



Official Statistics

Background information for appeals for GCSE, AS, A level and Project qualifications: 2024 to 2025 academic year

Published 2 April 2026

Applies to England

[Contents](#)

[Provide your feedback](#)

[Purpose](#)

[Scope of the release](#)

[Context](#)

[Data sources](#)

[Data quality and areas of uncertainty](#)

[Methods](#)

[Methodology used in this release](#)

[Appropriate use of the statistics](#)

[Confidentiality and disclosure control](#)

[Related statistics](#)

[Useful links](#)

[Official statistics designation](#)

[Contact details](#)

Provide your feedback

We welcome your feedback on our publications. If you have any comments on this statistical release, or how to improve it to meet your needs, please complete our [short survey](#) or data.analytics@ofqual.gov.uk.

Purpose

This annual statistical release provides information on appeals for GCSE, AS, A level, and Project qualifications during the 2024 to 2025 academic year. The release covers all the opportunities to enter for the qualifications during the academic year: November 2024 and June 2025 for GCSE qualifications; June 2025 for AS and A level qualifications; and November 2024, January 2025 and June 2025 for Project qualifications. It also includes historical data going back to the 2021 to 2022 academic year.

This release does not include appeals rejected by awarding organisations, for example due to the school or college applying on invalid grounds or the application being outside of the permitted time window. Whilst it is possible for staff members to appeal a decision made (for example, appealing a malpractice decision), appeals relating to staff members are also not included in this release.

Scope of the release

Figures provided within this release relate to GCSE, AS, A level and Project qualifications taken by students in schools and colleges in England only. Four awarding organisations offer GCSE, AS, A level and Project qualifications in England:

- AQA Education (AQA)

- Cambridge OCR
- Pearson Education Ltd. (Pearson)
- WJEC-CBAC Ltd. (WJEC/Eduqas)

Three additional awarding organisations offer Project qualifications in England:

- ASDAN
- City & Guilds Limited
- University of the Arts London (UAL)

Context

Submitting an appeal

For all GCSE, AS, A level, and Project qualifications, schools and colleges can submit appeals to the awarding organisation if they are dissatisfied with the result of a review of marking, review of moderation, a malpractice decision, or the outcome of a reasonable adjustment or special consideration request. Appeals are made at the component level and, if related to the same issue, can cover more than one student.

Schools and colleges can submit appeals against the outcomes of reviews of marking and reviews of moderation, if they believe that a marking or moderation (or a review of marking or moderation) error has occurred or that the awarding organisation did not apply its review of marking or review of moderation procedures consistently, properly or fairly.

Schools and colleges can submit appeals regarding an awarding organisation's decisions about malpractice if they believe the awarding organisation did not follow its procedures, the decision was unreasonable given existing evidence, the sanction was disproportionate or if new evidence has come to light.

Schools and colleges can also submit appeals related to reasonable adjustments and special consideration if they believe the awarding organisation did not follow its procedures.

The [GCSE Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements](#) and [AS and A level](#)

[Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements](#) also require awarding organisations to accept appeals requests directly from private candidates.

The appeals process

The [Joint Council for Qualifications \(JCQ\) guide](#) to the awarding bodies' appeals process describes 2 steps for appeals:

1. Preliminary appeal ('stage 1' appeal): a review by a senior awarding organisation member who has not previously been involved with the particular case.
2. Appeal hearing ('stage 2' appeal): applicants and awarding bodies present their respective cases to the panel of 3 or more members, one of whom must be independent of the awarding organisation (meaning they have not been an employee, examiner, committee or board member of the awarding organisation in the previous 5 years). A school or college, or private candidate can request an appeal hearing only after going through a preliminary appeal.

Ofqual's Conditions do not prescribe timescales for appeals. The [Joint Council for Qualifications guidelines](#) set out target timescales for completing appeals. In the 2024 to 2025 academic year, the target timescales for completing a preliminary appeal allowed was 6 weeks (42 calendar days) from the receipt of the application. The target timescale for completing an appeal hearing was 10 weeks (70 calendar days), in addition to the time already spent at the preliminary appeal stage from the receipt of a request for an appeal hearing. In some cases, appeals are not resolved in the target timescale. Sometimes, this occurs to allow a fair appeal hearing with appropriate evidence, or for individuals to be present from both the school or college and the awarding organisation.

The Examination Procedures Review Service

If a school or college, or private candidate, is still dissatisfied with the outcome following an appeal, they can apply to Ofqual's [Examination Procedures Review Service \(EPRS\)](#) within 21 days of receiving the appeal outcome from the awarding organisation. Ofqual reviews each application and looks at whether the awarding organisation has followed the appropriate procedures and used them properly and fairly.

If the awarding organisation has not followed its own procedures or has not secured the outcomes required by Ofqual's regulations, the application to EPRS may be upheld. Awarding organisations must give due regard to the outcome of EPRS hearings, both in respect of results issued to the candidate making the application and, where appropriate, other potentially affected results.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic led to the cancellation of exams in [summer 2020](#) and [summer 2021](#). As a result, the standard post-results services, including reviews of marking, were not available and a different appeals process was in place each year. For further information on appeals arrangements in these years please see the [background notes of previous publications](#). Due to the different appeals process in place in the academic year 2020 to 2021, this year is not included in this release.

This report presents comparisons with data from the 2021 to 2022, 2022 to 2023 and 2023 to 2024 academic years. [Summer 2022](#) saw the return of exams, [with a package of support in place for students](#). The approach to grading led to overall results in 2022 being midway between results in 2021 and 2019. In the 2021 to 2022 academic year, the [standard post result services](#) were available for all exam series for the first time since the 2018 to 2019 academic year. In the [2022 to 2023](#) academic year, assessment arrangements largely returned to normal and results in summer 2023 were broadly similar to summer 2019, reflecting a return to pre-pandemic grading. Please note that whilst the same appeals process was in place between these years, comparisons should be treated with caution due to the differences in the [grading standard applied in summer 2022 as well as the additional autumn 2021 exam series](#).

Data sources

All data used within this release was supplied to Ofqual by the awarding organisations that offer GCSE, AS, A level and Project qualifications in England. Note that UAL offered, and submitted data for, Project qualifications for the first time in summer 2023. Data was prepared and submitted in line with our [Appeals: guide to the data submission process](#).

For the appeals data presented in this release, the data cutoff date for the summer 2025 series was 16 February 2026. The data cutoff date for the November 2024 GCSE and Project series and the January 2025 Project series was 22 July 2025. Cutoff dates in earlier years were set around the same time of year.

The figures included in this release are correct as of the above date, however, note that some appeal investigations may still be ongoing at the time data was collected. In 2024 to 2025, there were 15 appeals which were still ongoing at the time of the data cutoff date. Ongoing appeals are included in figures relating to the number of appeals received and grades challenged but they are not included in figures relating to the number appeals completed, the time taken to complete an appeal or mark or grade changes following an appeal.

The number of students with results issued and the number of results issued each year for GCSE, AS and A level in the release, comes from the [awarding data submitted by the exam boards](#) to Ofqual that contains information on final grades awarded to students in England. The reported number includes students who received passing grades, Unclassified (U) as well as outcomes representing the absence of a result (Q, X) as these may still have had an appeal and, if appealed, that grade is counted as a grade challenged in this release.

This approach is different to some other releases such as the reviews of marking and moderation statistics as well as the summer qualification results in England statistics. In those releases outcomes representing the absence of a result (Q, X) are not included. Additionally, these other statistical releases use provisional awarding data rather than final awarding data (as the final awarding data is not available). These reasons, along with the fact that this release includes all exam series included in the academic year (not just the summer series) means that the number of students with results issued and the number of results issued reported in this release may differ to those reported elsewhere.

The awarding data had cutoff dates of 11 March 2026 for summer 2025 and 15 September 2025 for November 2024 and January 2025. Note that this data was only available from summer 2023 and therefore data on the number of students with results issued is only provided for the 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025 academic years.

Prior to the summer 2023 exam series, data on the number of results awarded each year for GCSE, AS and A level was provided by JCQ, on behalf of the regulated awarding organisations offering GCSE, AS, and A level. This means that this data for the 2022 to 2023 academic year comes from a combination of both data sources (exam board awarding data for summer 2023 and JCQ data for November 2022).

For Project qualifications, data on the number of certificates issued comes from the [vocational quarterly data submitted by the awarding organisations](#) to Ofqual each quarter. The number of certificates issued for Project qualifications only includes students who were awarded a certificating grade, and does not include unclassified or not awarded results.

Once published, figures within this release are not usually subject to revision, unless an error is discovered, which would be dealt with according to our [corrections and revisions policy for official statistics](#).

Data quality and areas of uncertainty

Data quality

There may be errors in the data we receive from awarding organisations and as such Ofqual cannot guarantee that the information received is correct. Nevertheless, we do take appropriate steps to assess accuracy prior to publication.

The way we work with our data suppliers to promote data quality at source is described in our [statement on administrative data sources](#). We also carry out our own quality assurance procedures as explained in our [quality framework for statistical publications](#), to check 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.

Appeals associated with a grade change

Whilst the release reports the number of preliminary appeals and appeal hearings associated with a grade change, it does not necessarily mean the same number of appeals directly resulted in a grade change. This is because a student may appeal multiple components for the same qualification grade, several of which might be upheld and affect the grade in different ways. Also, an appeal may be upheld at both the preliminary appeal and the appeal hearing stage. In addition an appeal may be upheld for multiple grounds for appeal, again affecting the grade in different ways.

For these reasons, it isn't necessarily clear from the data which upheld appeal directly led to the grade changing, meaning that while all these appeals are associated with a grade change, they might not necessarily have all directly caused that grade to change. Whilst the release reports the number of preliminary appeals and appeal hearings associated with a grade change, it does not necessarily mean the same number of appeals directly resulted in a grade change.

Methods

Changes to methodology

Only full-course GCSEs are included in the number of appeals figures, number of students reported, and number of results issued, in addition to AS and A levels. In previous releases of these statistics, short-course GCSEs were also included but these have now been removed. This has meant that some historical figures may have changed to a small degree (for the years covered by this release only a decrease of fewer than 5 appeals received in 2021 to 2022 has occurred) compared with previous releases.

Methodology used in this release

Throughout this release, figures are provided for the number of appeals, be this either the number received, upheld, associated with a grade change or completed in the target time. To calculate the number of appeals, the number of distinct case reference numbers are counted, per exam series, school or college and awarding organisation, for the count of interest. Note that appeals are made at the component level and, if related to the same issue, can cover more than one student.

An appeal about a student's grade can be made on multiple grounds. Appeals made on multiple grounds for the same component are reported under the same case reference number and therefore are generally counted as 1 appeal received. The exception to this is where we break down the number of appeals by ground for appeal, where each ground for appeal is counted separately. Therefore, that the total number of appeals in the grounds for appeal section will not match the total number

of appeals reported elsewhere in the release.

Because a single appeal may cover more than 1 qualification grade challenged and an upheld appeal may result in a change to all, some, or none of the associated qualification grades, the release also presents data on the number of qualification grades challenged and changed at appeal. The number of qualification grades challenged is calculated by counting the number of distinct students, pre- and post-appeal qualification grades and specification codes, per exam series and awarding organisation.

Similarly, the number of qualification grades changed is calculated in the same way as grades challenged, but only includes instances where the appeal was upheld, both the pre- and post-appeal qualification grades are known and where the pre-appeal qualification grade is different to the post-appeal qualification grade.

The release also reports on the number of qualification grades not changed at appeal. It is important to note that these figures only refer to instances where an appeal was upheld but the grade was not changed. For example, this may occur when a mark changes but the overall qualification grade remains the same. These figures do not include grades which were not changed because the appeal was not upheld.

Throughout the release, figures relating to the number of grades changed or unchanged does not include the small number of cases (20 in 2024 to 2025) where either the pre- or post-appeal qualification grade is unknown or yet to be determined (for example, in cases where a preliminary appeal was upheld, the appeal progressed to an appeal hearing and the final qualification grade is awaiting the result of the appeal hearing).

In all figures counting the number of grades challenged or changed, except the figures referring to the original grades challenged (reported in the pre-appeal grades challenged section of the release and table 7 of the data tables), where combined science grades have been double counted to account for the fact that it is the size of 2 GCSEs. This means that if a student appealed a 4-4 grade and it was changed to a 5-4, this would be reported as 2 grades challenged (4 and 4), 1 grade changed (4 to 5) and 1 grade not changed (4 to 4).

Some GCSE qualifications are tiered and the [tier of entry determines the possible range of grades](#) (foundation papers are graded 1 to 5 and higher tier papers are graded 4 to 9 with a narrow grade 3 available as a safety net). This means that, when presenting the size of qualification of grade changes in the release, a change from, for example, U to 4 in a higher tier paper is only a grade change of 2 grades (not 4

grades as it would be in the foundation/un-tiered paper) as the grades 1 and 2 aren't available.

Similar to calculating grade changes, the release also presents information on the number and size of raw mark changes. These changes are at component level and are calculated by looking at the difference between the pre- and post- appeal raw mark for upheld appeals. As with grade changes, it does not include the small number of cases (fewer than 5 in 2024 to 2025) where either the pre- or post- appeal raw mark is unknown.

Appropriate use of the statistics

As mentioned in the methods section above, the number of appeals and the number of grades are two different measures and there is not a one-to-one relationship between grades and appeals. Some appeals might cover multiple grades, for example more than one student's grade may be included in a single appeal when appealing in a review of moderation decision. On the other hand, appeals are at component level so one grade might cover multiple appeals, for example if a student appealed 3 components in the same qualification 3 distinct appeals would be counted for one grade. This means that a change in the number of appeals received should not be overinterpreted and an increase or decrease in appeals received may not be reflected in the number of grades challenged or changed.

Whilst the number of certificates for Project qualifications is provided for context, direct comparisons of the number of certificates with the number of Project qualification grades challenged and changed should be avoided. In particular,, it is recommended to avoid calculating the proportion or percentage of certificates challenged or changed. This would not be appropriate as certificates do not include unclassified (U) or not awarded results (X and Q; for example, if a student was absent), which could still be appealed.

Confidentiality and disclosure control

To ensure confidentiality and clarity of the accompanying data, all figures are rounded, as per our [rounding policy for statistical publications](#).

Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5. If the value is less than 5 (1 to 4), it is represented as 'Fewer than 5'. True zero is denoted as '0'. This applies to reports as well as accompanying data tables.

In some instances, where individual rounded values have been presented in a table along with their sum total, this total may be slightly different to the sum of the individual rounded values. This is because the total has been calculated using the original unrounded values.

We also use unrounded values to derive percentages. Percentages are rounded to one decimal place. Due to this rounding, percentages may not always add to up exactly 100%.

Related statistics

Related statistical releases and publications:

Appeals can be made against the result of a malpractice decision. The [Malpractice for GCSE and A level](#) statistical release published by Ofqual provides an analysis of the malpractice cases and sanctions for GCSE, AS and A level.

Appeals can be made to contest the result of a review of marking or review of moderation decision. The [Reviews of marking and moderation](#) statistical release published by Ofqual reports on the number of reviews of marking and moderation for GCSE, AS and A level.

Appeals can be made to contest the decision made against a special consideration or reasonable adjustment request. The [Special consideration in GCSE, AS and A level](#) statistical release published by Ofqual reports on the number of adjustments to the marks or grades of students who have not been able to demonstrate attainment because of exceptional circumstances for GCSE, AS and A level. The [Access arrangements for GCSE, AS and A level](#) statistical release published by Ofqual reports on the number of pre-agreed reasonable adjustments or special considerations in the form of approved access arrangements and the number of requests granted for modified papers for GCSE, AS and A level.

See [Statistics at Ofqual](#) for links to our other statistical releases and interactive visualisations.

For appeals statistics relating to Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland, see:

- [Qualifications Wales](#)
- [CCEA](#)
- [SQA](#)

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.

[Make a freedom of information \(FOI\) request](#) to access official information.

Official statistics designation

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 with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing regulation@statistics.gov.uk or via the [OSR website](#).

Contact details

Email: data.analytics@ofqual.gov.uk

[↑ Back to top](#)

Help us improve GOV.UK

To help us improve GOV.UK, we'd like to know more about your visit today. [Please fill in this survey \(opens in a new tab\)](#).



Services and information

[Benefits](#)

[Births, death, marriages and care](#)

[Business and self-employed](#)

[Childcare and parenting](#)

[Citizenship and living in the UK](#)

[Crime, justice and the law](#)

[Disabled people](#)

[Driving and transport](#)

[Education and learning](#)

[Employing people](#)

[Environment and countryside](#)

[Housing and local services](#)

Government activity

[Departments](#)

[News](#)

[Guidance and regulation](#)

[Research and statistics](#)

[Policy papers and consultations](#)

[Transparency](#)

[How government works](#)

[Get involved](#)

[Money and tax](#)

[Passports, travel and living abroad](#)

[Visas and immigration](#)

[Working, jobs and pensions](#)

[Help](#) [Privacy](#) [Cookies](#) [Accessibility statement](#) [Contact](#)

[Terms and conditions](#) [Rhestr o Wasanaethau Cymraeg](#)

[Government Digital Service](#)

OGI

All content is available under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#), except where otherwise stated



[© Crown copyright](#)