

Geography continues to experience an increase in entry at GCSE in 2019

Geography GCSE candidate numbers increased for the eighth year. Entries increased by 8749 (+3.4%) overall. This was entirely due to an increase in England of 8853 (+3.7%) candidates. In Northern Ireland there was a decrease of 137 (-2.3%) while in Wales there was a decrease of 17 (-0.6%).¹

The 16-year-old population in the three countries is up 1.5% compared to 2017 with total entries for all GCSEs up by 77371 (+1.4%). GCSE Entries in Northern Ireland decreased by 5.2%. This may be associated with the introduction of a new grading system in Northern Ireland.

- In 2019 geography continued to be the 6th most popular subject at GCSE
- Geography entries in England increased more than the national entry increase
- Geography entries in Northern Ireland declined less than the national entry decrease
- Geography entries in Wales were down slightly but overall national entries for GCSE increased by 6.5%
- Geography remains gender imbalanced with 53.9% of entries from males and 46.1% of entries from females. This has slightly widened (+0.4%) from 2018.

The proportion of top grades increased slightly (+0.7%) from 2018, with 24.9% of candidates achieving a grade A/7 up from 24.2% in 2018. 65.8% of candidates obtained a C/4 or above compared to 65.2% in 2018. This illustrates that the 'anchoring' (see below) of grades has largely been achieved.

The JCQ commentary says:

Update on Reforms

Reforms are complete in Wales and those in England are complete with the exception of a few lesser taught languages. New GCSEs in Northern Ireland have

¹ Please note there is a small discrepancy in these numbers – they are taken from different tables and in Wales a small number of entries from independent schools that use grades 9-1 are ignored.

been awarded for the first time, alongside other reformed GCSEs.

Working with regulators, JCQ members across England, Northern Ireland and Wales, remain committed to anchoring grade standards of reformed and legacy qualifications at key grades (7/A, 4/C, 1/G). This means that, all things being equal (i.e. no other changes and a similar cohort profile), outcomes are broadly similar to the legacy outcomes.

Dr Philip Wright, Director General of JCQ said: *"Today students across the UK are receiving their GCSE results. They have worked hard for these results and should be proud of their achievements."*

"Students and teachers have done a great job during a period of reform as this year's results have overall been stable, with small increases in pass rates at 7/A and 4/C. We are seeing more entries and better outcomes in the sciences and in computing from both males and females."

"Today students should be celebrating their hard work with their friends, family and teachers as they look forward to the future"

Source: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/>