



Entries, late entries and awards for GCSE, AS and A level

Background information accompanying the statistical release:

Entries, late entries and awards for GCSE, AS and A level 2018/19

(Northern Ireland)

Reporting Period: 2018/19 academic year

Publication Date: 21st November 2019

Information about the statistics

Purpose

In this release, CCEA Regulation presents data on entries and late entries for GCSE, AS and A level examinations taken during the 2018/19 academic year.

Geographical coverage

This report presents data on entries, late entries and certifications for GCSEs, AS and A levels in Northern Ireland.

Reports published in previous years by Ofqual also included entry data for England and Wales. Historical figures in this report reflect Northern Ireland only data and may therefore differ from previously published figures.

Description

Five awarding organisations offer GCSE and AS/A level qualifications in Northern Ireland

- AQA Education (AQA)
- Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)
- Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR)
- Pearson Education Ltd. (Pearson)
- WJEC-CBAC Ltd. (WJEC)

These five awarding organisations are members of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), which issues regulations, instructions and guidance on examination conduct and administration, including the appeals process.

Schools and colleges (centres entering candidates for examinations and assessments) are responsible for submitting entries to awarding organisations for GCSEs and A levels on behalf of a candidate. A separate entry is made for each unit or component that makes up a qualification¹. An entry, therefore, is counted as a candidate being put forward for an individual assessment, whereas certifications refer to the overall qualification.

A small number of reformed linear GCSEs and A levels were taken in Northern Ireland. Entries for these qualifications are at qualification level rather than unit/component level.

¹ For linear specifications, a unit are referred to as a component.

GCSEs and A levels have undergone major reform in England. Reformed A levels in England are different from the legacy qualifications (and the current CCEA qualifications) in that the results of the AS qualification do not count towards a candidate's final A level grade. As such, there is no requirement for a candidate to be entered the AS units in a given subject, even if they intend to study the full A level. In 2016, reformed AS and A level qualifications started to be phased in, in England.

The governments of Wales and Northern Ireland have retained the unitised structure of GCSEs, so schools and colleges in Wales and Northern Ireland still enter candidates for examinations in the January examination series in some subjects.

Data source

On behalf of CCEA Regulation, Ofqual collects entries data from the five Awarding Organisations, referenced in this publication, that offer GCSEs, AS and A levels in Northern Ireland.

Awarding Organisations submit entries data to Ofqual for GCSEs, AS and A levels as well as entries and late entries in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, other UK regions and overseas.

Awarding organisations submit entries data to Ofqual for each examination series in the academic year. For this release, entry data has been collected from all awarding organisations referenced in this publication.

Data were collected for AS and A level separately for the first time in 2016. Therefore, in this publication pre-2016 data are reported as a combined figure for AS and A level. From 2016 onwards where data are available, AS and A level figures are reported separately within tables.

Limitations

There is potential for error in the information provided by awarding organisations. CCEA Regulation compares the data over time and checks for systematic issues with the data. Summary data are returned to awarding organisations for checking and confirmation.

Revisions

Once published, data are not usually subject to revision, although subsequent releases may be revised to insert late data or to correct an identified error.

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. Ofqual continuously manages this process by:

- ensuring that data providers are clear about what is required of them – a process helped by ensuring that providers are fully consulted during the initial design phase and for any subsequent change
- reminding all providers (if appropriate) that, as a condition of them being regulated, all data must be completely accurate
- being alert to unexpected changes in the data submitted by comparing individual returns over time from the same provider
- actively challenging any unexpected results with the data providers, and
- having a proportionate data-auditing framework in place, allowing for auditing of providers' information collection, collation and delivery processes as necessary

The publication may be deferred if the statistics are not considered fit for purpose.

Confidentiality and rounding

To ensure confidentiality of the published accompanying data, figures have been rounded to the nearest 5. If the value is less than 3, it is represented as 0~ and 0 represents zero entries.

Status

These statistics are classified as Official Statistics.

Related publications

This release is part of an annual series. The previous release can be found [here](#). Releases before 2017/18 were published by Ofqual and are [available here](#).

Glossary

Definitions of important terms used in this release are [available here](#).

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 regulation@ccea.org.uk

We wish to make our publications widely accessible. Please contact us at ccearegulation@ccea.org.uk if you have any specific accessibility requirements.

This publication is available at ccea.org.uk/regulation/statistics

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