

November 2017 exam entries for GCSEs: provisional figures

Background information accompanying the
statistical release



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Information about the statistics

Purpose

This release presents figures on the number of entries for GCSEs submitted to exam boards for the exams being sat in November 2017. These figures are provisional and they represent the number of entries submitted by schools and colleges to exam boards by 25 October 2017.

Geographical coverage

The report presents data on the number of entries in England for GCSEs for the November 2017 exam series.

Description

This release shows the number of entries broken down by subject and age of students based on school year groups.

External Influences

There are various factors which might have influenced the entries for the November GCSE series.

GCSE

- In 2017 the first reformed GCSEs were available in three subjects: English language, English literature and mathematics. These GCSEs are graded on a 9 to 1 scale (9 denoting the highest passing grade and 1 denoting the lowest passing grade). In 2018, further new reformed GCSEs become available. For more information on phases of the GCSE reform [click here](#); for information on the grading [click here](#).
- Since August 2015 full time students, who have not achieved a grade C (and from 2017 a grade 4) or above in English and mathematics in GCSE or a Level 1/2 certificate, must continue studying these subjects in order to meet funding requirements post 16.
- In GCSE English language and GCSE mathematics, re-sits are also available in November, but only for students who were aged 16 or above on 31 August of that year.
- November 2017 is the first opportunity for students to re-sit exams for new GCSEs in English language and maths. Students will also be able to re-sit these subjects in summer 2018, and in November or summer of subsequent years.

Data source

Data have been collected at an appropriate point when entries are reasonably complete, in this case, by 25 October 2017. However, schools can continue to make late entries right up to the day of the exam, so the total entry numbers will change almost on a daily basis. Ofqual agreed these dates with the exam boards as the date when the majority of entries would have been submitted. We collect the data at the same point each year to aid year-on-year comparisons.

Limitations

There is potential for error in the information provided by exam boards, therefore Ofqual cannot guarantee that the information received is correct. However, Ofqual conducts various quality assurance checks outlined below.

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, using a wide range of tools from questionnaires to on-site process audits.

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

Revisions

Once published, data on the number of provisional entries as at 25 October 2017 are not usually subject to revision, although subsequent releases may be revised to insert late data or to correct an error. In some cases, data may be amended to reflect any new categorisation of subjects.

Confidentiality and rounding

To ensure confidentiality of the accompanying data, the figures have been rounded to the nearest 5. Values less than 5 (ie 1 to 4) are represented as 0~ and 0 represents zero entries.

Total values of rows or columns are calculated using unrounded figures; the sum of rounded figures may differ from the total reported.

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. As a result of rounded figures, the percentages (calculated on actual figures) shown in tables may not necessarily add up to 100.

Status

These statistics are classified as official statistics.

Related publications

For any related publications for qualifications offered in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland please contact the respective regulators - [Qualifications Wales](#), [CCEA](#) and [the Scottish Qualifications Authority \(SQA\)](#).

Statistical policies

The [policies and procedures](#) that Ofqual follow for production and release of its statistical releases are available online.

Glossary

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

Useful links

The [report and data tables](#) accompanying this release are available separately.

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 statistics@ofqual.gov.uk.

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



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