

SDR 160/2014

25 September 2014

## Examination results in Wales, 2013/14 (provisional)

This Statistical Release provides the earliest results of external examinations taken by pupils aged 15 or 17 in schools in Wales in 2013/14, as well as final information for previous years. Schools are currently checking this latest information and therefore the figures are subject to change.

### Key results for 2013/14:

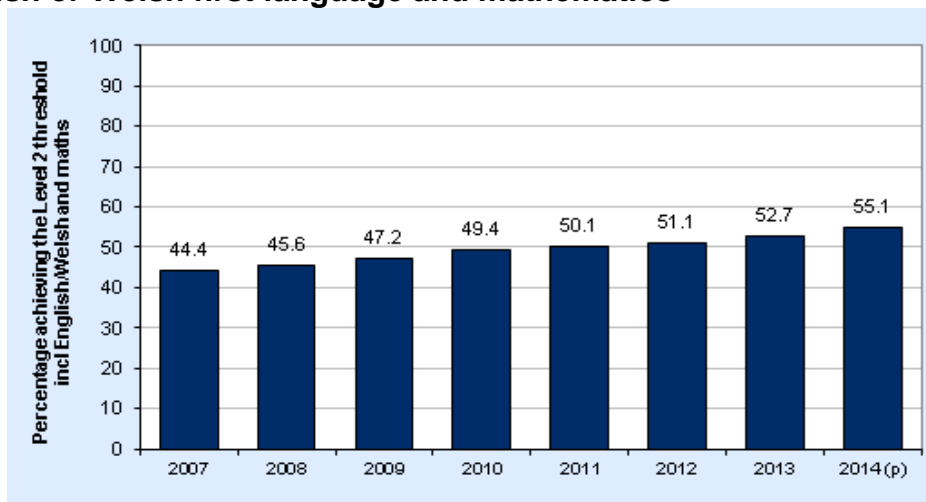
#### 15 year olds

- 55.1 per cent achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE grade A\*-C in English or Welsh first language and mathematics, higher (by 2.3 percentage points) than in 2012/13 (Table 1 and Chart 1). This is the largest single year increase seen since records began in 2006/07, and performance is now 11 percentage points higher than that year;
- 82.0 per cent achieved the Level 2 threshold, 4.2 percentage points higher than in 2012/13 (Table 1);
- The average capped wider points score was 340.0, 6.9 points higher than in 2012/13 (Table 1);
- 1.1 per cent achieved no recognised qualification, an increase of 1.0 percentage point compared with 2012/13 (Table 1).
- 81.5 per cent of pupils achieved A\*-C in science, an increase of 6.7 percentage points compared with 2012/13 (Table 2)
- 61.4 per cent of pupils achieved A\*-C in maths, slightly higher (1.0 percentage point) than in 2012/13 (Table 2)

#### 17 year olds

- 97.1 per cent of those entering a volume equivalent to 2 A levels achieved the Level 3 threshold, 0.6 percentage points higher than in 2012/13 (Table 3);
- The average wider points score was 803.1, 3.5 points lower than in 2012/13 (Table 3).

**Chart 1: Percentage of pupils aged 15 who achieved the Level 2 threshold including English or Welsh first language and mathematics**



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**Table 1: Pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year (a) (b)**

	Percentage of pupils aged 15 who...							
	Number of pupils aged 15	achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	achieved the Core Subject Indicator (c)	Average wider points score	Average capped (d) wider points score	achieved no recognised qualification (e)
2001/02	37,116	84.8	50.5	..	36.9	..	..	4.7
2002/03	37,993	85.1	51.1	..	37.5	..	..	4.6
2003/04	39,212	85.3	51.4	..	37.7	324.7	..	4.4
2004/05	38,495	85.2	52.2	..	38.4	327.7	..	4.3
2005/06	38,859	86.0	53.8	..	39.7	335.4	..	3.9
2006/07	39,576	86.0	55.0	44.4	40.0	343.9	..	3.9
2007/08	39,027	86.8	58.0	45.6	44.4	356.0	..	2.5
2008/09	37,607	88.2	60.7	47.2	46.0	378.9	..	1.9
2009/10	37,072	89.7	63.8	49.4	48.0	394.3	305.1	1.4
2010/11	36,088	90.3	67.3	50.1	48.7	422.9	311.6	1.8
2011/12	35,404	91.8	72.6	51.1	48.9	465.0	323.5	1.1
2012/13	36,617	93.2	77.8	52.7	49.2	501.2	333.1	0.1
2013/14 (p)	35,170	93.8	82.0	55.1	51.9	520.5	340.0	1.1

(a) Up to 2005/06, includes GCSEs, GCSE Short Course, GNVQs and NVQs. From 2006/07, includes all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales.

(b) Ages at the start of the academic year. Includes results for 15 year old pupils, in maintained schools and independent schools, achieved during the academic year and any examinations taken at earlier age.

(c) Core Subject Indicator: achieved GCSE grade A\*-C in each of English or Welsh first language, mathematics and science.

(d) Average capped wider point scores are calculated using the best 8 results.

(e) Up to 2006/07, based on pupils who achieved no Entry Level Qualification, GCSE short course, GCSE or equivalent. 2007/08 onwards is based on the wider definition. This indicator is based on small numbers and is more sensitive to changes.

**Table 2: Pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year (a) (b)**

	Percentage of pupils aged 15 who...					
	Number of pupils aged 15	achieved A*-C in English/Welsh (c)	achieved A*-C in English (d)	achieved A*-C in Welsh (e)	achieved A*-C in Maths	achieved A*-C in Science (f)
2010/11	36,088	63.7	62.8	74.6	56.5	65.9
2011/12	35,404	63.5	62.2	73.8	58.4	70.6
2012/13	36,617	64.0	62.9	73.5	60.3	74.8
2013/14 (p)	35,170	67.0	66.0	73.7	61.4	81.5

(a) Includes all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales.

(b) Ages at the start of the academic year. Includes results for 15 year old pupils, in maintained schools and independent schools, achieved during the academic year and any examinations taken at earlier age.

(c) For each pupil the best grade of English language, English literature, Welsh first language and Welsh literature is taken.

(d) For each pupil the best grade of English language and English literature is taken.

(e)

For each pupil the best grade of Welsh language and Welsh literature is taken. The denominator for this indicator is the number of 15 year olds who entered Welsh First Language, rather than the total number of 15 year olds.

(f) Includes single and double award core science.

**Table 3: Pupils aged 17 at the start of the academic year (a) (b)**

	Number of pupils aged 17 entering a volume equivalent to 2 A levels	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Number of pupils aged 17	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17
2001/02	9,486	94.4	11,201	..
2002/03	9,848	93.9	11,568	..
2003/04	10,041	94.9	11,822	..
2004/05	10,373	94.4	12,072	..
2005/06	10,731	93.9	12,507	..
2006/07	10,592	93.9	12,418	618.5
2007/08	10,943	94.2	12,653	630.9
2008/09	11,367	96.0	13,241	687.7
2009/10	11,653	94.9	13,586	747.9
2010/11	11,512	96.3	13,615	798.9
2011/12	11,538	96.9	13,632	772.9
2012/13	11,706	96.5	13,365	806.6
2013/14 (p)	11,437	97.1	13,102	803.1

(a) Up to 2005/06, includes A levels, AS levels and Advanced Vocational Certificates of Education (AVCE). From 2006/07, includes all qualifications approved for use in Wales.

(b) Includes independent schools, but excludes further education institutions.

## Notes

### 1. Context

#### 1.1 Related Publications

Data for England and Northern Ireland can be found at the links below. Note that the data produced by these administrations are based on pupils at the end of Key Stage 4, whereas we publish on the basis of pupils aged 15. Following the changes to qualifications levels, equivalencies and discounting in England in 2014, comparisons with England are not straightforward. Comparisons cannot be made with Scotland because their examination system and qualifications are sufficiently different.

Developments are underway in Wales in moving towards producing indicators based on pupils at the end of Key Stage 4.

For further information or advice on the constraints of international comparisons please e-mail [school.stats@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:school.stats@wales.gsi.gov.uk).

For reference, examination results for the other UK countries can be found by following the links below:

#### England

[SFR 01/2014 GCSE and Equivalent Results in England 2012/13 \(Revised\)](#)

[SFR 02/2014 A-Level and other Level 3 Results in England 2013/14 \(Revised\)](#)

#### Northern Ireland

[Qualifications and Destinations of Northern Ireland School Leavers 2012/13](#)

#### Scotland

[Summary statistics for attainment, leaver destinations and healthy living, No.4: 2014 Edition](#)

We also publish information on teacher assessments in core and non core subjects at foundation phase and key stages 2 and 3, which can be found here:

<http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/?topic=Education+and+skills&lang=en>

The figures differ from those published by Awarding Organisations in August. The Awarding Organisations' figures related to the outcome of the individual subject areas for all candidates in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, regardless of their age. The figures published in this Statistical First Release focus on the overall performance of candidates aged 15 and 17 taking these examinations in Wales only. These figures are here:

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results>

## **2. Data source**

The statistics are collated from a number of awarding organisations over the summer. The following awarding organisations provided data for this release: ABC Awards, Agored, AQA, ASDAN, British Computer Society (BCS), British Safety Council (BSC), CACHE, City and Guilds, CCEA, Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), C Skills, EMTA Awards Ltd (EAL), Edexcel, EDI, IFS School of Finance, ILM, IMI Awards Ltd (IMIAL), NCFE, National Open College Network (NOCN), OCR, The Prince's Trust (PT), VTCT and WJEC.

## **3. Definitions**

### **3.1 Coverage**

The statistics in this release cover all maintained and independent schools in Wales. Only results for pupils aged 15 and 17 received from the awarding organisations listed above are included. Examinations taken at an earlier age are also included. Any examinations achieved before the age of 15 will be held back and included in the school year in which the pupil turns 15.

The information in this release relates to all schools for Wales figures and to maintained secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units for LA figures.

Only qualifications awarded up to the 31 August are included. New awards after that date, as well as any resists or re-marks after that date, are not included.

Up to 2005/06, the statistics include GCSEs, GCSE short course, GNVQs and NVQs only. From 2006/07, the statistics include all qualifications approved for pre-16 or 16-18 use in Wales. The introduction of the wider definition has meant the inclusion of a larger range of qualifications and thus an increase in the headline indicators of performance. An explanation of the different types of qualifications can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean>

### **3.2 Threshold indicators and points**

Indicators showing threshold equivalencies were published (as provisional indicators) for the first time in 2007 and are now the headline indicators of performance in secondary schools. Thresholds represent a volume, or 'size', of qualifications at a specific level on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Three thresholds have been established: Level 1 – a volume of qualifications at Level 1 equivalent to the volume of 5 GCSEs at grade A\*-G; Level 2 – a volume of qualifications at Level 2 equivalent to the volume of 5 GCSEs at grade A\*-C; Level 3 – a volume of qualifications at Level 3 equivalent to the volume of 2 A levels at grade A\*-E.

The average capped wider points score is calculated using the best 8 results for each pupil. Further information on how the capped points score is produced can be found in the technical document at the link below:

<http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/examination-results/?lang=en#/statistics-and-research/examination-results/?lang=en>

The average wider points score includes all approved qualifications. English Literature and Welsh literature can count towards the L2 threshold including A\*-C in English/Welsh First language and maths.

### 3.3 Discounting

An examination is discounted when a pupil achieves a higher grade or higher level qualification in the **same subject group**. If a qualification is discounted then **it does not** count towards the statistics published in this release, or in any other official statistics published by the Welsh Government. We discount similar qualifications within the following subject groups:

**Group 1:** Entry level qualifications, GCSE short course, full GCSE, vocational double award GCSEs

**Group 2:** AS level, vocational double AS level, A levels, vocational double A level, AS Vocational Certificate of Education, Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education, Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education double award

**Group 3:** free standing maths qualifications

**Group 4:** key skills

**Group 5:** the Award in Digital Applications (AiDA), the Certificate in Digital Applications (CiDA), the Extended Certificate in Digital Applications (CiDA+) and the Diploma in Digital Applications (DiDA).

**Group 6:** NVQs

**Group 7:** BTECs and other qualifications

**Group 8:** the Welsh Baccalaureate

## 4. Rounding and symbols

In tables where figures have been rounded to the nearest final digit, there may be an apparent discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total shown.

The following symbols have been used throughout the publication:

(p) provisional

- percentages less than 0.5 but higher than zero

. not applicable

.. not available

~ not yet available

\* figure is less than 5, or is based on a figure less than 5.

## 5. Key Quality Information

This section provides a summary of information on this output against five dimensions of quality: Relevance, Accuracy, Timeliness and Punctuality, Accessibility and Clarity, and Comparability. It also covers specific issues relating to quality of 2014 data, and describes the quality management tool applied to this area of work.

### 5.1 Relevance

The statistics are used both within and outside the Welsh Government to monitor educational trends and as a baseline for further analysis of the underlying data. Some of the key users are:

- Ministers and the Members Research Service in the National Assembly for Wales;

- The Department for Education and Skills in the Welsh Government;
- Estyn;
- Other government departments;
- The research community;
- Regional education consortia, Local Authorities and schools;
- Students, academics and universities;
- Individual citizens, private companies and the media.

These statistics are used in a variety of ways. Some examples of these are:

- General background and research;
- Inclusions in reports and briefings;
- Advice to Ministers;
- The all-Wales education core data packs;
- LA and school comparisons and benchmarks;
- To inform the education policy decision-making process in Wales including school reorganisation;
- Development of a national banding system for Wales;
- To inform ESTYN during school inspections;
- The education domain of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation;
- To assist in research in educational attainment.

## **5.2 Accuracy**

The data are labelled as provisional because during October they will be sent to schools for checking. The data may be revised if schools provide factual evidence of errors in the data or of additional qualifications obtained with awarding organisations that we have not approached.

In a typical year we would expect the final indicators, to be published in November, to differ from these provisional statistics by up to half a percentage point for all indicators apart from the one that measures no recognised qualifications (which is based on small numbers and is more sensitive to changes).

## **5.3 Timeliness and Punctuality**

The data relate to all qualifications achieved between 1 September 2013 and 31 August 2014.

## **5.4 Accessibility and Clarity**

This Statistical First Release is pre-announced and then published on the Statistics section of the Welsh Government website. It is accompanied by more detailed tables on [StatsWales](#), a free to use service that allows visitors to view, manipulate, create and download data.

School-level data is available through the My Local School website. This provisional data will not be added to My Local School but final data for 2013/14 will be added later in the year.

## **5.5 Comparability**

See section 1.2.

The review of qualifications will be in effect from the academic year 2015/16. This means that the way we will calculate our performance measures will change. This might have an impact on comparability over time and will further impede the ability to compare educational attainment in Wales with the rest of the UK. Information about the review of qualifications in Wales can be found here:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/qualificationsinwales/revofqualen/implementing-the-review-of-qualifications/?lang=en>

Information about the review of qualifications in England can be found here:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/qualifications/gcses/a00221366/gcse-reform>