

GCSE entries and results 2014

Overview

- Geography maintained its place as the 8th most popular subject in 2014.
- The increase in entries was 2297 to 225149
- Geography had the 5th highest percentage increase (1.03%) of the large entry (over 100 000) subjects. Overall entries for all subjects decreased by 4.2% (largely because of changes to accountability measures – see below)
- A* grades were down 0.3% to 9.2% (9.5% -2013) but this still compares favourably with the national average of 6.7% for all subjects.
- A grades were down 0.2% to 17.3% (17.5% -2013).
- A*-C grades stayed the same at 69.0%. The national average for all subjects is now 68.8% an increase of 0.7%.
- The gender imbalance for geography stayed much the same at 54:46 (M:F). The national pattern is that 51% of all entries are from girls.
- 6800 (3% of the total geography entry) were students aged 15 and under. This was a decrease of 4305 (38.8%) which is in line with the overall decrease nationally. This is attributed to the change in accountability measures (see below)
- Younger students' performance was worse with 6.7% achieving an A* grade (5.9% in 2013) and 64.5% A*-C grades (59.3% in 2013) The differentials were however substantially smaller than 2013 (2.5% at A* and 4.5% at A*-C) thus reducing the negative impact of early entry.

The JCQ news release stated:

Changes to the system lead to significant change in entry patterns

Summary of headline results

There was a marginal decrease in the proportion of A grades awarded in 2014, declining 0.1 percentage points to 6.7 per cent. Grades A*-A remained unchanged at 21.3 per cent and there was a rise of 0.7 percentage points awarded A*-C (to 68.8 per cent).*

The results follow a series of changes to the system. In England:

- *GCSEs are now taken in a linear fashion;*
- *a change in the accountability measure means that a candidate's first result counts in school performance tables.*

These changes are expected to cause increased volatility in the results of some schools and colleges, especially those that made the greatest use of the winter examination series in previous years. To explain the changes and how they could affect centres, JCQCIC and the awarding bodies have written an open letter to stakeholders. The letter can be found here: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/media-centre/news-releases/JCQ-CIC-open-letter-to-stakeholders-regarding-changes-to-GCSE-results>.

- Although there was a drop of 2.1 per cent in the number of 16 year olds in the UK (compared to 2013) the number of GCSE entries declined further, by 4.2 per cent to just over 5.2 million. This drop is mainly attributable to a significant fall in the number of 15 year old GCSE entries – down 39.3 per cent to 489,190.
- The number of entries from 16 year olds is up 1.2 per cent to just under 4.5 million.
- The new accountability measure, where a candidate’s first entry counts, and the move to linear are also major contributing factors to these changes in entry patterns.

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/media-centre/news-releases/gcse-press-notice>

Results for Geography 2013 (UK – England, Northern Ireland and Wales)

Table 1: Percentages of Subject Results by Grade and Gender

Gender	Year	Total Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C	Change	% Change
Boys	2014	121580	7	15	20	23.2	16.8	9.4	5.1	2.5	1	65.2	1693	1.4
Boys	2013	119887	7	15.4	19.5	23	17.1	9.6	4.9	2.5	1	64.9	16106	15.5
Boys	2012	103781	7	16.5	19.9	22.3	17.1	9.1	4.8	2.3	1	65.7		
Girls	2014	103569	11.9	19.9	21.5	20.2	12.9	7.3	3.9	1.8	0.6	73.5	604	0.6
Girls	2013	102965	12.4	20	21.3	20.2	13.1	6.9	3.7	1.8	0.6	73.9	19724	23.7
Girls	2012	83241	12.8	21.5	21.2	19.5	12.5	6.5	3.6	1.7	0.7	75		
All	2014	225149	9.2	17.3	20.7	21.8	15	8.5	4.5	2.2	0.8	69	2297	1.0
All	2013	222852	9.5	17.5	20.4	21.6	15.3	8.4	4.3	2.2	0.8	69.0	35830	19.2
All	2012	187022	9.6	18.7	20.4	21.2	15.0	8.0	4.2	2.0	0.9	69.9		

Source Joint Council for Qualifications Provisional GCSE (Full Course) Results – June 2014 (all UK candidates)

Overall the rise in entries for geography in 2014 was more limited than the previous year. There was an overall increase of 2297 (1.0%) entries for Geography with the gender distribution little altered. There was a slightly larger increase for boys of 1693 (1.4% increase) than girls, 604 (0.6% increase).

Girls continued to outperform boys at the higher grades. There was 4.9% (5.4% in 2013) difference at A* grade, 9.8% (10%-2013) difference at A*-A grades and 8.3% (9% in 2013) at A*-C. Overall therefore this was little different from previous years.

Popularity of geography at GCSE: Top 10 subjects

Table 2a: Top 10 GCSE subjects in 2014

Ranking	Subject	% of total	Number of candidates
1 (1)	Mathematics	14.11	736403
2 (2)	English	9.88	515575
3 (3)	English Literature	9.17	478575
4 (4)	Science	7.19	374961
5 (5)	Additional Science	6.21	323944
6 (6)	Religious Studies	5.41	282099
7 (7)	History	4.91	256179
8 (8)	Geography	4.32	225149
9 (9)	Design & Technology	4.09	213629
10 (10)	Art and Design subjects	3.67	191398

(2013 ranking in brackets.)

Table 2b Top GCSE full subject increases (entry greater than 100,000)

Ranking	Subject	% change	2013 Number of candidates	2014 Number of candidates
1	Additional Science	14.31	283391	323944
2 (9)	Physical Education	7.70	104895	112971
3 (5)	Religious Studies	6.86	263988	282099
4 (10)	Art and Design subjects	4.54	183090	191398
5 (1)	Geography	1.03	222852	225149
6 (33)	English Literature	0.75	475031	478575

(2013 ranking in brackets. Subjects having a year-on-year decrease in 2013 are shown as blank.)

Source JCQ: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/media-centre/news-releases/entry-trends-gender-and-regional-charts-gcse-2014>

Geography remained the 8th most popular subject at GCSE

History had a decrease in entries of 4057 to 256179 and remained the 7th most popular subject.

Trends in geography entries over time

For the third year running there was an increase in entries for geography (2297). This has reversed the downward trend from the high of over 300000 entries in 1996. There was a slightly larger increase in entries for boys (1693) (figure 3b) than girls (16106) (figure 3c) but the differences were relatively small so the gender imbalance stayed at 54:46 (M:F).

Performance at the higher grades was lower than 2013. A* grade was down 0.3% to 9.2%; A*/A grade down 0.5% to 26.5%; A*-C grade stayed the same at 69.0% as did A*-G grades at 99.2%.

Table 3a: Entries for geography by all candidates 2005-2013

Year	Total Entry	Change	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C
2005	216756	-10484	9.1	14	17.1	24.3	15.3	9	5.5	3	2.7	64.5
2006	213469	-3287	9.2	14.9	17.4	24.4	15.3	8.7	5	2.7	2.4	65.9
2007	213124	-345	9.9	15.3	17.6	24	15.5	8.4	4.7	2.4	2.2	66.8
2008	203862	-9262	10.4	16.2	18.2	23.4	15.1	8.1	4.4	2.3	1.9	68.2
2009	196018	-7844	10.6	16.5	18.2	23.2	15.4	7.9	4.3	2.1	1.8	68.5
2010	194599	-1419	11.3	16.9	18.3	23.0	16.0	7.5	3.7	1.7	1.6	69.5
2011	180737	-13862	10.4	18.2	20.0	21.5	14.8	7.8	4.2	2.1	1.0	70.1
2012	187022	6285	9.6	18.7	20.4	21.2	15.0	8.0	4.2	2.0	0.9	69.9
2013	222852	35830	9.5	17.5	20.4	21.6	15.3	8.4	4.3	2.2	0.8	69.0
2014	225149	2297	9.2	17.3	20.7	21.8	15	8.5	4.5	2.2	0.8	69.0

Table 3b: Boys entries for geography 2005-2013

Year	Total Entry	change	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C
2005	121892	-5715	7.2	12.6	16.6	25.1	16.3	9.9	6	3.2	3.1	61.5
2006	118849	-3043	7.6	13.4	16.7	25.3	16.5	9.4	5.5	2.9	2.7	63
2007	117811	-1038	8.2	14	17.2	24.6	16.6	9.1	5.1	2.7	2.5	64
2008	113078	-4733	8.7	14.8	17.8	24.2	16.3	8.9	4.7	2.5	2.1	65.5
2009	108211	-4867	8.9	15	17.9	24.1	16.5	8.6	4.7	2.3	2	65.9
2010	107794	-417	9.1	15.1	18.1	24.1	17.6	8.3	4.0	1.9	1.8	66.4
2011	100353	-7441	7.9	16.0	19.4	22.7	16.8	8.8	4.8	2.5	1.1	66.0
2012	103781	3428	7.0	16.5	19.9	22.3	17.1	9.1	4.8	2.3	1.0	65.7
2013	119887	16106	7.0	15.4	19.5	23.0	17.1	9.6	4.9	2.5	1.0	64.9
2014	121580	1693	7	15	20	23.2	16.8	9.4	5.1	2.5	1	65.2

Table 3c: Girls entries for geography 2005-2013

Year	Total Entry	change	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C
2005	94864	-5361	11.5	15.8	17.9	23.2	13.8	8.1	4.8	2.7	2.2	68.4
2006	94620	-244	11.2	16.8	18.2	23.3	13.8	7.9	4.3	2.4	2.1	69.5
2007	95313	693	12	16.9	18	23.3	14.1	7.5	4.2	2.2	1.8	70.2
2008	90784	-4529	12.4	18	18.7	22.3	13.7	7.3	3.8	2.1	1.7	71.4
2009	87807	-2977	12.7	18.3	18.6	22.1	14	7.1	3.9	1.9	1.4	71.7
2010	86805	-1002	14.0	19.0	18.8	21.5	14.1	6.4	3.3	1.5	1.4	73.3
2011	80384	-6421	13.4	21.0	20.8	19.9	12.5	6.5	3.4	1.7	0.8	75.1
2012	83241	2857	12.8	21.5	21.2	19.5	12.5	6.5	3.6	1.7	0.7	75.0
2013	102965	19724	12.4	20.0	21.3	20.2	13.1	6.9	3.7	1.8	0.6	73.9
2014	103569	604	11.9	19.9	21.5	20.2	12.9	7.3	3.9	1.8	0.6	73.5

Performance by gender

Girls continued to outperform boys at the higher grades although the gender differential in performance was variable at different grades. There was a gender differential of 4.9% in favour of girls at A*; 12.0% at A*/A; 8.3% at A*-C and 0.0% at A*-G

Table 4: Gender differentials in performance by cumulative grade for geography 2014 (UK)

Grade	Girls	Change from 2013	Boys	Change from 2013	Differential Girls: Boys	Change from 2013
A*	11.9%	-0.5%	7.0%	0%	4.9%	-0.5%
A* / A	31.8%	-0.6%	19.8%	-2.6%	12.0%	2.0%
A* - C	73.5%	-0.4%	65.2%	0.3%	8.3%	-0.7%
A* - G	99.4%	+0.1%	99.0%	0%	0.4%	0.0%
Total Entries	11105	+2643 (31.2%)	208447	+33128 (18.9%)	3300	

Entries by age

This was the second year that entries have been analysed by age. Three categories were reported – Aged 15 and under; Aged 16; Aged 17 and over. A summary of performance at different grades is given in table 5. Full performance tables are shown in figures 6a, 6b and 6c.

The largest percentage loss in entries was for students aged 15 and under where entries decreased by 38.0% to 6800 so this is now only 3.0% of the total entry for geography. Performance by these students was lower than for those aged 16 (Table 5) but the differentials closed considerably suggesting that entries were being targeted better and the penalties for early entry for this selected cohort was limited. Again there were gender differentials in performance.

Table 5: Entries by age for geography 2014 (UK)

Grade	Age 15 and under	Change from 2013	Age 16	Change from 2013	Age 17 and over	Change from 2013
Entries	6800	-4305 (-38.0%)	214815	+6368 (+3.1%)	3534	+151 (8.1%)
A*	6.7%	+0.8%	9.4%	-0.3%	7.2%	-0.2%
A* / A	20.5%	+1.7%	26.7%	-0.8%	24.9%	-0.1%
A* - C	65.1%	+5.8%	69.2%	-0.4%	66.2%	-1.4%
A* - G	98.7%	0.1%	99.2%	0%	98.8%	+0.2%

Table 6a Entries for geography by students aged 15 and under: 2012-14 (UK)

Gender	Year	Total Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C	Change	% Change
Boys	2014	3644	5	11.7	18.6	24.2	18.6	11.2	5.6	3.4	1.7	59.5	-2231	-38.0
Boys	2013	5875	4.5	10.8	15.6	24.2	20.2	12.9	6.5	3.6	1.7	55.1	1289	28.1
Boys	2012	4586	3.6	11.8	16	22.5	20.8	11.9	8	3.7	1.7	53.9		
Girls	2014	3156	8.6	16.3	22.8	22.5	14.5	8.1	4.2	2.2	0.8	70.2	-2074	-39.7
Girls	2013	5230	7.5	15.3	18.6	22.6	16.9	9.2	5.8	3	1.1	64	1354	34.9
Girls	2012	3876	7.3	16.7	19.9	21.2	16.2	8.9	5.8	2.9	1.1	65.1		
All	2014	6800	6.7	13.8	20.5	23.5	16.7	9.7	5	2.8	1.3	64.5	-4305	-38.8
All	2013	11105	5.9	12.9	17.1	23.4	18.6	11.2	6.1	3.4	1.4	59.3	2643	31.2
All	2012	8462	5.3	14	17.8	21.9	18.7	10.6	6.9	3.4	1.4	59		

Table 6b Entries for geography by students aged 16: 2012-14 (UK)

Gender	Year	Total Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C	Change	% Change
Boys	2014	115910	7.1	15.1	20.1	23.1	16.7	9.4	5.1	2.5	0.9	65.4	3773	3.4
Boys	2013	112137	7.2	15.6	19.8	22.9	16.9	9.4	4.8	2.4	1	65.5	14802	15.2
Boys	2012	97335	7.2	16.8	19.9	22.4	16.9	9	4.6	2.2	1	66.3		
Girls	2014	98905	12	20.1	21.4	20.1	12.9	7.2	3.9	1.8	0.6	73.6	2595	2.7
Girls	2013	96310	12.7	20.3	21.3	20.1	12.9	6.8	3.6	1.7	0.6	74.4	18326	23.5
Girls	2012	77984	13.1	21.7	21.2	19.5	12.4	6.4	3.4	1.7	0.6	75.5		
All	2014	214815	9.4	17.3	20.8	21.7	14.9	8.5	4.4	2.2	0.8	69.2	6368	3.1
All	2013	208447	9.7	17.8	20.5	21.6	15.1	8.2	4.2	2.1	0.8	69.6	33128	18.9
All	2012	175319	9.8	19	20.5	21.1	14.9	7.8	4.1	2	0.8	70.4		

Table 6c Entries for geography by students aged 17 and over: 2012-14 (UK)

Gender	Year	Total Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C	Change	% Change
Boys	2014	2026	4.9	15.6	19.2	22.2	17.5	10.3	5.8	3.1	1.4	61.9	151	8.1
Boys	2013	1875	5	14.3	20.2	21.7	17.9	10.4	5.5	3.7	1.3	61.2	15	0.8
Boys	2012	1860	5.9	15.7	21.2	23.1	16	8.8	5.3	2.7	1.3	65.9		
Girls	2014	1508	10.1	20.7	21.3	19.8	12.8	7.1	4.2	3.2	0.8	71.9	83	5.8
Girls	2013	1425	10.5	22	22.9	20.5	11.1	6.1	4	1.5	1.4	75.9	44	3.2
Girls	2012	1381	11.7	23.5	20.6	17.6	11.2	7.4	3.8	2.4	1.8	73.4		
All	2014	3534	7.2	17.7	20.1	21.2	15.4	9	5.1	3.1	1.2	66.2	234	7.1
All	2013	3300	7.4	17.6	21.4	21.2	14.9	8.6	4.8	2.7	1.4	67.6	59	1.8
All	2012	3241	8.4	19	20.9	20.8	14	8.2	4.6	2.6	1.5	69.1		

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/media-centre/news-releases/gcse-full-course-results-by-age-group-2014>

Entries by Country

England as the largest country dominates the overall patterns of entries (table 7). England was the only country to experience an increase in entries (1.6%), compared with a loss of 4.5% in Northern Ireland and 7.8% in Wales. This may continue to reflect the pressure on schools in England to teach geography as part of the English Baccalaureate which is reported in the school performance tables.

Performance varies between countries with Northern Ireland having fewer A* grades but more students obtaining A*/A grades and A*-C grades (78.8% compared with 68.8% (England) and 67.4% (Wales)). The much smaller entries for Northern Ireland and Wales mean that annual fluctuations are likely to be much larger than for England.

Differential gender performance is much the same between the three countries with girls outperforming boys by similar amounts as shown in the detailed tables 8a,8b and 8c.

Table 7: Entries by age for geography 2014 (UK)

Grade	England	Change from 2013	Northern Ireland	Change from 2013	Wales	Change from 2013	UK	Change from 2013
Entries	207857	+3360 (1.6%)	6807	-323 (-4.5%)	10485	-510 (-7.8%)	225149	+2297 (1.0%)
A*	9.3%	-0.3%	8.4%	+0.3%	7.9%	-0.8%	9.2%	-0.3%
A* / A	26.5%	-0.6%	32.5%	+1.5%	24.0%	+0.3%	26.5%	-0.5%
A* - C	68.8%	-0.1%	78.8%	+0.6%	67.4%	+0.9%	69.0%	0.0%
A* - G	99.2%	0%	99.6%	+0.1%	99.3%	+0.3%	99.2%	+0.0%

Table 8a: Entries for geography 2012-4 England

Gender	Year	Total Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C	Change	% Change
Boys	2014	111796	7.1	14.9	19.9	23	16.9	9.5	5.1	2.6	1	64.9	2302	2.1
Boys	2013	109494	7	15.5	19.5	22.7	17.1	9.6	5.1	2.5	1	64.7	15644	16.7
Boys	2012	93850	7.1	16.6	19.8	22.1	17	9.2	4.9	2.3	1	65.6		
Girls	2014	96061	11.9	19.7	21.4	20.2	13	7.4	3.9	1.9	0.6	73.2	1058	1.1
Girls	2013	95003	12.4	19.9	21.1	20.2	13.1	7.1	3.8	1.8	0.6	73.6	18885	24.8
Girls	2012	76118	12.9	21.4	21.1	19.4	12.6	6.5	3.6	1.8	0.7	74.8		
All	2014	207857	9.3	17.2	20.5	21.8	15	8.6	4.5	2.3	0.8	68.8	3360	1.6
All	2013	204497	9.6	17.5	20.2	21.6	15.2	8.4	4.5	2.2	0.8	68.9	34529	20.3
All	2012	169968	9.7	18.8	20.3	20.9	15	8.1	4.2	2.1	0.9	69.7		

Table 8b: Entries for geography 2012-4 Northern Ireland

Gender	Year	Total Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C	Change	% Change
Boys	2014	3753	5.5	19.6	26.3	22.4	13.4	7	3.5	1.9	0.4	73.8	-99	-2.6
Boys	2013	3852	5.1	18.7	25.2	24.4	14.8	6.9	2.9	1.4	0.6	73.4	-1	0.0
Boys	2012	3853	5.9	18.9	24.9	23.6	13.9	7.1	3.3	1.6	0.8	73.3		
Girls	2014	3054	12.1	29.4	27.1	16.4	9	3.5	1.5	0.6	0.4	85.0	-224	-6.8
Girls	2013	3278	11.7	27.7	26.2	18.3	9.3	4.5	1.4	0.6	0.3	83.9	276	9.2
Girls	2012	3002	12.5	27.1	23.5	18.9	10	4.5	2	1.1	0.4	82.0		
All	2014	6807	8.4	24.1	26.6	19.7	11.5	5.4	2.6	1.3	0.4	78.8	-323	-4.5
All	2013	7130	8.1	22.9	25.6	21.6	12.3	5.8	2.2	1	0.5	78.2	275	4.0
All	2012	6855	8.8	22.5	24.3	21.6	12.1	6	2.7	1.4	0.6	77.2		

Table 8c: Entries for geography 2012-4 Wales

Gender	Year	Total Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C	Change	% Change
Boys	2014	6031	5.9	13.9	19.4	25.2	18.1	9.7	4.7	2.3	0.8	64.4	-510	-7.8
Boys	2013	6541	6.1	13.3	17.4	25.7	18.6	10.4	5.1	2.2	1.2	62.5	463	7.6
Boys	2012	6078	5.9	13.7	18.1	25.3	18.9	10.1	4.8	2.4	0.8	63.0		
Girls	2014	4454	10.6	19.1	19.9	21.8	14.4	7.9	3.9	1.8	0.6	71.4	-230	-4.9
Girls	2013	4684	12.2	17.5	20	22.3	15	7	3.5	1.8	0.7	72.0	563	13.7
Girls	2012	4121	11.3	19.1	20.1	22.7	14.3	7.1	3.3	1.3	0.8	73.2		
All	2014	10485	7.9	16.1	19.6	23.8	16.5	8.9	4.4	2.1	0.7	67.4	-740	-6.6
All	2013	11225	8.7	15	18.5	24.3	17.1	9	4.4	2	1	66.5	1026	10.1
All	2012	10199	8.1	15.8	19	24.2	17.1	8.8	4.2	2	0.8	67.1		

Paul Weeden (August 2014)