

## GCSE Geography Results Analysis 2009

The UK GCSE results for 2009 show continuing improvements across most subjects.

The number of entries is down this year by 199,817 (from 5,669,077 in 2008 to 5,469,260) a decrease of 3.5 per cent, which is in line with the reduction in the size of the 16-year-old cohort by 3.6 per cent.

Data published today (Thursday 27 August 2009) by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) show the overall results increasing by 0.9 percentage points at grades A\*-A (from 20.7 per cent in 2008 to 21.6 per cent in 2009) and 1.4 percentage points at grades A\*-C (from 65.7 per cent in 2008 to 67.1 per cent in 2009). Overall the cumulative percentage of candidates attaining GCSE grades A\*-G increased by 0.2 percentage points (from 98.4 per cent in 2008 to 98.6 per cent in 2009).

The number of entries for GCSE in the core subjects is largely governed by the statutory requirements of the National curricula in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. In the core subjects - English, mathematics and science, and Welsh in Wales - the great majority of students will take a GCSE examination. These core subjects account for nearly half of all GCSE full course entries (48.4 per cent).

(Source: JCQb 2009)

Entries for geography are down by 7844 (3.8%) to 196018. While this is slightly larger than the overall drop in candidates (3.5%) geography rose from 9<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> place in terms of entry because Art had a larger fall of 11965 (5.8%). Geography is therefore largely managing to retain its position relative to other subjects.

**Table A Top 10 GCSE full course subjects**

Subject			2009	
(2008 ranking in brackets)			% of total	Number of candidates
1	(1)	Mathematics	13.80	754738
2	(2)	English	12.82	701196
3	(3)	English Literature	9.66	528315
4	(4)	Science	9.02	493505
5	(5)	Additional Science	7.26	396946
6	(6)	Design & Technology	5.59	305809
7	(7)	History	4.02	219809
8	(9)	Geography	3.58	196018
9	(8)	Art	3.54	193578
10	(10)	French	3.45	188688

(Source JCQb, 2009)

Overall performance in geography increased slightly with the number of A\*-C grades increasing by 0.3% to 68.5% from 68.2% and A\* and A grades increasing 0.5% to 27.1% from 26.6%.

Differential performance was broadly maintained with Girls outperforming Boys by 3.8% at A\*; 7.1% at A\*-A and 5.5% at A\*-C.

Boys	A*	8.9% up 0.2% from 2008;
	A* and A	23.9% up 0.4% from 2008
	A*-C	65.9% up 0.4% from 2008
Girls	A*	12.7 up 0.3% from 2008
	A* and A	31.0% up 0.6% from 2008
	A*-C	71.7% up 0.3% from 2008

Overall performance

A*	10.6% up 0.2% from 2008
A* and A	27.1% up 0.5% from 2008
A*-C	68.5% up 0.3% from 2008

There was a slightly larger reduction in entries for boys but the relative proportions stay about the same at 55% boys and 45% girls

**Table B summary of total entries and changes: geography 2009**

	Total entry 2009	Proportion of total entry %	Change in entry	% change in entry
Boys	108211	55.2%	4867	-4.3%
Girls	87807	44.8%	2977	-3.3%
Total	196018	100%	7844	-3.8%

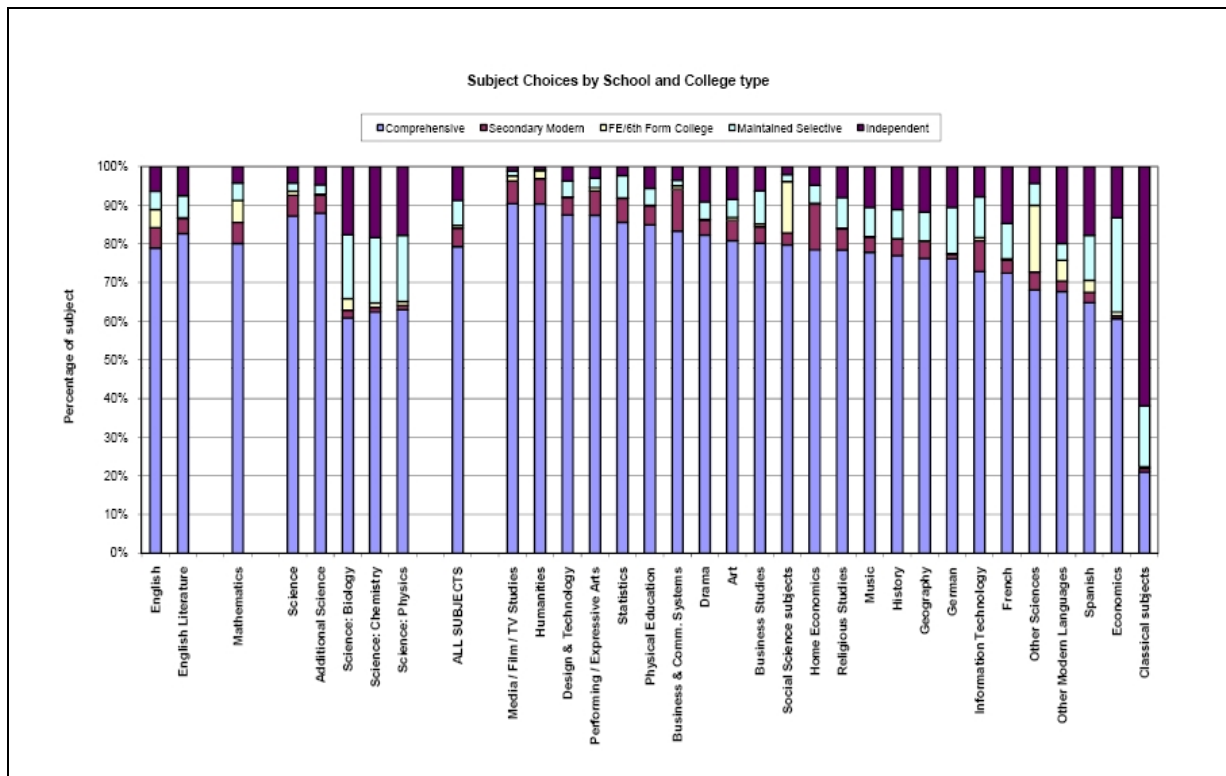
**Table C Geography GCSE results 2009 for all countries (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)**

		(3198)	(0.1)	(8.5)	(26.1)	(52.1)	(74.2)	(86.8)	(93.0)	(95.6)	(96.7)	(100.0)
English	Male	355398 (364982)	13.2 (13.0)	2.9 (2.8)	11.7 (11.6)	28.7 (29.3)	56.2 (56.2)	78.8 (78.2)	90.6 (90.3)	96.1 (96.0)	98.4 (98.4)	100.0 (100.0)
	Female	345798 (356595)	12.5 (12.4)	5.4 (5.2)	19.6 (19.4)	41.7 (42.1)	69.3 (69.6)	87.5 (87.4)	94.9 (95.0)	97.7 (97.8)	98.9 (99.0)	100.0 (100.0)
	Male & Female	701196 (721577)	12.8 (12.7)	4.1 (4.0)	15.6 (15.5)	35.1 (35.6)	62.7 (62.9)	83.1 (82.7)	92.7 (92.6)	96.9 (96.9)	98.7 (98.7)	100.0 (100.0)
English Literature	Male	252385 (268837)	9.4 (9.6)	4.2 (3.9)	17.5 (16.3)	40.0 (37.8)	67.4 (64.2)	84.4 (82.1)	92.9 (91.8)	96.7 (96.0)	98.2 (97.9)	100.0 (100.0)
	Female	275930 (289550)	10.0 (10.1)	7.0 (6.3)	26.8 (24.7)	53.7 (50.7)	79.2 (76.0)	91.5 (89.8)	96.5 (95.8)	98.2 (97.9)	98.9 (98.8)	100.0 (100.0)
	Male & Female	528315 (558387)	9.7 (9.8)	5.6 (5.1)	22.4 (20.6)	47.2 (44.5)	73.5 (70.3)	88.1 (86.1)	94.8 (93.9)	97.5 (97.0)	98.6 (98.3)	100.0 (100.0)
French	Male	81128 (87710)	3.0 (3.1)	9.8 (8.8)	22.8 (21.4)	40.4 (38.4)	65.1 (62.6)	83.8 (82.0)	93.4 (92.5)	98.0 (97.6)	99.6 (99.5)	100.0 (100.0)
	Female	107560 (114230)	3.9 (4.0)	12.4 (11.4)	28.9 (27.7)	49.4 (47.9)	73.8 (72.6)	89.3 (88.4)	96.2 (95.8)	98.8 (98.7)	99.8 (99.7)	100.0 (100.0)
	Male & Female	188688 (201940)	3.4 (3.6)	11.2 (10.3)	26.3 (25.0)	45.5 (43.8)	70.1 (68.3)	86.9 (85.6)	95.0 (94.3)	98.5 (98.2)	99.7 (99.7)	100.0 (100.0)
Geography	Male	108211 (113078)	4.0 (4.0)	8.9 (8.7)	23.9 (23.5)	41.8 (41.3)	65.9 (65.5)	82.4 (81.8)	91.0 (90.7)	95.7 (95.4)	98.0 (97.9)	100.0 (100.0)
	Female	87807 (90784)	3.2 (3.2)	12.7 (12.4)	31.0 (30.4)	49.6 (49.1)	71.7 (71.4)	85.7 (85.1)	92.8 (92.4)	96.7 (96.2)	98.6 (98.3)	100.0 (100.0)
	Male & Female	196018 (203862)	3.6 (3.6)	10.6 (10.4)	27.1 (26.6)	45.3 (44.8)	68.5 (68.2)	83.9 (83.3)	91.8 (91.4)	96.1 (95.8)	98.2 (98.1)	100.0 (100.0)
German	Male	34623 (36165)	1.3 (1.3)	7.9 (8.0)	21.7 (21.2)	40.9 (39.4)	69.9 (67.5)	87.1 (85.8)	94.5 (93.7)	97.9 (97.7)	99.6 (99.6)	100.0 (100.0)
	Female	38846 (40530)	1.4 (1.4)	10.4 (10.4)	28.0 (27.3)	50.7 (49.2)	77.7 (76.1)	91.4 (90.7)	96.7 (96.3)	98.9 (98.7)	99.8 (99.8)	100.0 (100.0)
	Male & Female	73469 (76695)	1.3 (1.4)	9.2 (9.3)	25.0 (24.4)	46.1 (44.6)	74.0 (72.0)	89.4 (88.4)	95.7 (95.1)	98.4 (98.2)	99.7 (99.7)	100.0 (100.0)

(source JCQA, 2009)

An innovation from JCQ (2009d) this year is an analysis of entries by type of school (figure 1 and table D). This shows that geography has a higher than average entry from independent schools and maintained selective schools and lower than average entry from comprehensive and secondary modern schools. *(This is determined by comparing the entry for geography with those for English and Mathematics that tend to have entries from all candidates in an examination centre).*

**Figure 1: Subject choices by school and college type (JCQd)**



**Table D: Major subject entries by Centre Type (JCQd)**

Major Subject entries by Centre Type					
Subject	Comprehensive	Secondary Modern	FE/6th Form College	Maintained Selective	Independent
English	78.94	5.27	4.72	4.87	6.41
English Literature	82.65	3.97	0.15	5.70	7.54
Mathematics	80.11	5.45	5.72	4.46	4.25
Science	87.20	5.38	1.10	2.06	4.26
Additional Science	88.00	4.50	0.24	2.51	4.66
Science: Biology	80.90	1.95	3.02	16.52	17.82
Science: Chemistry	82.44	1.15	1.16	16.95	18.31
Science: Physics	82.99	1.15	1.02	17.03	17.81
ALL SUBJECTS	79.30	4.74	0.73	6.51	8.72
Media / Film / TV Studies	90.43	5.85	1.32	1.32	1.09
Humanities	90.32	6.56	2.08	0.16	0.87
Design & Technology	87.55	4.57	0.01	4.18	3.70
Performing / Expressive Arts	87.41	6.32	0.87	2.51	2.90
Statistics	85.62	6.15	0.15	5.78	2.30
Physical Education	85.00	4.92	0.06	4.42	5.80
Business & Comm. Systems	83.30	10.88	0.82	1.53	3.47
Drama	82.27	3.91	0.14	4.57	6.11
Art	80.83	5.30	0.81	4.60	8.47
Business Studies	80.18	4.21	0.73	8.59	6.29
Social Science subjects	79.77	3.15	13.20	1.90	1.99
Home Economics	78.52	11.81	0.27	4.57	4.83
Religious Studies	78.47	5.47	0.10	8.04	7.93
Music	77.88	3.88	0.07	7.58	10.59
History	77.02	4.25	0.16	7.44	11.14
Geography	76.27	4.35	0.09	7.58	11.70
German	76.22	1.03	0.25	11.93	10.58
Information Technology	72.89	7.91	0.85	10.46	7.87
French	72.47	3.36	0.33	9.13	14.71
Other Sciences	68.10	4.63	17.31	5.65	4.31
Other Modern Languages	67.67	2.76	5.39	4.33	19.85
Spanish	64.84	2.66	3.06	11.69	17.74
Economics	60.61	0.73	1.07	24.41	13.18
Classical subjects	21.08	0.82	0.47	15.80	61.84

## Changes in other subjects

The subjects that had large increases were single sciences (Physics, Chemistry and Biology – about 20%), Mathematics (2%) and Religious Studies (2%). Humanities also had a small increase from a very small entry.

The larger entry subjects (>75,000) that had the largest decreases in entry were Additional Science PE, Science, Design and Technology and French. Smaller entry subjects that experienced relatively large decreases were ICT, Business, Home Economics, Irish and Music.

(Source JCQb, 2009)

## References

JCQ (2009a) **GCSE Results 2009** [online] <http://www.jcq.org.uk/attachments/published/1129/JCQ-GCSE.pdf> [accessed 2nd September 2009]

JCQ (2009b) **Entry trends for GCSE, Applied GCSE and Entry Level Certificate Results Summer 2009** [online] <http://www.jcq.org.uk/attachments/published/1131/GCSE%20Trends.pdf> [accessed 2nd September 2009]

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JCQ (2009d) **Data for Centre Types and Regions, GCSE, Applied GCSE and ELC 2009** [online] <http://www.jcq.org.uk/attachments/published/1132/GCSE%20Slides.pdf> [accessed 2nd September 2009]

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