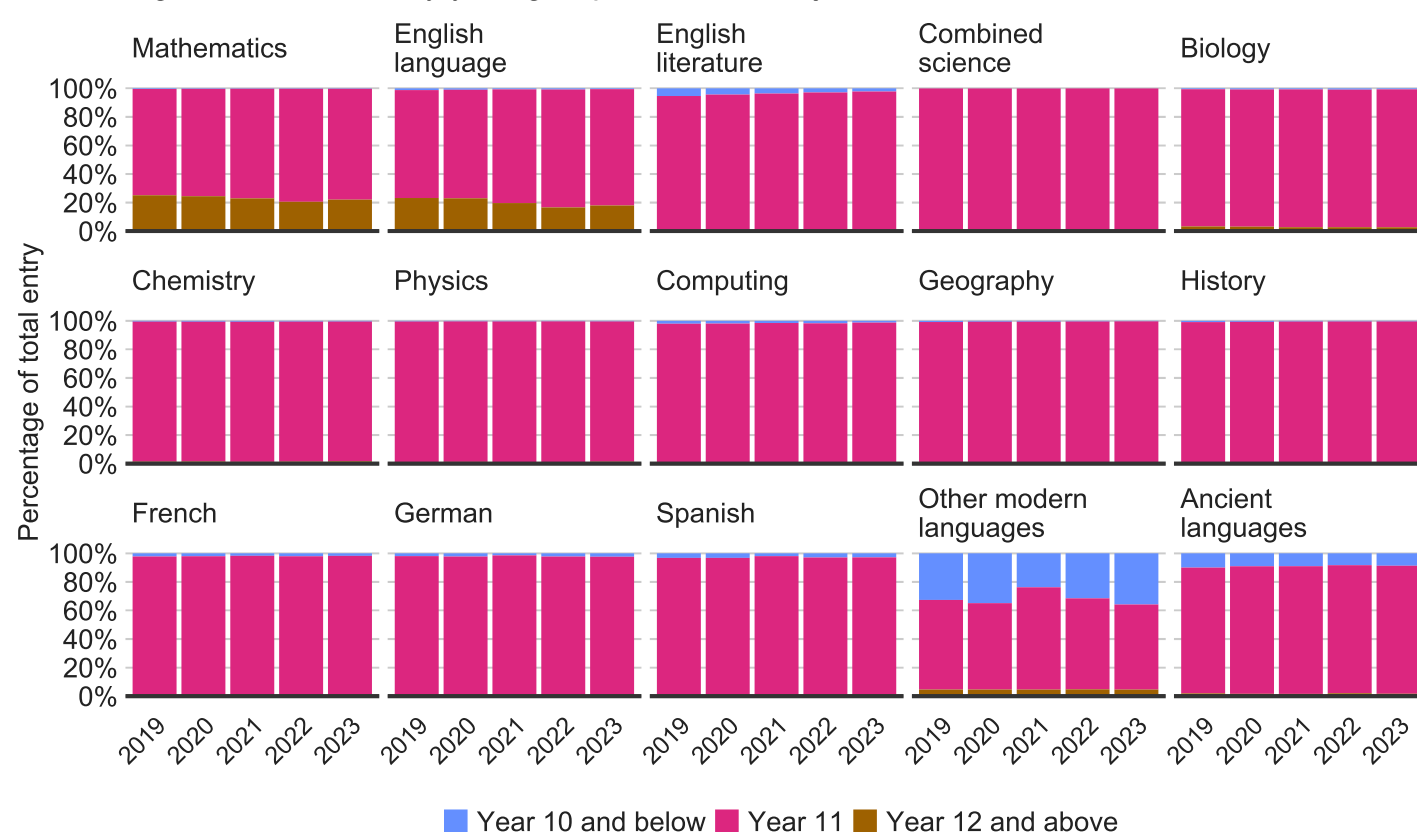


Table 5. Percentage of candidates by year group in EBacc subjects from summer 2019 to summer 2023

Subject	Year group	Summer 2019	Summer 2020	Summer 2021	Summer 2022	Summer 2023
Ancient languages	Year 10 and below	10.0%	9.1%	9.0%	8.3%	8.7%
Ancient languages	Year 11	88.1%	89.3%	89.4%	89.7%	89.6%

Ancient languages	Year 12 and above	1.9%	1.6%	1.6%	2.0%	1.7%
Biology	Year 10 and below	0.6%	0.8%	0.7%	0.9%	0.7%
Biology	Year 11	96.1%	96.0%	96.5%	96.3%	96.6%
Biology	Year 12 and above	3.3%	3.1%	2.8%	2.8%	2.7%
Chemistry	Year 10 and below	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	0.6%	0.5%
Chemistry	Year 11	98.0%	97.9%	98.1%	98%	97.8%
Chemistry	Year 12 and above	1.4%	1.5%	1.3%	1.4%	1.6%
Combined science	Year 10 and below	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Combined science	Year 11	98.6%	98.7%	98.7%	98.9%	98.8%
Combined science	Year 12 and above	1.4%	1.3%	1.1%	1.0%	1.1%
Computing	Year 10 and below	2%	1.9%	1.5%	1.7%	1.3%
Computing	Year 11	97.1%	97.2%	97.6%	97.4%	97.6%
Computing	Year 12 and above	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	1.2%
English language	Year 10 and below	1.2%	1.0%	0.7%	0.8%	0.6%
English language	Year 11	75.6%	76.0%	79.6%	82.5%	81.4%
English language	Year 12 and above	23.2%	23.0%	19.7%	16.6%	18.0%
English literature	Year 10 and below	5.4%	4.4%	3.7%	2.9%	2.2%
English literature	Year 11	93.9%	94.9%	95.7%	96.5%	97.1%

English literature	Year 12 and above	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	0.7%
French	Year 10 and below	2.2%	2%	1.7%	2.1%	1.8%
French	Year 11	97.2%	97.4%	97.8%	97.4%	97.7%
French	Year 12 and above	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Geography	Year 10 and below	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.4%
Geography	Year 11	98.4%	98.6%	98.7%	98.9%	98.9%
Geography	Year 12 and above	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	0.8%
German	Year 10 and below	2.0%	2.2%	1.5%	2.2%	2.4%
German	Year 11	97.4%	97.2%	98.1%	97.3%	97.2%
German	Year 12 and above	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
History	Year 10 and below	0.9%	0.7%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
History	Year 11	98.4%	98.6%	98.9%	99.0%	99.0%
History	Year 12 and above	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%
Mathematics	Year 10 and below	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Mathematics	Year 11	74.4%	75.2%	76.7%	79.1%	77.6%
Mathematics	Year 12 and above	25.1%	24.5%	23.0%	20.6%	22.1%
Other modern languages	Year 10 and below	32.6%	34.9%	23.8%	31.5%	35.8%
Other modern languages	Year 11	62.8%	60.5%	71.6%	63.7%	59.6%
Other modern languages	Year 12	4.6%	4.6%	4.6%	4.8%	4.6%

languages	and above					
Physics	Year 10 and below	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%
Physics	Year 11	98.3%	98.3%	98.5%	98.5%	98.2%
Physics	Year 12 and above	1.2%	1.2%	1.0%	1.1%	1.4%
Spanish	Year 10 and below	3.2%	3.2%	2.0%	2.9%	2.8%
Spanish	Year 11	96.0%	96.0%	97.4%	96.5%	96.6%
Spanish	Year 12 and above	0.8%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%

3.3 Change from previous year in GCSE entries for non-EBacc subjects

The overall entry for non-EBacc subjects has increased by 1.9% from 971,140 in summer 2022 to 989,430 in summer 2023. This mirrors the increase in the number of 16 year olds in the population between the 2 years.

Overall entries increased in non-EBacc subjects

Percentage change in non-EBacc entries in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022

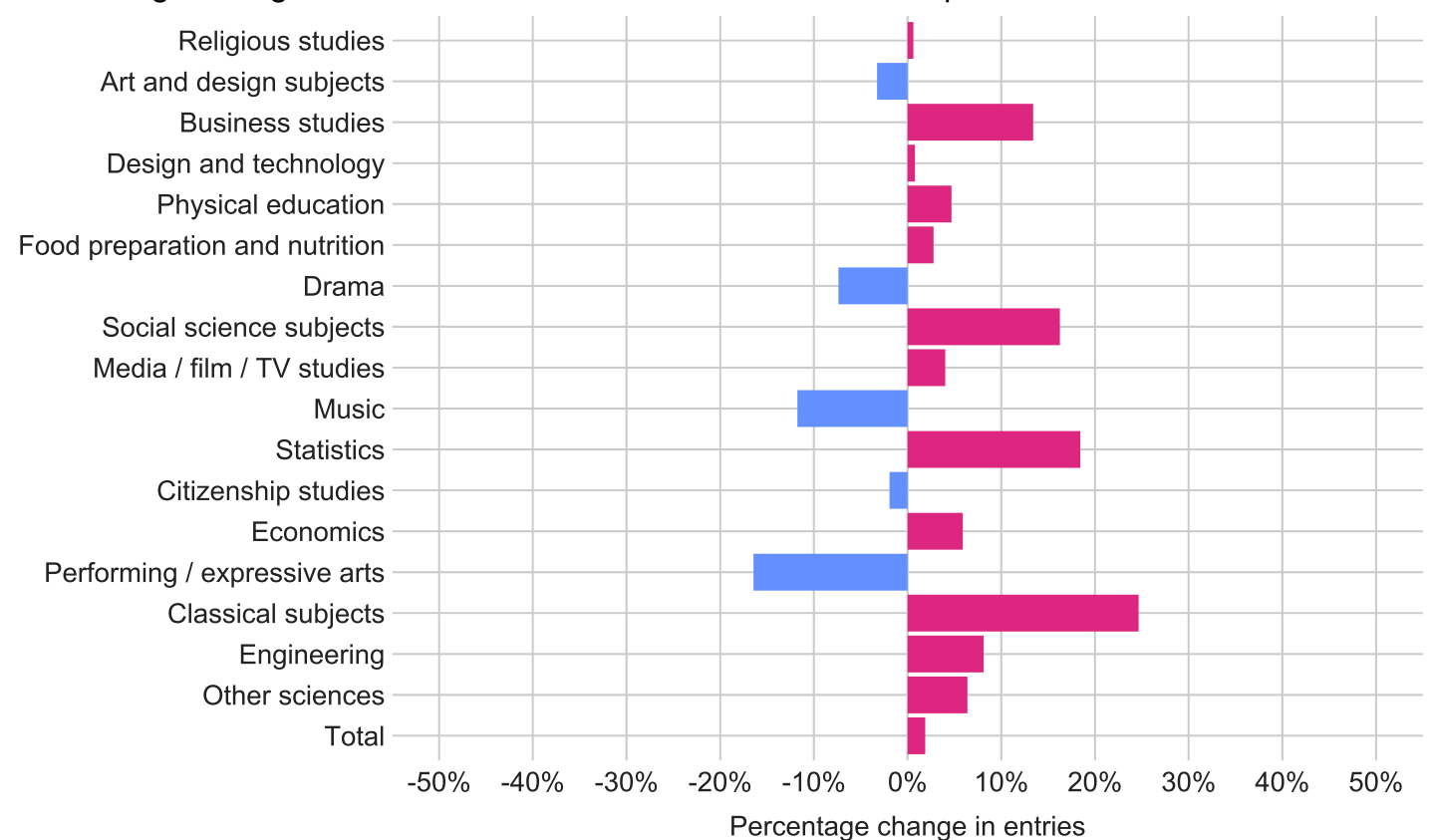


Table 6. Percentage change in non-EBacc entries in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022

Subject grouping	Entries in Summer 2022	Entries in Summer 2023	Percentage change in entries
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Religious studies	243,875	245,385	0.6%
Art and design subjects	194,040	187,710	-3.3%
Business studies	100,990	114,525	13.4%
Design and technology	78,405	79,025	0.8%
Physical education	71,215	74,550	4.7%
Food preparation and nutrition	51,940	53,380	2.8%
Drama	53,790	49,825	-7.4%
Social science subjects	42,385	49,270	16.3%
Media / film / TV studies	31,635	32,905	4.0%
Music	34,130	30,115	-11.8%
Statistics	22,615	26,785	18.4%
Citizenship studies	22,850	22,410	-1.9%
Economics	6,805	7,205	5.9%
Performing / expressive arts	8,245	6,890	-16.4%
Classical subjects	3,595	4,480	24.7%
Engineering	2,305	2,490	8.1%
Other sciences	2,320	2,465	6.4%
Total	971,140	989,430	1.9%

Most non-EBacc subjects had an increase in entries. The largest percentage increases were in business studies, social science subjects, statistics and classical subjects. There was a decrease in entries in art and design subjects, drama, music, citizenship studies and performing/expressive arts.

3.4 Entries for tiered GCSEs

In some subjects, there are 2 tiers of entry: foundation and higher. Entry by tier has remained broadly similar in most tiered subjects in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022.

Percentage entry by tier has remained broadly similar in most subjects in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022

Percentage of entries to foundation and higher tiers from summer 2019 to summer 2023

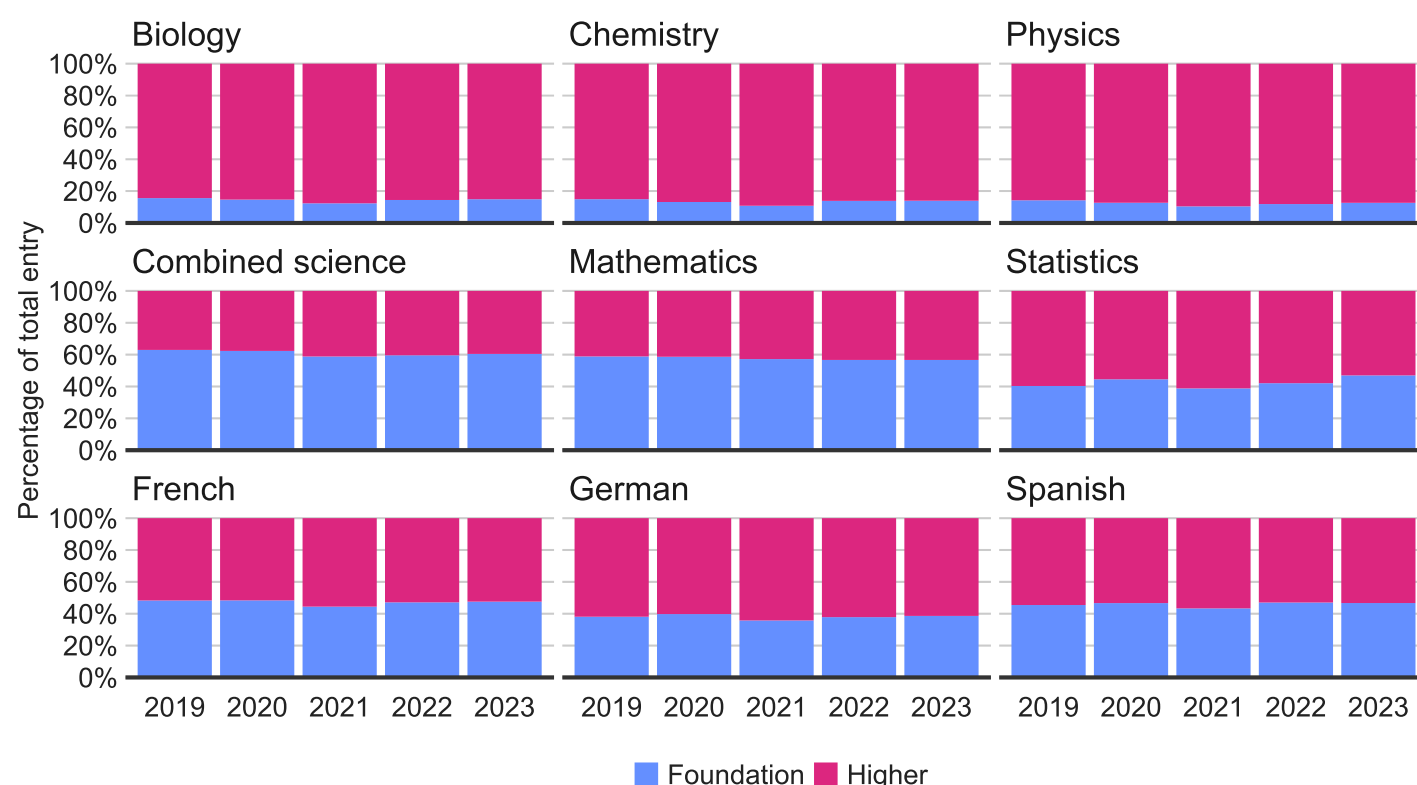


Table 7. Percentage of entries for higher tier from summer 2019 to summer 2023

Subject	Summer 2019	Summer 2020	Summer 2021	Summer 2022	Summer 2023
Biology	84%	85%	88%	86%	85%
Chemistry	85%	87%	89%	86%	86%
Combined science	37%	38%	41%	40%	40%
French	52%	52%	56%	53%	52%
German	62%	60%	64%	62%	61%
Mathematics	41%	41%	43%	43%	43%
Physics	86%	87%	90%	88%	87%
Spanish	55%	53%	57%	53%	53%
Statistics	60%	56%	61%	58%	53%

4. AS and A level entries

The overall entries for A level have increased by 2.3% from 788,125 in summer 2022 to 806,410 in summer 2023. This is likely to be partially explained by a 1.5% increase in the size of the population of those aged 18, which increased from 628,023 in 2022 to 637,756 in 2023 according to [ONS population estimates](#).

The overall entries for AS have decreased by 2% from 64,080 in summer 2022 to 62,785 in summer 2023. AS level entries have significantly decreased in previous years following the [decoupling of AS and A levels](#).

A level entries have increased and AS level entries have decreased in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022

AS and A level entries from summer 2019 to summer 2023

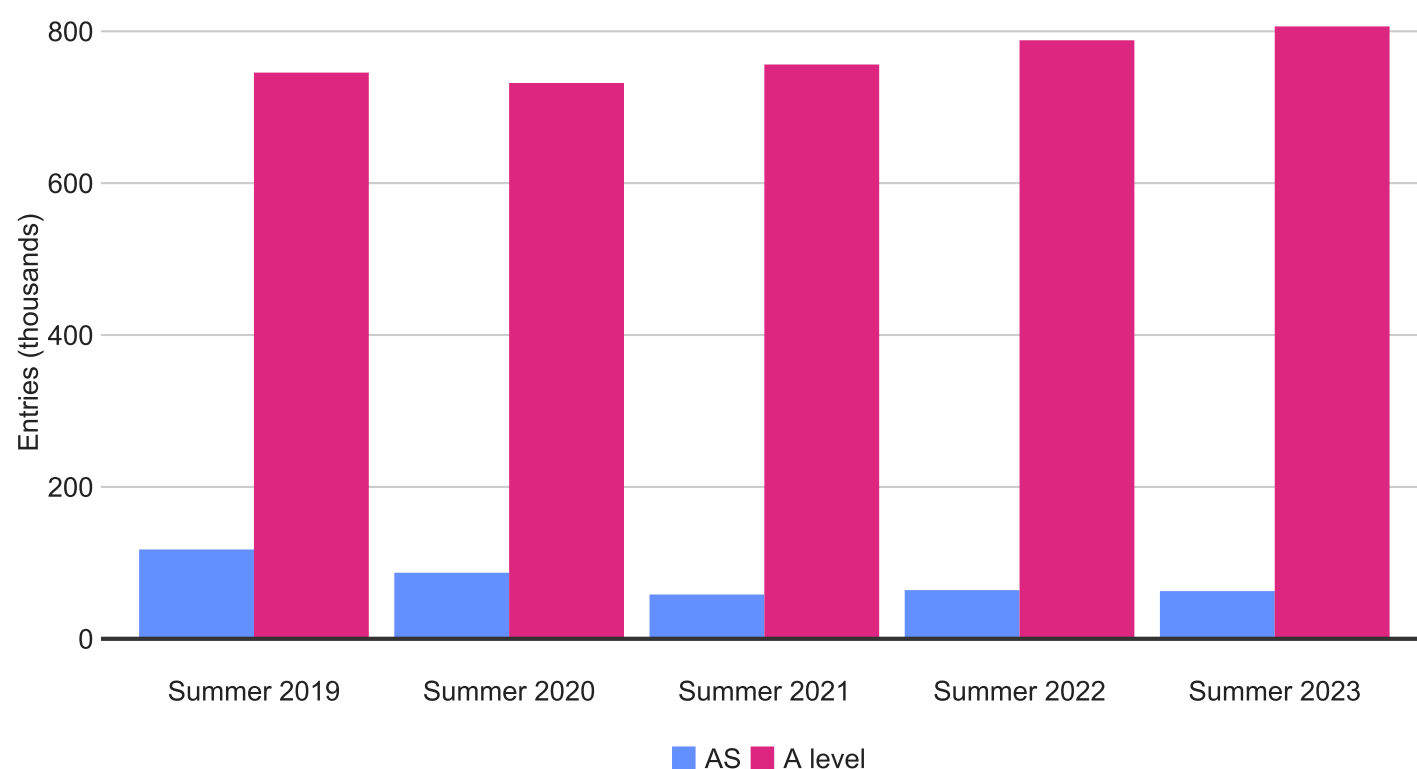


Table 8. AS and A level entries from summer 2019 to summer 2023

Qualification	Summer 2019	Summer 2020	Summer 2021	Summer 2022	Summer 2023
AS	117,595	86,970	58,300	64,080	62,785
A level	745,585	731,855	756,230	788,125	806,410
Total	863,180	818,825	814,525	852,200	869,195

4.1 A level entries

Most A level subjects have increased in entry size in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022. Classical subjects (20%) and computing (14.5%) showed the biggest overall percentage increase in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022. The 3 subjects with the largest percentage decrease are; German, Spanish, and French which decreased by more than 10% in summer 2023 when compared to summer 2022.

Please note that entries in “other subjects” is the combination of subjects with fewer than 2,000 entries as well as those grouped as “all other subjects” by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) for the purposes of results reporting.

Entries increased in many A level subjects

Percentage change in A level entries in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022

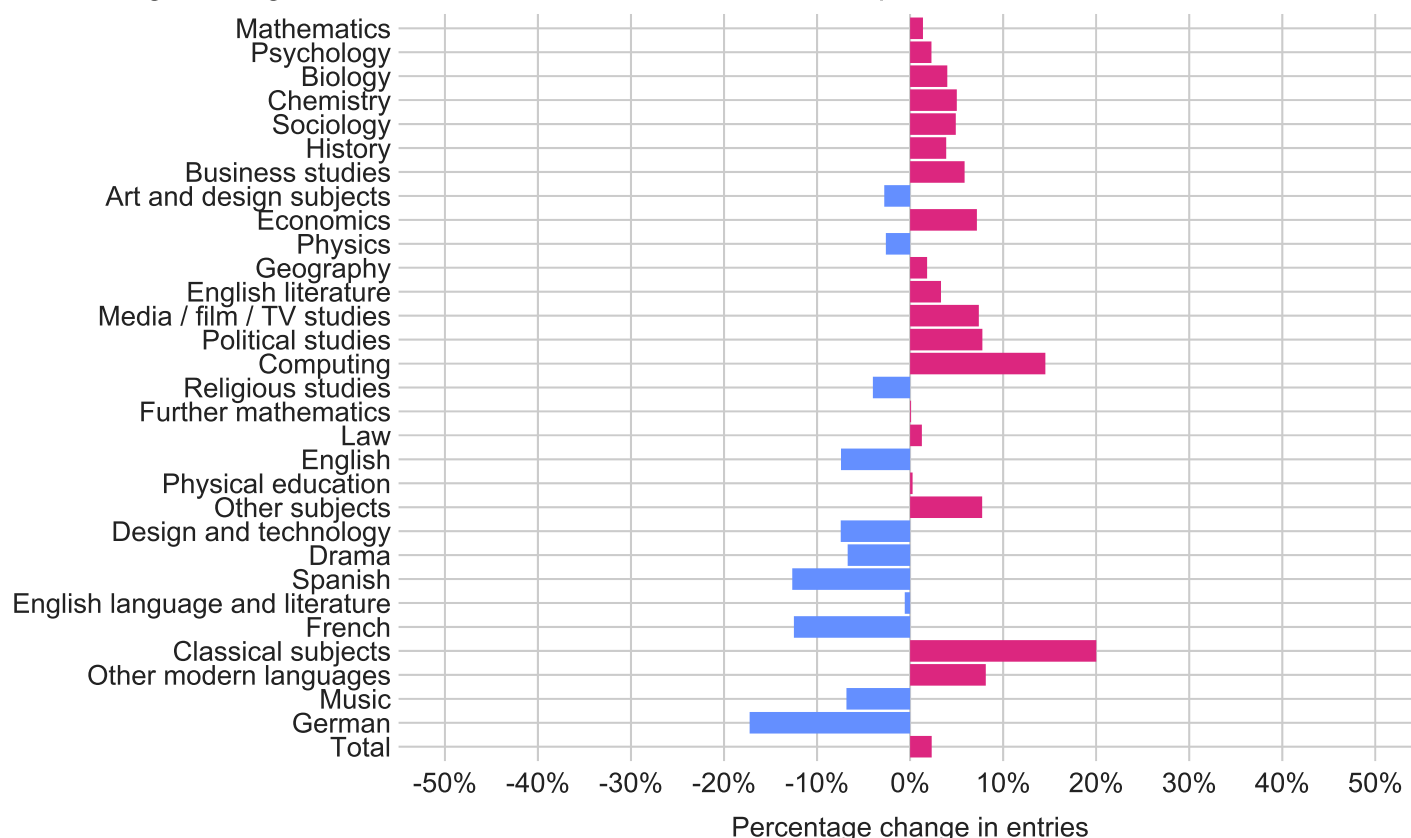


Table 9. Percentage change in A level entries in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022

Subject grouping	Entries in Summer 2022	Entries in Summer 2023	Percentage change in entries
Mathematics	89,605	90,845	1.4%
Psychology	76,265	78,015	2.3%
Biology	66,220	68,870	4.0%
Chemistry	54,865	57,620	5.0%
Sociology	43,590	45,730	4.9%
History	42,885	44,545	3.9%
Business studies	38,980	41,265	5.9%
Art and design subjects	42,100	40,930	-2.8%
Economics	35,760	38,325	7.2%
Physics	36,770	35,815	-2.6%
Geography	34,245	34,870	1.8%
English literature	32,910	34,000	3.3%
Media / film / TV studies	20,050	21,530	7.4%
Political studies	19,145	20,630	7.8%
Computing	15,210	17,420	14.5%
Religious studies	15,520	14,900	-4.0%
Further	14,520	14,535	0.1%

mathematics

Law	13,995	14,170	1.3%
English	14,260	13,200	-7.4%
Physical education	12,000	12,035	0.3%
Other subjects	9,400	10,130	7.7%
Design and technology	9,725	9,000	-7.5%
Drama	8,985	8,385	-6.7%
Spanish	8,640	7,545	-12.7%
English language and literature	6,795	6,755	-0.6%
French	7,440	6,510	-12.5%
Classical subjects	4,875	5,855	20.0%
Other modern languages	5,385	5,825	8.1%
Music	5,305	4,945	-6.8%
German	2,675	2,210	-17.2%
Total	788,125	806,410	2.3%

4.2 Change in A level entries over time

Entries in business studies, psychology, and sociology have increased each year from summer 2019 to summer 2023. Entries remain relatively stable in other high entry subjects.

Please note that according to the JCQ subject classifications, English includes English language, English literature and, English language and literature specifications. Also note, modern foreign languages contains French, German, and Spanish as they have been grouped together to allow any trends in entries to be shown.

Entries have continued to increase for business studies, psychology, and sociology

Entries in selected A level subjects from summer 2019 to summer 2023

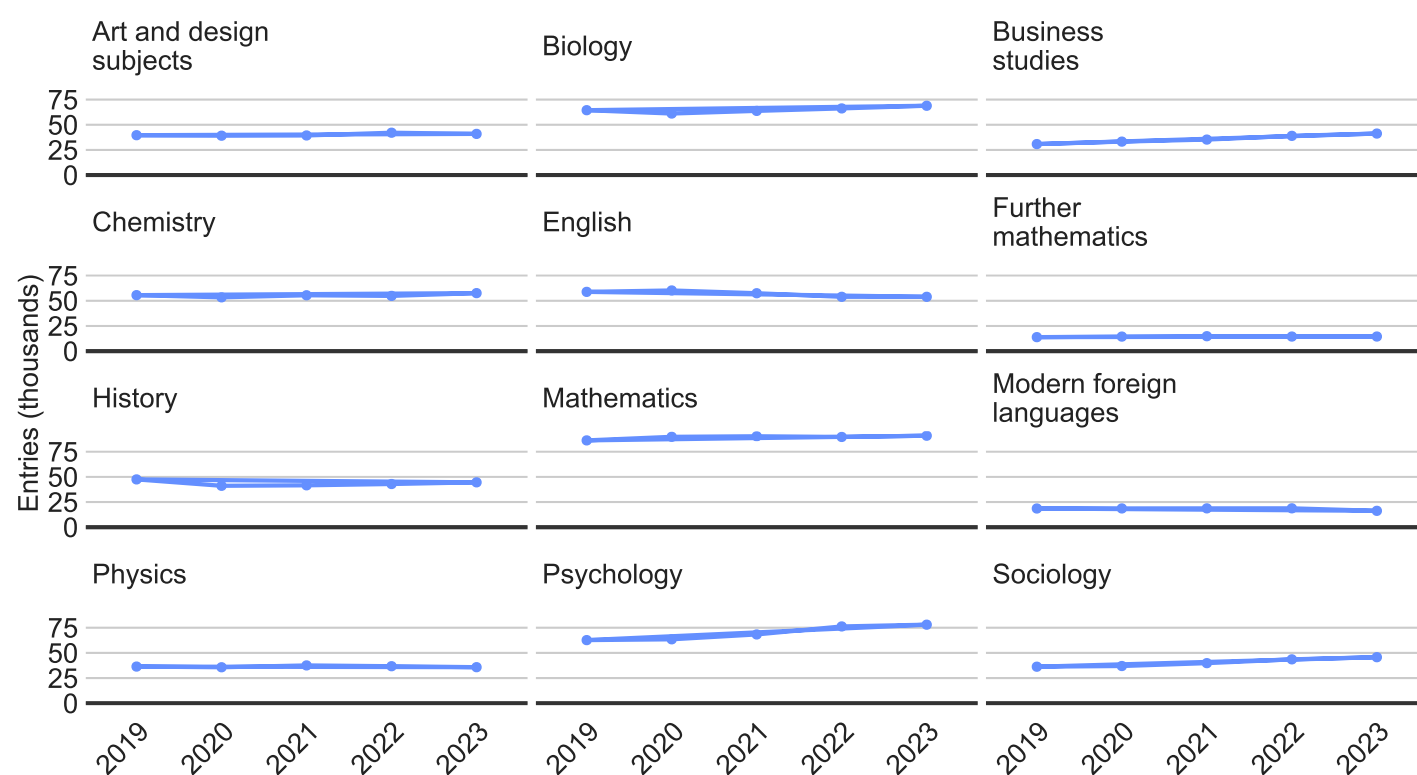


Table 10. Entries in selected A level subjects from summer 2019 to summer 2023

Subject	Summer 2019	Summer 2020	Summer 2021	Summer 2022	Summer 2023
Art and design subjects	39,635	39,145	39,370	42,100	40,930
Biology	64,460	61,130	63,765	66,220	68,870
Business studies	30,820	33,260	35,285	38,980	41,265
Chemistry	55,615	53,435	55,485	54,865	57,620
English	58,870	60,275	57,515	53,965	53,960
Further mathematics	13,920	14,475	14,850	14,520	14,535
History	47,455	41,120	41,585	42,885	44,545
Mathematics	86,185	89,730	90,290	89,605	90,845
Modern foreign languages	18,585	18,645	18,715	18,750	16,265
Physics	36,420	35,740	37,560	36,770	35,815
Psychology	62,685	63,490	68,315	76,265	78,015
Sociology	36,295	36,965	39,825	43,590	45,730

4.3 AS entries

AS entries in most subjects have decreased in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022. There is an increase in AS entries compared to summer 2022 in further

mathematics, physics, art and design subjects and English literature. The biggest percentage increase from summer 2022 to summer 2023 is in further mathematics with a 24.7% increase in entries.

Please note that entries in 'other subjects' is the combination of subjects with fewer than 2,000 entries as well as those grouped as 'all other subjects' by JCQ.

Entries increased in many AS subjects

Percentage change in AS entries in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022

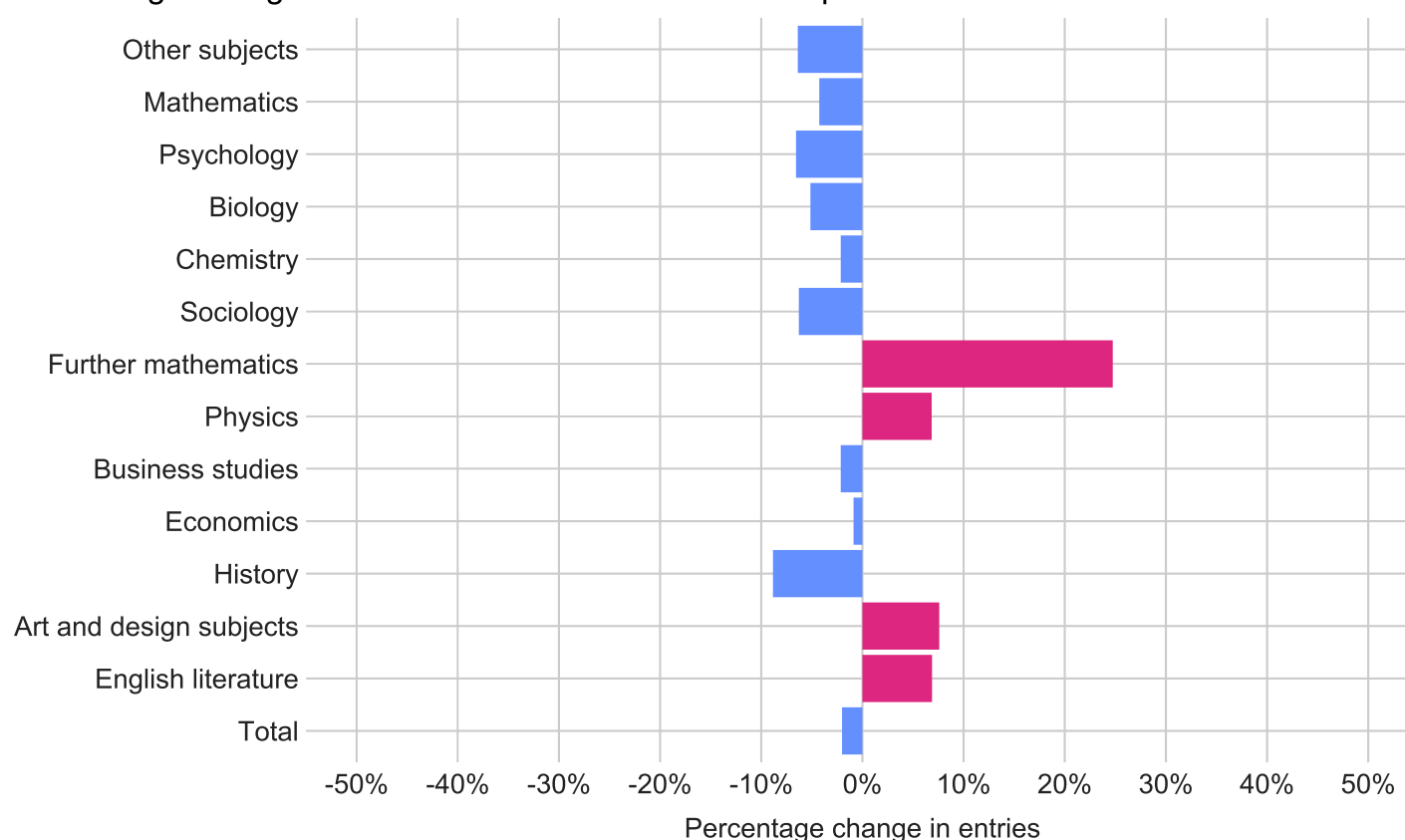


Table 11. Percentage change in AS entries in summer 2023 compared to summer 2022

Subject grouping	Entries in Summer 2022	Entries in Summer 2023	Percentage change in entries
Other subjects	13,270	12,425	-6.4%
Mathematics	8,865	8,485	-4.3%
Psychology	6,735	6,295	-6.6%
Biology	5,835	5,535	-5.1%
Chemistry	4,900	4,795	-2.1%
Sociology	5,105	4,785	-6.3%
Further mathematics	3,730	4,655	24.7%
Physics	3,215	3,435	6.8%
Business studies	3,170	3,105	-2.1%
Economics	2,620	2,595	-0.9%
History	2,670	2,435	-8.8%
Art and design subjects	2,000	2,155	7.6%
English literature	1,960	2,095	6.9%

Total	64,080	62,785	-2.0%
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5. Entries by centre type

For GCSEs, AS and A levels, the majority of entries are from secondary non-selective, maintained centres. Entries from Sixth form and FE centres are much higher, as expected, at AS and A level.

The majority of entries are from secondary non-selective schools

Percentage of total entries by centre type for GCSEs AS and A levels in summer 2023

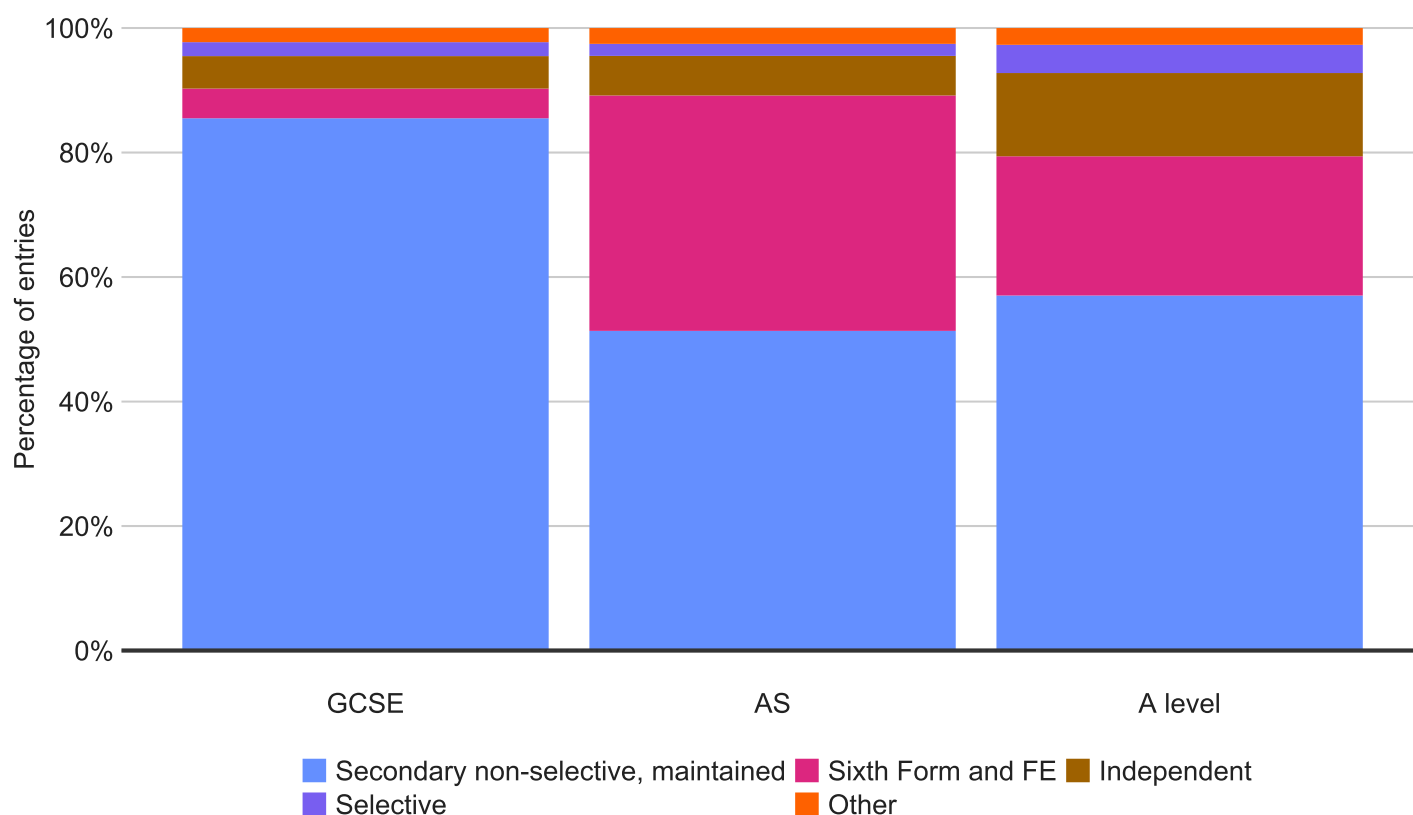


Table 12. Number of entries by centre type for GCSEs, AS and A levels

Centre Type	Number of entries at GCSE	Percentage of total entries at GCSE	Number of entries at AS	Percentage of total entries at AS	Number of entries at A level	Perc entri
Secondary non-selective, maintained	4,740,330	86%	32,245	51%	459,920	
Sixth Form and FE	264,550	5%	23,745	38%	180,375	
Independent	289,115	5%	3,990	6%	107,835	
Selective	124,270	2%	1,215	2%	36,545	
Other	125,580	2%	1,595	3%	21,730	

6. Background information

In this report, Ofqual presents data on the number of provisional entries for GCSEs, AS and A levels in England received by exam boards for the summer 2023 series.

Schools and colleges enter students with exam boards to take qualifications in the summer. The figures for entries can normally change up to the day of the exams. We collect provisional data at the same time every year, at a point when it should be reasonably complete. The figures presented here are the provisional figures as received by exam boards by 20 April 2023, final entry numbers are always expected to vary slightly from these.

In this report, all figures for the number of entries are rounded to the nearest 5.

[Background information](#) accompanying this report includes factors which may have an impact upon the entries in summer 2023, as well as information on data collected for this release and definitions of important terms used in the report.

[Data tables](#) published along with this report give provisional entry data (rounded to the nearest 5) for different subjects broken down by year group for GCSEs, AS and A levels.

7. User feedback

We welcome your feedback on publications. Should you have any comments on this statistical release and how to improve it to meet your needs please contact us at data.analytics@ofqual.gov.uk.

Head of profession: Nadir Zanini

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