

## **National Assembly for Wales**

### **A level, GCSE and Welsh Baccalaureate Results 2009**

#### **Research Paper**

September 2009

This paper provides an overview of the provisional 2009 A level and GCSE results for Wales. Comparisons are provided with results for 2008 and with results for England.

The paper also provides a summary of the provisional summer 2009 results for the Welsh Baccalaureate and provides a comparison with results from 2008

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# A Level, GCSE and Welsh Baccalaureate results 2009

## 1. A Level

Provisional<sup>1</sup> 2008 A Level results were published for Wales and England on 20 August 2009.

- The overall pass rate has remained the same as 2008 in Wales and has improved slightly in England. There are also improvements in those achieving higher grades (A-C) in both Wales and England.
- As in 2008, students in Wales achieved better results than students in England at grades A-C. However, the percentage of students achieving A grades was slightly higher in England. Differences in the overall pass rate between Wales and England are marginal.
- Girls continue to perform better than boys in both Wales and England. In Wales, the gap between boys and girls in the higher grades (A-C) has decreased from 2008 figures. The gap between boys and girls in Wales at grade A is now marginal. In England, the gap between boys and girls has decreased slightly.

Table 1 shows the provisional results for students in Wales and England for GCE A levels for 2009, with comparable data for 2008 in Table 2.

**Table 1: Percentage of pupils achieving GCE A level by grade, 2009**

	Number sat	A	A-C	A-E
<b>Wales</b>				
Girls	21,225	25.3	78.6	98.2
Boys	17,208	24.5	74.0	96.9
All pupils	38,433	25.0	76.5	97.6
<b>England</b>				
Girls	418,161	27.4	77.0	98.0
Boys	359,009	25.4	71.8	96.9
All pupils	777,170	26.5	74.6	97.5

Source: Joint Council for Qualifications

<sup>1</sup> Provisional in the sense that data represents the position at the time that results are issued. The data are subject to checking before final data is published.

**Table 2: Percentage of pupils achieving GCE A level by grade, 2008**

	Number sat	A	A-C	A-E
<b>Wales</b>				
Girls	20,710	25.6	78.7	98.1
Boys	16,126	22.1	72.1	96.9
All pupils	36,836	24.1	75.8	97.6
<b>England</b>				
Girls	409,911	26.6	75.8	97.7
Boys	350,970	24.4	70.5	96.5
All pupils	760,881	25.6	73.4	97.2

Source: Joint Council for Qualifications



## 2. GCSE

Provisional 2009 GCSE results were published on 27 August 2009.

- There were increases in achievements at all grades in England between 2008 and 2009. For Wales, while there were increases at grades A\*-C and A\*-G, achievement in the highest grades A\*-A remained the same as 2008.
- Pupils in England achieved slightly better results than pupils in Wales in all grades.
- Girls continue to out-perform boys in the higher grades, but the difference is less marked in the overall pass rate.

Table 3 below shows results for full course GCSEs in England and Wales for 2009 and Table 4 shows comparable data for 2008.

**Table 3: Percentage of pupils achieving GCSEs by grade, 2009 (provisional)**

	Number sat	A*-A	A*-C	A*-G
<b>Wales</b>				
Girls	153,999	21.8	69.2	98.7
Boys	147,048	16.0	61.6	98.3
All pupils	301,047	18.9	65.6	98.5
<b>England</b>				
Girls	2,522,233	24.3	70.3	98.9
Boys	2,461,232	18.7	63.4	98.3
All pupils	4,983,465	21.5	66.9	98.6

Source: Joint Council for Qualifications

**Table 4: Percentage of pupils achieving GCSEs by grade, 2008**

	Number sat	A*-A	A*-C	A*-G
<b>Wales</b>				
Girls	158,125	21.6	68.6	98.6
Boys	151,964	16.2	61.4	98.3
All pupils	310,089	18.9	65.0	98.4
<b>England</b>				
Girls	2,611,296	23.4	69.0	98.7
Boys	2,555,332	17.9	61.8	98.1
All pupils	5,166,628	20.6	65.5	98.4

Source: Joint Council for Qualifications

### 3. Welsh Baccalaureate

The Welsh Baccalaureate Intermediate and Advanced Diplomas were piloted at post-16 in 18 schools and colleges from September 2003. Following evaluation, the qualification was fully rolled out from September 2007 in 76 centres across Wales.

The pilot of the Welsh Baccalaureate Foundation Diploma (age range 14 - 19) and Intermediate Diploma (age range 14 - 16) began in September 2006 and was completed in August 2009.

From September 2009, 168 schools, colleges and training providers, with around 30,000 students, will be delivering the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification at all three levels, as part of the roll out of the full qualification.

The Welsh Baccalaureate qualification (Welsh Bac) consists of two parts; an 'Options' part and a 'Core Programme' part and the qualification is available at three levels. The 'Options' of the Welsh Baccalaureate must be completed by students studying for all levels of the Welsh Baccalaureate Diploma, and is comprised of options selected from established, approved courses/programmes (for example GCSEs, Vocational GCSEs, AS/A Levels, Vocational A Levels)

The 'Core Programme' part of the Baccalaureate consists of a programme of personal development studies, which students must complete along with their Options. The components of the 'Core Programme' are as set out below, and the programme is assessed solely on the evidence students collect in carrying out their activities.

- Key Skills – as well as from their options, students develop transferable Key Skills through the other four components outlined below.
- Wales, Europe and the World – a chance to learn more about Wales and its relationship with Europe and the World. A language module at a level suitable for the student is included in this.
- Work-Related Education – includes working with an employer and taking part in a team enterprise activity to help the student understand how businesses work.
- Personal and Social Education – helps the student explore issues in the modern world: family, health, relationships, citizenship and sustainable development. It includes an activity in the local community.
- Individual Investigation – the opportunity to carry out an individual research project into an area of interest.

### 3.1 Intermediate and Foundation Diplomas

The WJEC published the sixth summer award for the Welsh Baccalaureate Intermediate Diploma and the fourth award for the Foundation Diploma on 27 August 2009. The cumulative nature of the Welsh Baccalaureate means that many candidates who have not yet achieved the whole Core Certificate or Diploma will be able to do so, providing they achieve the remaining parts of the qualification in the coming academic year. Table 5 shows the summer awards for the Foundation Diploma and Table 6 shows the summer awards for the Intermediate Diploma.

For 2008 and 2009, the following summary is based on the figures published by the WJEC on the day the results were published.

### 3.2 Foundation

- The number of candidates entering at Foundation level has continued to increase.
- In 2008, 93 per cent of candidates completed the Foundation programme, this decreased in 2009 to 82 per cent.
- In 2008, 44 per cent of candidates completing the programme were awarded the Foundation Diploma. The equivalent figure for 2009 is 64 per cent.
- In 2008, 62 per cent of those completing the programme were awarded the Core Certificate compared to 77 per cent in 2009.

**Table 5: Welsh Baccalaureate Foundation Diploma Awards, 2008 and 2009**

	Summer 2008	Summer 2009
Candidates entered	1,085	1,726
Candidates completing the programme	1,013	1,414
Candidates awarded the Foundation Diploma	450	910
Candidates awarded the Core Certificate	626	1,085

Source: WJEC

### 3.3 Intermediate

- The number of candidates entering at Intermediate level has again more than doubled since 2008.
- In 2008, 90 per cent of the entry completed the Intermediate programme. In 2009, 88 per cent of the entry completed the programme.
- In 2008, 51 per cent of those completing the programme were awarded the Intermediate Diploma. The equivalent figure for 2009 is 58 per cent.
- In 2008, 63 per cent of those completing the programme were awarded the Core Certificate. The equivalent figure for 2009 is 71 per cent.

**Table 6: Welsh Baccalaureate Intermediate Diploma Awards, 2008 and 2009**

	Summer 2008	Summer 2009
Candidates entered	1,309	2,646
Candidates completing the programme	1,173	2,319
Candidates awarded the Intermediate Diploma	603	1,346
Candidates awarded the Core Certificate	735	1,640

Source: WJEC

### 3.4 Advanced Diploma

On 20 August 2009, the WJEC published the fifth August award for the Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Diploma.

- There was an increase of 1,562 candidates entered for the Advanced Diploma.
- In 2008, 89% of the entry completed the programme, this decreased in 2009 to 86%.
- 72% of those completing the programme in 2008 were awarded the Advanced Diploma, in 2009 this figure increased to 80%.

**Table 7: Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Diploma Awards, 2008 and 2009**

	Summer 2008	Summer 2009
Candidates entered	1,857	3,419
Candidates completing the programme	1,654	2,936
Diploma	1,186	2,341
Candidates awarded the Core Certificate	120	164

Source: WJEC

## 4. Sources of information

Data for 2009 is provisional in the sense that they represent the position at the time that results are issued. The data are subject to checking before final data at national (Wales), local authority and school level is published. Local authority data is usually published in November each year.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) has published provisional data for A, AS and Advanced Extension Awards for Wales, England and Northern Ireland, separately and as a whole. It includes information on results by grade and gender. It can be seen, along with results for previous years, [here](#). The JCQ publishes similar data for GCSE, Applied Level GCSE and Entry Level Certificates which can be seen [here](#).

The WJEC issues media releases on the day that results are published. The releases contain data for examinations awarded by the WJEC and data for all awarding bodies. The release for A levels, AS levels, the Advanced Extension Award and the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification can be seen [here](#). The media release for GCSEs, Entry Level Qualifications and the Welsh Baccalaureate Intermediate and Foundation Diplomas can be seen [here](#).

2008 data for Wales, at a local authority level can be seen in the Welsh Government Statistical Directorate publication, [Examination Results in Wales 2007/08](#). A similar release with data for 2009 is due to be published in November 2009.





