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Official Statistics

# Background information for provisional entries for GCSE, AS and A level: summer 2024 exam series

Published 30 May 2024

## Applies to England

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## 1. Purpose

This release provides information on the number of entries for GCSEs, AS and A levels for the summer 2024 exam series. Entries data are collected at the same time every year, at a point when they should be reasonably complete, although final entries are always expected to vary to some degree. These figures are therefore provisional and represent the number of entries submitted by schools and colleges (centres) to exam boards by 18 April 2024.

## 2. Geographical coverage

The report presents data on the number of entries in England for the summer 2024 exam series. Four exam boards offer GCSE, AS and A level qualifications in England:

- AQA Education (AQA)
- Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR)
- Pearson Education Ltd. (Pearson)
- WJEC-CBAC Ltd. (WJEC Eduqas)

## 3. Description

This release provides information on the number of entries broken down by subject and age of students based on school year groups. Centres enter students at qualification level ahead of the summer series according to the course of study that they have followed.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) assigns a code to every qualification according to a category defined by JCQ which groups qualifications in subject groups. JCQ groupings are used in this release to filter and sort the data in the data tables.

## 4. External influences

### 4.1 GCSE

[GCSEs are graded on a 9 to 1 scale](#) (9 denoting the highest grade and 1 denoting the lowest grade). Legacy GCSEs, graded A\* to G, are no longer available in England.

[Combined science is counted as 2 GCSEs in terms of grading](#). It is also counted as 2 GCSEs in [weighting in school accountability measures](#) and is reported on a 17-

point grade scale from 9-9, 9-8, and so on to 1-1. Therefore, entries for combined sciences are double counted in this report and associated data tables to reflect this.

[The English Baccalaureate \(EBacc\)](#) is a school accountability measure relating to attainment in core academic subjects (English literature, English language, mathematics, history or geography, a specified combination of science GCSEs and a language). Schools are measured on the number of students that take GCSEs in these core subjects and on how well their students do.

## 4.2 AS and A level

AS and A level have been decoupled. This means that AS results do not count towards a student's A level grade as they did prior to reform. This is likely to be the reason why AS entries are lower since the introduction of reformed specifications. [Reformed qualifications were introduced in phases with first awards between 2016 and 2020.](#)

It is worth noting that entries for AS and A level in summer 2022 and summer 2023 might be affected by the exceptional nature of GCSE awarding in [summer 2020](#) and [summer 2021](#), as it may have impacted on students' progression decisions.

## 5. Data source

Exam boards submit data to Ofqual for GCSEs, AS and A levels they award for the summer examination series. Any provider that does not return a complete set of data within the collection period is contacted to make sure the data is as complete as possible.

Data has been collected at an appropriate point when entries are reasonably complete, in this case by 18 April 2024. Ofqual agreed these dates with the exam boards at a point when the majority of entries would have been submitted. The data is collected at around the same time each year to aid year-on-year comparisons.

## 6. Limitations

There is potential for error in the information provided by exam boards and Ofqual cannot guarantee that the information received is correct. Ofqual quality assures data as far as possible, performing checks on the data, for example checking for systematic issues and comparing the data over time. Summaries of the data are sent back to exam boards for checking and confirmation. However, it is still possible that some errors may remain undetected.

## 7. 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.

## 8. Revisions

Once published, data on the number of provisional entries as at 18 April 2024 is not usually subject to revision, although subsequent releases may be revised to insert late data or to correct an error. In some cases, data may be amended to reflect any new categorisation of subjects.

## 9. Confidentiality and rounding

To ensure confidentiality of the accompanying data, all figures for the number of entries are rounded. In the accompanying data tables and commentary, the figures are rounded to the nearest 5. If the value is less than 5 (1 to 4), it is represented as 'Fewer than 5' and 0 represents zero values.

Total values of rows or columns are calculated using unrounded figures; the sum of rounded figures may differ from the total reported.

All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number, except where smaller magnitudes are needed for meaningful interpretation. As a result of rounded figures, the percentages (calculated on actual figures) shown in tables may not necessarily

add up to 100.

## 10. Status

These statistics are classified as Official Statistics.

Our statistical practice is regulated by the [Office for Statistics Regulation \(OSR\)](#). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

You are welcome to contact us directly at [data.analytics@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:data.analytics@ofqual.gov.uk) with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk) or via the OSR website.

## 11. Related publications

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 \(SQA\)](#).

## 12. Useful links

- [report and data tables](#) accompanying this release
- [definitions of important terms](#) used in this release
- [policies and procedures that Ofqual follow](#) for production and release of its statistical releases

## 13. 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

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