

GCSE entries and results 2013 (Final Report)

Overview

- Geography had the highest percentage increase (19.2%) of the large entry (over 100 000) subjects.
- Geography was the 8th most popular subject in 2013 (up from 9th in 2012).
- The increase in entries was 35830 to 222852.
- A* grades were down 0.1% to 9.5% (9.6% -2012) but this compares favourably with the national average of 6.8% for all subjects.
- A was down 1.2% to 17.5% (18.7% -2012).
- A*-C was down 0.9% to 69.0% (69.9% - 2012). The national average for all subjects is 68.1%.
- The gender imbalance for geography reduced to 54:46 (M:F). The national pattern is that 56% of entries were from girls.
- 11105 (5% of the total geography entry) were students aged 15 and under. This was an increase of 2633.
- Younger students' performance was worse with A* was 5.9% (3.6% lower) and A*-C 59.3% (10.6% lower).

The JCQ news release stated:

GCSE results show a decline at the top grades and more students taking key subjects

Summary of headline results

- *Decline in percentage of A*-C*
- *Significant rise in 15 year olds taking GCSEs brings down overall results*
- *Increase in IGCSEs impacts on GCSE outcomes in certain subjects*
- *Evidence of significant early and repeated entry in Mathematics throughout the year*
- *New, more challenging specifications in the sciences*
- *Boost for languages and humanities*

This year's GCSE results, show the number of GCSEs taken in 2013 increased by 4.2 per cent compared with 2012 (5.2m to over 5.4m). This significant rise can be attributed to the number of GCSEs taken by those aged 15 years and younger increasing 39.0 per cent to 806,141.

The proportion of GCSEs awarded A is down this year by 0.5 percentage points from 7.3 per cent to 6.8 per cent, while the proportion achieving A*-C is also down, 1.3 percentage points to 68.1 per cent.*

Across all subjects, girls continued to outperform boys at A* (8.3 per cent compared to 5.3 per cent) and at A*-C (72.3 per cent compared to 63.7 per cent).

Humanities

There were significant rises in the number of entries for Geography and History. Geography rose 19.2 per cent (3.5 per cent in 2012) and History rose 16.7 per cent (2.0 per cent in 2012).

JCQ News Release

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/media-centre/news-releases/news-release-for-gcse-and-elc-results-summer-2013>

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

Overall the rise in entries for geography in 2013 was significant. There was an overall increase of 35830 (19.2%) entries for Geography but the gender distribution shifted with a larger increase for girls of 19724 (23.7% increase) than boys, 16106 (15.5% increase).

Gender performance continued to be different with girls outperforming boys at the higher grades. There was 5.4% difference at A grade, 10% difference at A*-A and 9% at A*-C. This was little different from previous years.

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	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	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	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 2013 (all UK candidates)

Popularity of geography at GCSE: Top 10 subjects

The increased entry moved geography up one place in the league table of subjects for 2013 to 8th place.

For comparison history had a lower percentage increase (+16.7%) but higher total increase +37253 up to 260236 entries for history from 218588 in 2011 to 222983 entries in 2012. History moved up to 7th most popular subject. These changes are almost certainly largely the result of schools entering more students for history and geography following the inclusion of performance in the 'ebc subjects' in school performance tables. Geography had the largest percentage increase for large subjects but Mathematics, English and History had larger total increases.

Table 2a: Top 10 GCSE subjects in 2013

Ranking	Subject	% of total	Number of candidates
1 (1)	Mathematics	13.96	760170
2 (2)	English	13.43	731153
3 (4)	English Literature	8.72	475031
4 (3)	Science	8.29	451433
5 (5)	Additional Science	5.20	283391
6 (7)	Religious Studies	4.85	263988
7 (8)	History	4.78	260236
8 (9)	Geography	4.09	222852
9 (6)	Design & Technology	4.04	219931
10 (10)	Art and Design subjects	3.36	183090

(2012 ranking in brackets)

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

Ranking	Subject	% change	2012 Number of candidates	2013 Number of candidates
1 (6)	Geography	19.16	187022	222852
2 (8)	History	16.71	222983	260236
3	French	15.55	153436	177288
4	Mathematics	12.49	675789	760170
5 (5)	Religious Studies	10.40	239123	263988
6 (7)	English	9.20	669534	731153
7 (2)	Biology	4.97	166168	174428
8 (3)	Chemistry	4.38	159126	166091
9	Physical Education	3.26	101580	104895
10	Art and Design subjects	2.34	178895	183090

(2012 ranking in brackets. Subjects having a year-on-year decrease in 2012 are shown as blank.)

Source JCQ: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/media-centre/news-releases/gcse-project-and-entry-level-trends-2013>

Trends in geography entries over time

For the second year running there was a large increase in entries for geography (35380), probably as the result of the governments' emphasis on traditional subjects (Table 4a). This has reversed the downward trend from the high of over 300000 entries in 1996. In two years entries have returned to the level of 2005. There was a larger increase in entries for girls (19724) (figure 4c) than boys (16106) (figure 4b) so that the gender imbalance was reduced to 54:46 (M:F) from 55:45 in 2012.

Performance at the higher grades was lower than 2012. A* grade was down 0.1% to 9.5%; A*/A grade down 1.3% to 27.0%; A*-C grade down 0.9% to 69.0%; A*-G grade up 0.1% to 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

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

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

Performance by gender

Girls continued to outperform boys at the higher grades although the gender differential in performance narrowed slightly. There was a gender differential of 5.4% in favour of girls at A*; 10.0% at A*/A; 9.0% at A*-C and 0.4% at A*-G

Table 4: Gender differentials in performance by cumulative grade for geography 2013 (UK)

Grade	Girls	Change from 2012	Boys	Change from 2012	Differential Girls: Boys	Change from 2012
A*	12.4%	-0.4%	7.0%	0%	5.4%	-0.4%
A* / A	32.4%	-1.9%	22.4%	-1.1%	10.0%	-0.8%
A* - C	73.9%	-1.1%	64.9%	-0.8%	9.0%	-0.3%
A* - G	99.4%	+0.1%	99.0%	0%	0.4%	+0.1%
Total Entries	11105	+2643 (31.2%)	208447	+33128 (18.9%)	3300	

Entries by age

This year for the first time 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 growth in entries was for students aged 15 and under where entries increased by 31.2% to 11105 although this was only 5.0% of the total entry for geography. Performance by these students was lower than for those aged 16 (Table 5). Again there were gender differentials in performance.

Table 5: Entries by age for geography 2013 (UK)

Grade	Age 15 and under	Change from 2012	Age 16	Change from 2012	Age 17 and over	Change from 2012
Entries	11105	+2643 (31.2%)	208447	+33128 (18.9%)	3300	+59 (1.8%)
A*	5.9%	+0.6%	9.7%	-0.1%	7.4%	-1.0%
A* / A	18.8%	-0.5%	27.5%	-1.3%	25.0%	-2.4%
A* - C	59.3%	+0.3%	69.6%	-0.8%	67.6%	-1.5%
A* - G	98.6%	0%	99.2%	0%	98.6%	-0.1%

Table 6a Entries for geography by students aged 15 and under: 2013 (UK)

Gender	Year	Total Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C	Change	% Change
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
<i>Boys</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>4586</i>	<i>3.6</i>	<i>11.8</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>22.5</i>	<i>20.8</i>	<i>11.9</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>3.7</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>53.9</i>		
Girls	2013	5230	7.5	15.3	18.6	22.6	16.9	9.2	5.8	3	1.1	64	1354	34.9
<i>Girls</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>3876</i>	<i>7.3</i>	<i>16.7</i>	<i>19.9</i>	<i>21.2</i>	<i>16.2</i>	<i>8.9</i>	<i>5.8</i>	<i>2.9</i>	<i>1.1</i>	<i>65.1</i>		
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
<i>All</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>8462</i>	<i>5.3</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>17.8</i>	<i>21.9</i>	<i>18.7</i>	<i>10.6</i>	<i>6.9</i>	<i>3.4</i>	<i>1.4</i>	<i>59.0</i>		

Table 6b Entries for geography by students aged 16: 2013 (UK)

Gender	Year	Total Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C	Change	% Change
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
<i>Boys</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>97335</i>	<i>7.2</i>	<i>16.8</i>	<i>19.9</i>	<i>22.4</i>	<i>16.9</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>4.6</i>	<i>2.2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>66.3</i>		
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
<i>Girls</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>77984</i>	<i>13.1</i>	<i>21.7</i>	<i>21.2</i>	<i>19.5</i>	<i>12.4</i>	<i>6.4</i>	<i>3.4</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>75.5</i>		
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
<i>All</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>175319</i>	<i>9.8</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>20.5</i>	<i>21.1</i>	<i>14.9</i>	<i>7.8</i>	<i>4.1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>70.4</i>		

Table 6c Entries for geography by students aged 17 and over: 2013 (UK)

Gender	Year	Total Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C	Change	% Change
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
<i>Boys</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>1860</i>	<i>5.9</i>	<i>15.7</i>	<i>21.2</i>	<i>23.1</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>8.8</i>	<i>5.3</i>	<i>2.7</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>65.9</i>		
Girls	2013	1425	10.5	22	22.9	20.5	11.1	6.1	4	1.5	1.4	75.9	44	3.2
<i>Girls</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>1381</i>	<i>11.7</i>	<i>23.5</i>	<i>20.6</i>	<i>17.6</i>	<i>11.2</i>	<i>7.4</i>	<i>3.8</i>	<i>2.4</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>73.4</i>		
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
<i>All</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>3241</i>	<i>8.4</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>20.9</i>	<i>20.8</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>8.2</i>	<i>4.6</i>	<i>2.6</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>69.1</i>		

Entries by Country

England as the largest country dominates the overall patterns of entries (table 7). The increase in entries was much larger in England (20.3%), compared with 4.0% in Northern Ireland and 1.8% in Wales, reflecting the pressure on schools 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 (78.2% compared with 68.9% (England) and 66.5% (Wales)). The much smaller entries for Northern Ireland and Wales means 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 2013 (UK)

Grade	England	Change from 2012	Northern Ireland	Change from 2012	Wales	Change from 2012	UK	Change from 2012
Entries	204497	+34529 (20.3%)	7130	+275 (4.0%)	11225	+59 (1.8%)	222852	+35830 (19.2%)
A*	9.6%	-0.1%	8.1%	-0.7%	8.7%	+0.6%	9.5%	-0.1%
A* / A	27.1%	-1.4%	31.0%	-0.3%	23.7%	-0.2%	27.0%	-1.3%
A* - C	68.9%	-1.4%	78.2%	+1.0%	66.5%	-0.6%	69.0%	-0.9%
A* - G	99.2%	0%	99.5%	+0.1%	99.0%	-0.2%	99.2%	+0.1%

Table 8a: Entries for geography 2013 England

Gender	Year	Total Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C	Change	% Change
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	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	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 2013 Northern Ireland

Gender	Year	Total Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C	Change	% Change
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	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		
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 2013 Wales

Gender	Year	Total Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	A*-C	Change	% Change
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		
Girls	2013	4684	12.2	17.5	20	22.3	15	7	3.5	1.8	0.7	72	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	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 (September 2013)