

**Overview of
AS, A level and
Advanced Skills
Challenge Certificate
results in Wales –
Summer 2020**



August 2020

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On 17 August 2020, the Minister for Education announced that following changes in other jurisdictions, learners in Wales will be awarded their centre assessment grades. In response, we have instructed WJEC to issue learners with their centre assessment grades for GCSEs, AS and A levels and the Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate qualifications. (17 August 2020)

The information within this document has not been updated to represent any changes in policy.

This Overview of AS, A level and Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate results/Overview of awarding GQs in summer 2020

Wales contains information describing results that were issued to centres in readiness for results publication day on 13 August. Since writing, the Minister for Education has issued Qualifications Wales with a Direction to introduce a rule preventing A level learners receiving a grade that was lower than their AS level result in that subject. The information within this document will be updated in due course to represent accurately this change in policy. (13 August 2020)

Background to summer 2020 results

Due to the ongoing COVID public health crisis, Welsh Government announced that summer 2020 exams would be cancelled on 18 March¹. Subsequently Welsh Government directed Qualifications Wales to pay due regard to their policy that the 2020 cohort of learners for GCSE, AS, A level and Skills Challenge Certificate qualifications should receive calculated grades².

Grades have been calculated by WJEC for 33 AS and A level qualifications in Wales, as well as the Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate. Following a public consultation this summer, we published our aims to underpin the statistical standardisation model for the issuing of grades for the summer 2020 exam series (see Annex A). These aims included that national results should be broadly similar to recent years. This aim is important both to the credibility of the grades awarded this summer and to fairness within and across cohorts of learners. We have approved the models proposed by WJEC for standardisation this summer, and closely monitored their processes to award the calculated grades.

Considerable effort has been made to ensure that the standardisation approaches in Wales are as accurate, robust, and fair as possible in the circumstances. We are confident that grades awarded to learners this summer are just as valuable as grades received by learners in other years. Despite the cancellation of exams, most learners will be able to progress as planned to further study or employment.

We acknowledge that a process to standardise grades, in the absence of exams, can never be perfect. Nor will it be perceived as totally fair by everyone, so it is important that there is a mechanism by which errors can be identified and addressed. WJEC have published their guidance on the appeals process this summer and more information can be found [here](#).

¹ <https://gov.wales/written-statement-written-statement-summer-examinations-2020>

² <https://gov.wales/gcse-and-level-cancellations-letter>

Headlines

1. Results in Wales for AS, A level and the Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate have increased in 2020 but are broadly similar to recent years.
 - 29.9% have achieved A*-A for A level, up 2.9pp from last year, and 98.6% achieved A*-E, up 1.0pp from last year.
 - 22.2% have achieved grade A for AS, up 1.9pp from last year, and 91.4% have achieved grade A-E, up 1.4pp from last year
 - 22.7% achieved A*-A in the Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate, up 1.0pp from last year, and 98.0% have achieved A*-E, up 0.2pp from last year
2. The overall number of A level qualifications taken has fallen again this year, whereas the number of AS taken has increased after a number of years of decline. There are likely to be a number of factors driving those changes.
3. Although attainment gaps (gender, age, eligibility for free school meals) have changed relative to last year, the gaps are consistent with gaps seen over the previous five years.
4. The Centre Assessment Grades (CAGs) submitted by schools and colleges were optimistic and, without standardisation, would have produced atypically high outcomes. This would have been contrary to the aim of achieving broadly similar national outcomes to reduce the risk of unfairness to learners over time and maintain public confidence.

Technical notes

1. Due to the changes in entry size for AS and A levels, we have included in this overview the number of students achieving each grade, as well as the percentages achieving them. Considering changes in results in terms of both counts and percentages can also be helpful in Wales where entry sizes can be small and where changes in percentages can often represent a small change in the number of learners receiving grades.
2. Particular care should be taken when comparing year-on-year results this year. Grades in 2020 have been calculated, whereas in previous years they are based on exams. The 2019 results in the tables are provisional and prior to reviews of marking and moderation and appeals. Grades in 2020 have been calculated to reflect outcomes after reviews of marking and moderation (RoMMs) and appeals, that is near final data rather than provisional data. As RoMMs and appeals usually lead to small increases to the provisional results, the increases between 2019 and 2020 results in this summary will be inflated, for example, over the past four years this difference for GCSEs is, on average, 0.5pp at A, 2.2pp at C and 0.5pp at G.
3. To protect confidentiality, and in accordance with Qualifications Wales's statistical outputs policy³, all (non-percentage) numbers are rounded. In the commentary and tables, they are rounded to the nearest 5. Figures fewer than 5 but greater than 0 are replaced with a *. This is to ensure that data does not reveal an individual candidate. All percentages within the commentary are based on actual figures. Figures have been rounded independently and therefore may not sum to the total.

³ <https://qualificationswales.org/english/publications/statistical-outputs-policy/>

Number of AS and A level qualifications taken in Wales

At A level, the number of qualifications taken in Wales has decreased again this year to 30,450, 3.3% lower compared to 2019. At AS level, the number of qualifications taken has increased by 14.6% to 45,435.

AS and A level 2015-2019: Number of qualifications taken in Wales

	AS	A level
2020	45,435	30,450
2019	39,645	31,485
2018	42,915	32,445
2017	46,130	33,295
2016	49,145	35,535
2015	52,770	36,035

Source: JCQ

The increase for AS is likely due to the following factors:

- An increase in the population size for the current cohort of 17-year-olds⁴, following a trend of declining population sizes in previous years
- An increase in the number of centres choosing to cash in AS grades

The drop for A level could be caused by a number of factors:

- a smaller population size, reducing the number of learners that could choose to enter these qualifications;
- a fall in the average number of qualifications taken by learners;
- an increase in learners choosing to study vocational qualifications, enter training or starting apprenticeships, and
- an increase in the number of learners withdrawn after a provisional entry was made

⁴ <https://statswales.gov.wales/v/ISIM>

A level Results

In 2020

- the proportion achieving A* is 10.8%
- the proportion achieving A* or A is 29.9%
- the proportion achieving A* to E is 98.6%

A level Results 2020 (cumulative percentage)

	A*	A*-A	A*-E
2020	10.8	29.9	98.6

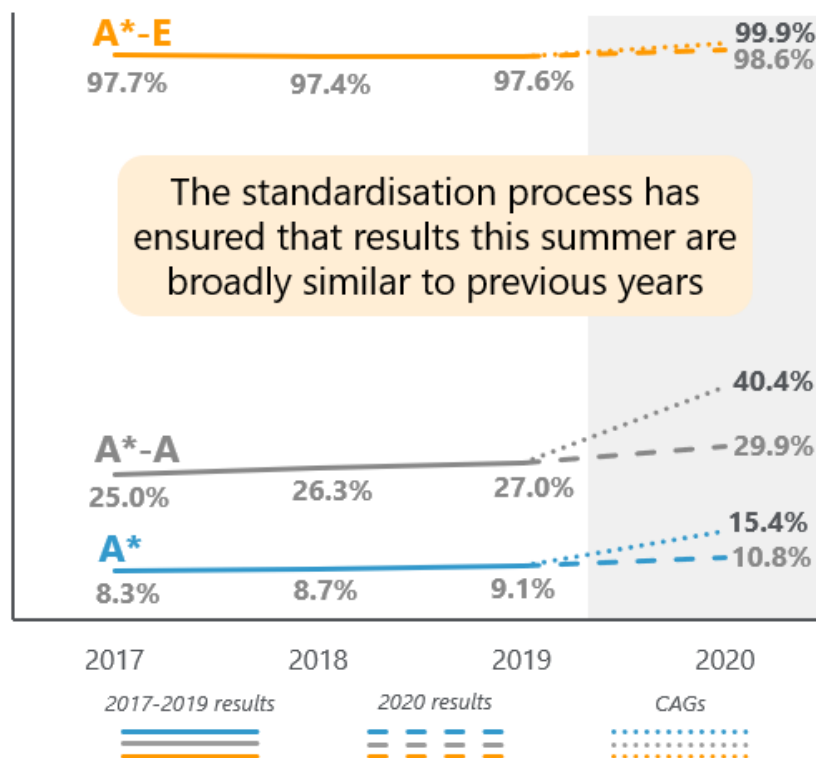
Source: JCQ

In comparison to the 2019 provisional results:

- the proportion achieving A* is up 1.7 percentage points to 10.8%
- the proportion achieving A* or A is up 2.9 percentage points to 29.9%
- the proportion achieving A* to E is up 1.0 percentage points to 98.6%

Overall results

compared with summer 2020 Centre Assessment Grades (CAGs)



Figures shown for 2017-2019 are provisional summer results published by JCQ and have not been adjusted to account for reviews of marking. Care should be taken when comparing these historical results with 2020 results.

A level Results 2015-2019 (cumulative percentage)

	A*	A*-A	A*-E
2019	9.1	27.0	97.6
2018	8.7	26.3	97.4
2017	8.3	25.0	97.7
2016	6.6	22.7	97.3
2015	7.3	23.1	97.3

Source: JCQ

A level Results 2020 (cumulative number of grades awarded)

	A*	A*-A	A*-E	Number Sat
2020	3,300	9,110	30,030	30,450

Source: JCQ

A level Results 2015-2019 (cumulative number of grades awarded)

	A*	A*-A	A*-E	Number Sat
2019	2,875	8,510	30,715	31,485
2018	2,815	8,525	31,605	32,445
2017	2,750	8,320	32,525	33,295
2016	2,350	8,080	34,565	35,535
2015	2,360	8,325	35,060	36,035

Source: JCQ

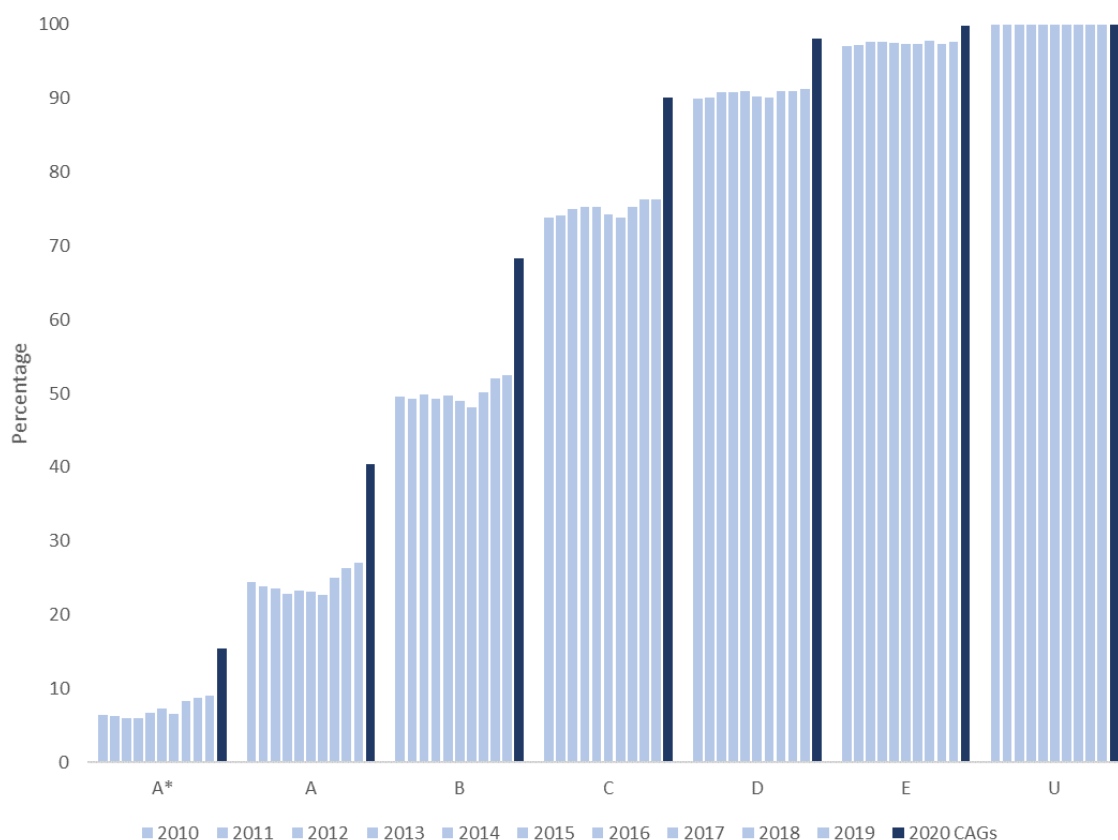
The increases in A level results have led to more A* and A grades being awarded at A level compared to previous years, although the overall decrease in the numbers sat means that fewer A*-E grades were awarded.

Centre assessment grades (CAGs) for A level

Annex B contains analysis of the CAGs submitted by centres this summer, compared to provisional results in the last ten years. In summary, the analysis shows that the CAGs would have produced atypically high outcomes if they had been accepted in full. This would have been contrary to the aim of achieving broadly similar national outcomes to reduce the risk of unfairness to learners over time and maintain public confidence.

For example, for the summer series from 2010 to 2019 inclusive the highest A* outcome was 9.1% (in 2019), the CAGs would have given 15.4%. For the same period, the highest cumulative A*-A outcomes was 27.0%, the CAGs would have given cumulative A*-A outcomes of 40.4%.

Figure 1. Provisional Summer GCE A level Cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020)



Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Initial equalities impact analysis for A level

Following our public consultation, aim 3 underpinning the standardisation model was that:

'As far as possible, the process for awarding grades will not systematically advantage or disadvantage learners, including those with characteristics protected by equalities legislation'.

We have committed to carrying out and publishing a detailed equality impact analysis after the summer. We have undertaken an initial equalities impact analysis for A level and AS results in Wales which can be found in Annex C. In summary, the analysis for A levels shows:

- Attainment gaps by eligibility for free school meals have changed a small amount relative to 2019. However, across grades the changes are not all in the same direction and the gaps are not atypical when compared to the previous 5 years.
- Attainment gaps by gender have changed relative to 2019. However, across grades the changes are not all in the same direction and the gaps are not atypical when compared to the previous 5 years.
- Attainment gaps by age (18yo vs non-18yo) have changed relative to 2019. However, across grades the changes are not all in the same direction and the gaps are not atypical when compared to the previous 5 years.
- A statistical test⁵ has shown that the attainment gaps (gender, age, EFSM) seen in 2020 are not atypical to those seen over the last five years.
- Due to the small sample sizes in most broad ethnicity groups and the need to account for other characteristics, it was not possible to robustly analyse attainment gaps by ethnicity in this initial analysis. Ethnicity attainment gaps will be analysed in the full equalities impact analysis.

It is important to note that attainment gaps in qualifications tend to change each year especially in optional qualifications with smaller entry sizes, like A levels. This is likely to be because the underlying ability and performance of learners in each group can change in different directions.

⁵ A z-test of the cumulative gaps following normality tests (Shapiro-Wilks and Kolmogorov-Smirnov). The significance level, family-wise, was 1% following a Bonferroni adjustment to account for the 33 tests (5 AS grades, 6 A level grades and 3 gaps (gender, age, EFSM)).

AS Results

In 2020:

- the proportion achieving A is 22.2%
- the proportion achieving A to E is 91.4%

AS Results 2020 (cumulative percentage)

	A	A-E
2020	22.2	91.4

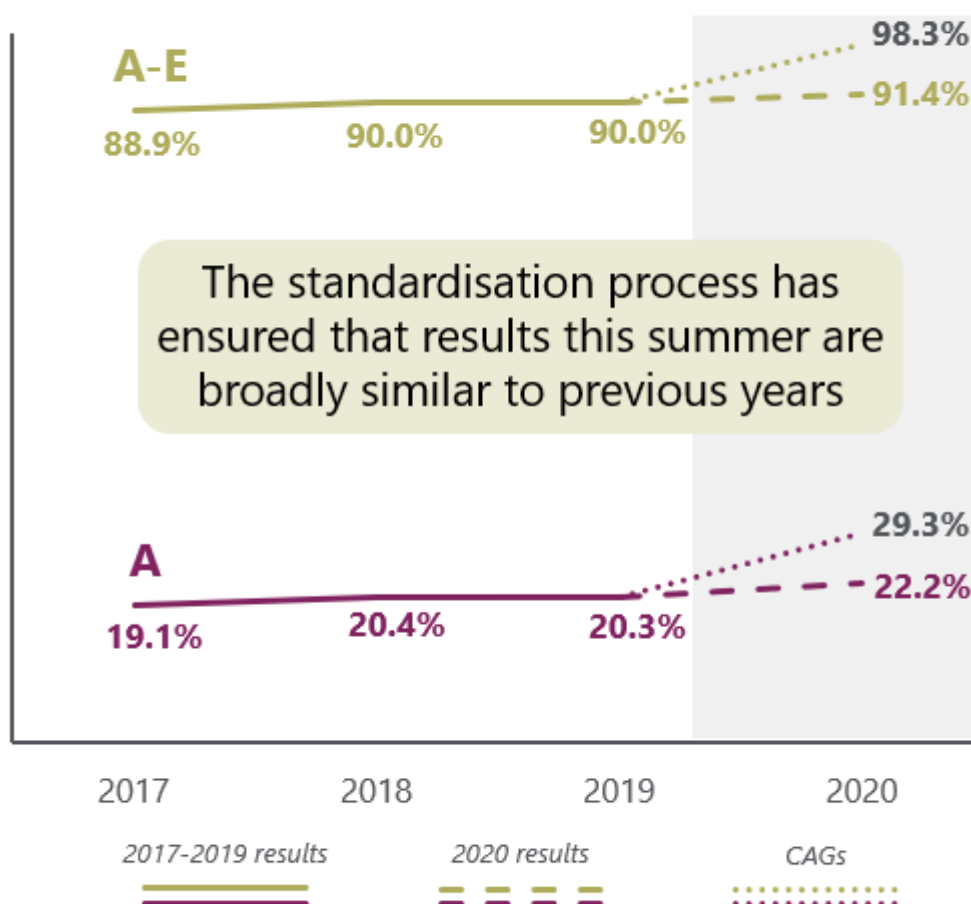
Source: JCQ

In comparison with 2019 results:

- the proportion achieving A has increased by 1.9 percentage points to 22.2%
- the proportion achieving A to E has increased by 1.4 percentage points to 91.4%

Overall results

compared with summer 2020 Centre Assessment Grades (CAGs)



Figures shown for 2017-2019 are provisional summer results published by JCQ and have not been adjusted to account for reviews of marking. Care should be taken when comparing these historical results with 2020 results.

AS Results 2015-2019 (cumulative percentage)

	A	A-E
2019	20.3	90.0
2018	20.4	90.0
2017	19.1	88.9
2016	18.0	88.3
2015	16.2	86.8

Source: JCQ

AS Results 2020 (cumulative number of grades awarded)

	A	A-E	Number Sat
2020	10,070	41,540	45,435

Source: JCQ

AS Results 2015-2019 (cumulative number of grades awarded)

	A	A-E	Number Sat
2019	8,040	35,695	39,645
2018	8,735	38,635	42,915
2017	8,825	40,985	46,125
2016	8,830	43,385	49,145
2015	8,550	45,805	52,770

Source: JCQ

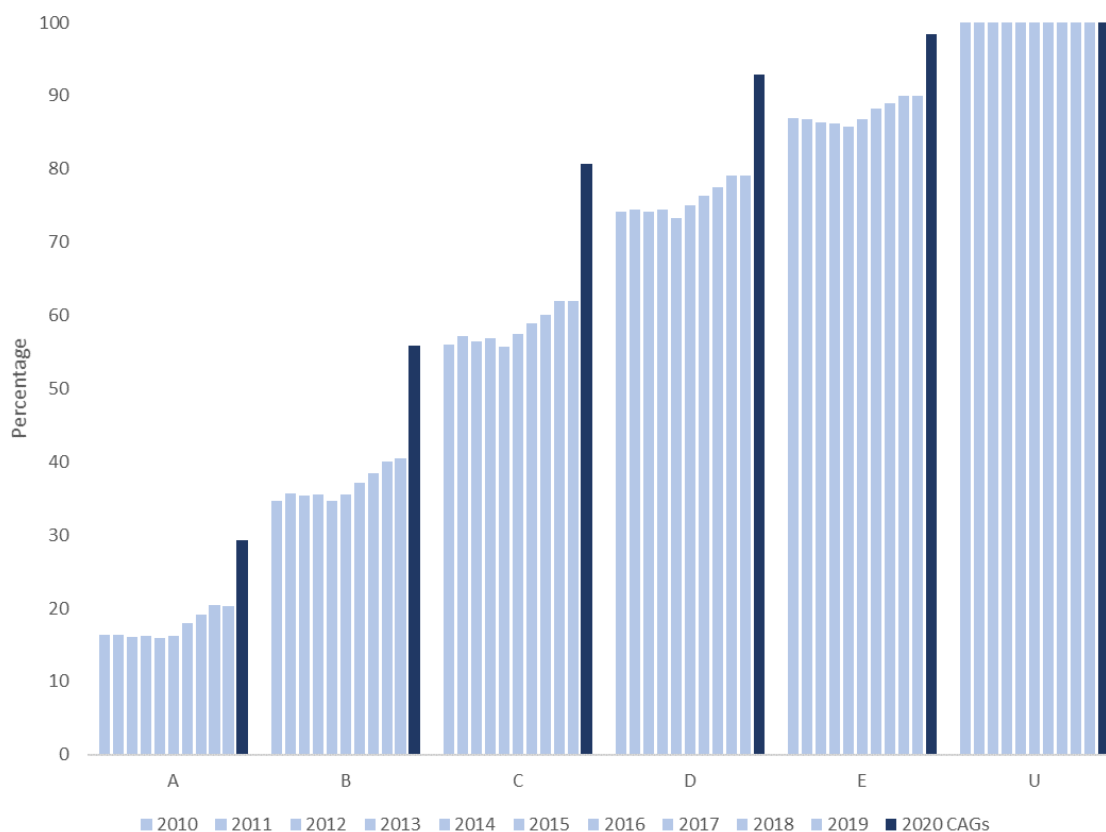
The number of AS grades awarded has increased in 2020. This, plus the overall increase in results, means that more grade A grades and more grades between A and E have been awarded at AS in 2020 than in 2019.

Centre assessment grades (CAGs) for AS

Annex B contains analysis of the CAGs submitted by centres this summer, compared to provisional results in the last ten years. In summary, the analysis shows that the CAGs would have produced atypically high outcomes if they had been accepted in full. This would have been contrary to the aim of achieving broadly similar national outcomes to reduce the risk of unfairness to learners over time and maintain public confidence.

For example, for the summer series from 2010 to 2019 inclusive the highest A outcomes was 20.3% (in 2019), the CAGs would have given 29.3%. For the same period, the highest cumulative A-C outcomes was 62.0%, the CAGs would have given cumulative A-C outcomes of 80.7%.

Figure 2. Provisional Summer GCE AS Cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020)



Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Initial equalities impact analysis for AS

Following our public consultation, aim 3 underpinning the standardisation model was that

'As far as possible, the process for awarding grades will not systematically advantage or disadvantage learners, including those with characteristics protected by equalities legislation'.

We committed to carry out and publish a detailed equality impact analysis after the summer. We have undertaken an initial equalities impact analysis for A level and AS results in Wales which can be found in Annex C. In summary, the analysis for AS levels shows:

- Attainment gaps by eligibility for free school meals have changed a small amount relative to 2019. However, across grades the changes are not all in the same direction and the gaps are not atypical when compared to the previous 5 years.
- Attainment gaps by gender have changed relative to 2019. However, across grades the gaps are not atypical when compared to the previous 5 years.
- Attainment gaps by age (17yo vs non-17yo) have changed relative to 2019. However, across grades the changes are not all in the same direction and the gaps are not atypical when compared to the previous 5 years.
- A statistical test⁶ has shown that the attainment gaps (gender, age, EFSM) seen in 2020 are not atypical to those seen over the last five years.
- Due to the small sample sizes in most of the broad ethnicity group and the need to account for other characteristics, it was not possible to robustly analyse attainment gaps by ethnicity in this initial analysis. Ethnicity attainment gaps will be analysed in the full equalities impact analysis.

It is important to note that attainment gaps in qualifications tend to change each year especially in optional qualifications with smaller entry sizes, like AS. This is likely to be because the underlying ability and performance of learners in each group can change in different directions.

⁶ A z-test of the cumulative gaps following normality tests (Shapiro-Wilks and Kolmogorov-Smirnov). The significance level, family-wise, was 1% following a Bonferroni adjustment to account for the 33 tests (5 AS grades, 6 A level grades and 3 gaps (gender, age, EFSM)).

Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate Results

The Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate is equivalent in size and demand to an A level. It uses the same grading scale and carries the same UCAS tariff points.

Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate Results 2020 (cumulative percentage)

	A*	A*-A	A*-E	Numbers Sat
2020	6.5	22.7	98.0	11,795

Source: WJEC

Consistent with A level and AS, results on the Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate have increased in 2020 relative to recent years.

Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate Results 2017 – 2019 (cumulative percentage)

	A*	A*-A	A*-E	Numbers Sat
2019	4.6	21.7	97.8	11,715
2018	3.9	21.5	97.7	12,015
2017	1.6	15.6	94.1	11,120

Source: WJEC

Annex A: Our aims for standardisation

The four aims listed below are the final aims to underpin statistical standardisation in summer 2020 as published in our decisions report in June. This followed on from the full public consultation we ran between 28 April and 13 May.

- Aim 1:** Learners for whom a qualification-level centre assessment grade and rank order are submitted will receive a grade.

- Aim 2:** National outcomes will be broadly similar to those in previous years to reduce the risk of unfairness for learners over time and maintain public confidence.

- Aim 3:** As far as possible, the process for awarding grades will not systematically advantage or disadvantage learners, including those with characteristics protected by equalities legislation.

- Aim 4:** The statistical standardisation model will use a range of evidence to calculate the likely grades that learners would have achieved, had they been able to complete their assessments.

Annex B: Analysis of centre assessment grades

One of the sources of evidence used for calculating grades this summer are the centre assessment grades and rank orders provided for learners by centres. This analysis compares the outcomes implied by the CAGs with previous outcomes for GCSEs, AS, and A level qualifications in Wales. Charts and commentary are provided first, with the supporting tables available at the end.

Data

Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ⁷) data used for historical outcomes (2009/11-2018/19 inclusive). These are the provisional results published on results day and prior to reviews of marking and moderation and appeals. For 2019/20, centre assessment grades submitted by awarding bodies to Qualifications Wales are used.

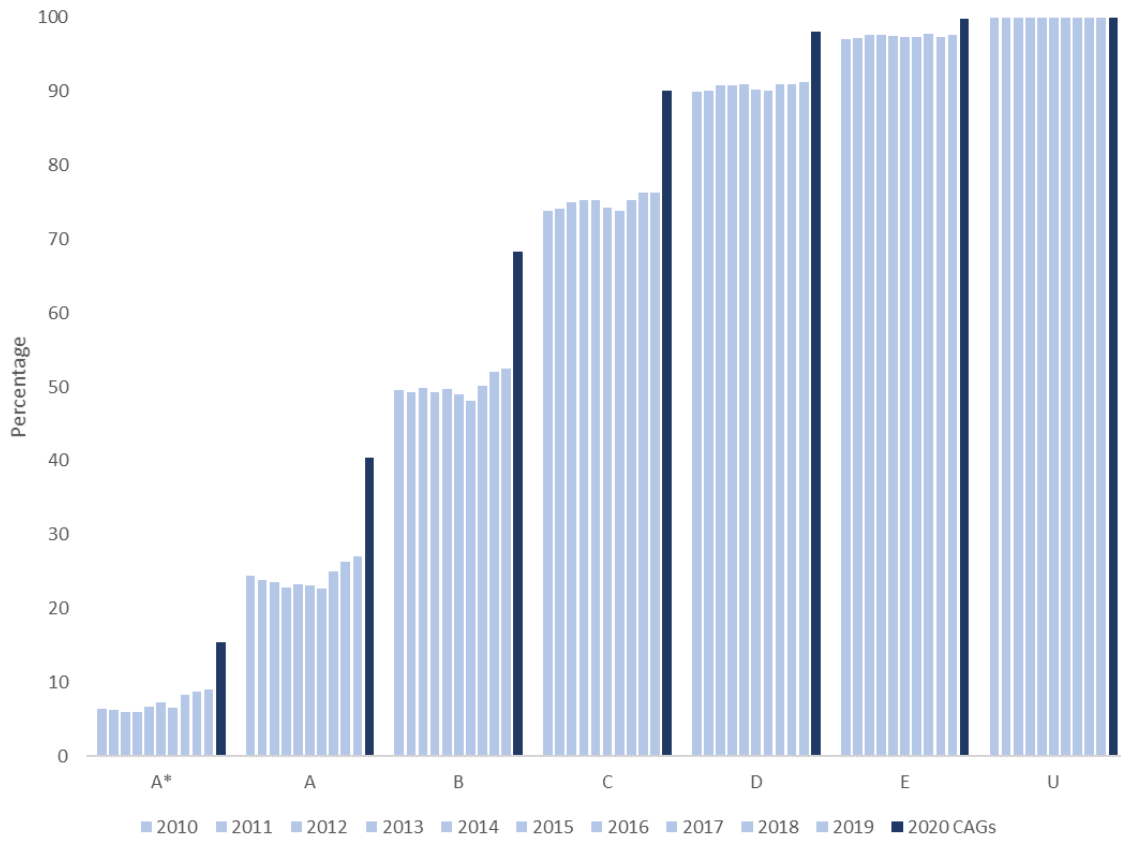
Provisional results usually vary by a small amount following reviews of marking and moderation and appeals. For example, over the past four years this difference for GCSEs is, on average, 0.5pp at A, 2.2pp at C and 0.5pp at G, due to data issues it is not possible to provide this figure for A levels and AS. Differences between the centre assessment grades in 2019/20 and results in previous years would reduce in this analysis if final results data in previous years were used. The provisional results were used in this analysis as the final results for all learners are not publicly available.

⁷ <https://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results/>

A level

Figure three shows that the CAGs would produce atypically high cumulative outcomes not seen in the previous ten years.

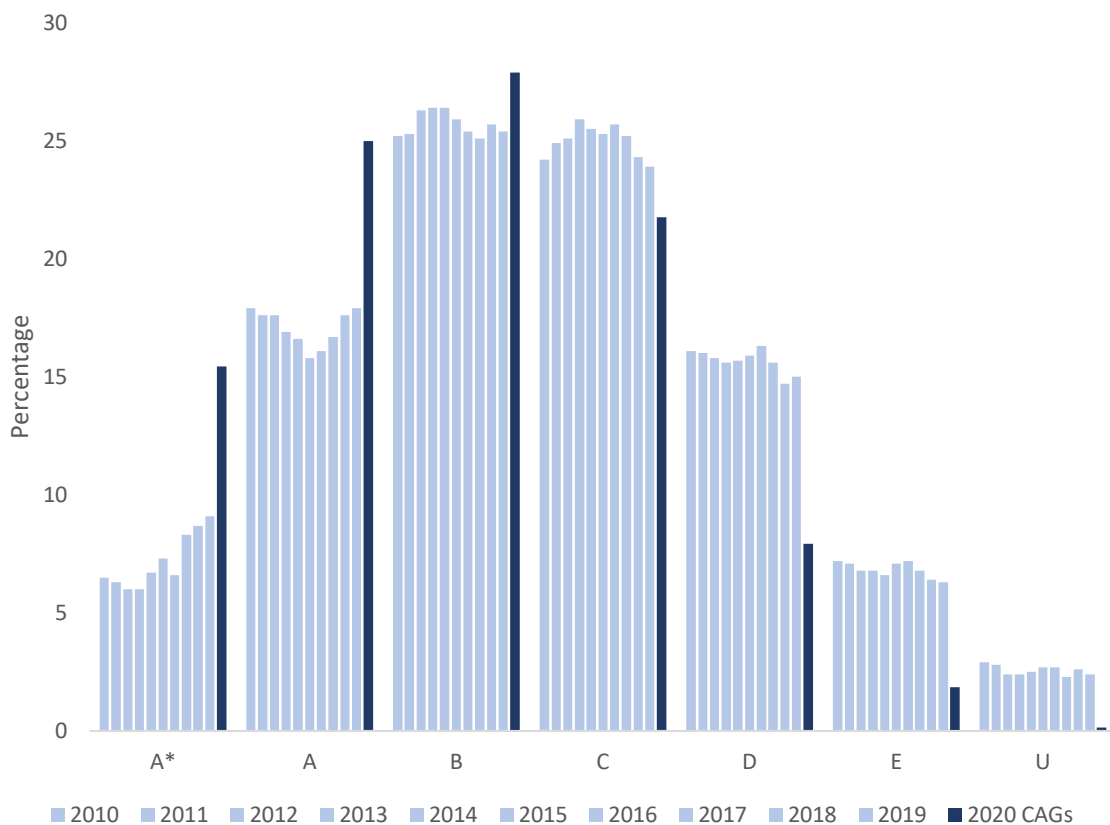
Figure 3. Provisional Summer GCE A level Cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020)



Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Figure four shows the same data on a non-cumulative basis. This shows that the CAGs would produce atypically high outcomes at A*, A, and B and atypically low outcomes at C, D, E, and U.

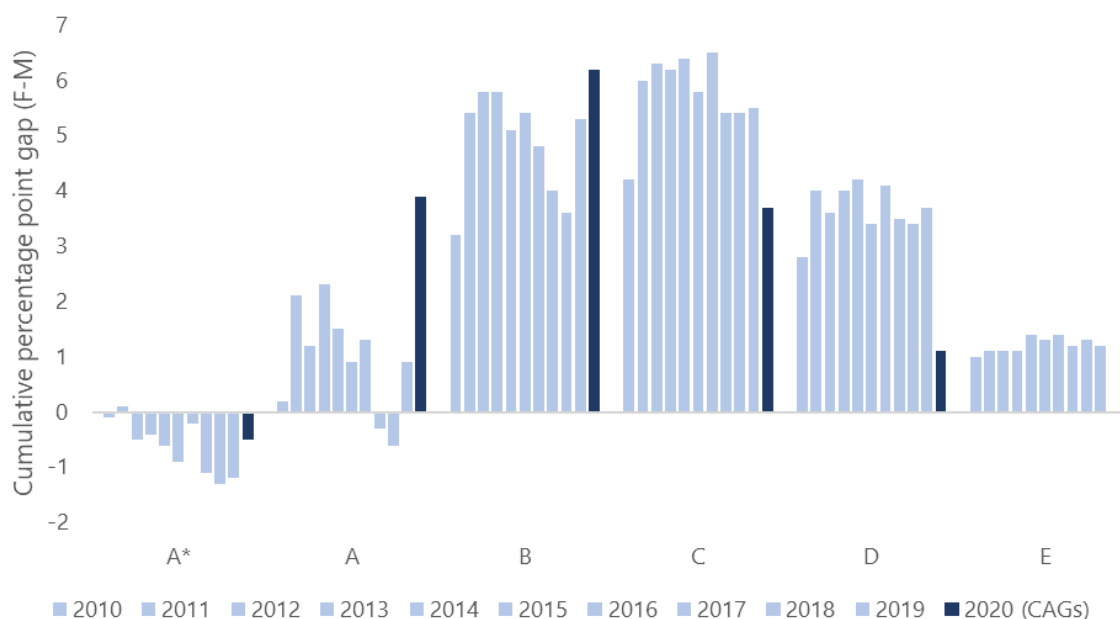
Figure 4. Provisional Summer GCE A level Non-cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020)



Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Figure five shows the difference (females – males) in cumulative outcomes. This shows that the CAGs would give atypical gender gaps at A, B, D, and E. The gap at A* is narrower than in recent years but not atypical when compared to the previous ten years. The gap at C is atypically narrow, but not vastly different to that seen in 2010.

Figure 5. Gender Gap (F – M), Provisional Summer GCE A level Cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020)



Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Table 1 below shows the final A level grades in relation to CAGs by free school meal status. This shows that across all learners, 42.2% of the final A level grades were lower than the CAGs. For learners eligible for free school meals, 48.1% of the final A level grades were lower than the CAGs, compared to 45.3% for learners not eligible for free school meals.

Table 1. Final A level grades in relation to CAGs by eligibility for free school meal status⁽¹⁾, all learners

Free School Meal Status	Lower than CAG	Same as CAG	Higher than CAG	Grades ⁽²⁾
Eligible	48.1%	46.2%	5.7%	1,285
Not eligible	45.3%	50.6%	4.1%	23,070
Unknown	27.6%	68.9%	3.5%	5,315
Total	42.2%	53.7%	4.1%	29,670

Source: Awarding Bodies

- (1) Note that the free school meal eligibility data may not be available for all learners and where it is available it may not be data from the current year.
 (2) Due to the timing of data extracts, the total number of grades in this table may not exactly match the figure presented in other sections of this paper.

Table 1a below shows the final A level grades in relation to the CAGs. This shows that, across all learners, 53.5% of the final grades were the same as the CAGs, and 94.2% were within one grade of the CAG.

Table 1a. Final A level grades in relation to CAGs (e.g. Final = C, CAG = B, difference = -1), all learners⁽¹⁾

	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	Total	Within one grade
Grades	15	165	1,555	11,110	16,225	1,225	25	5	30,315	28,555
Percentage	0.0%	0.5%	5.1%	36.7%	53.5%	4.0%	0.1%	0.0%	100.0%	94.2%

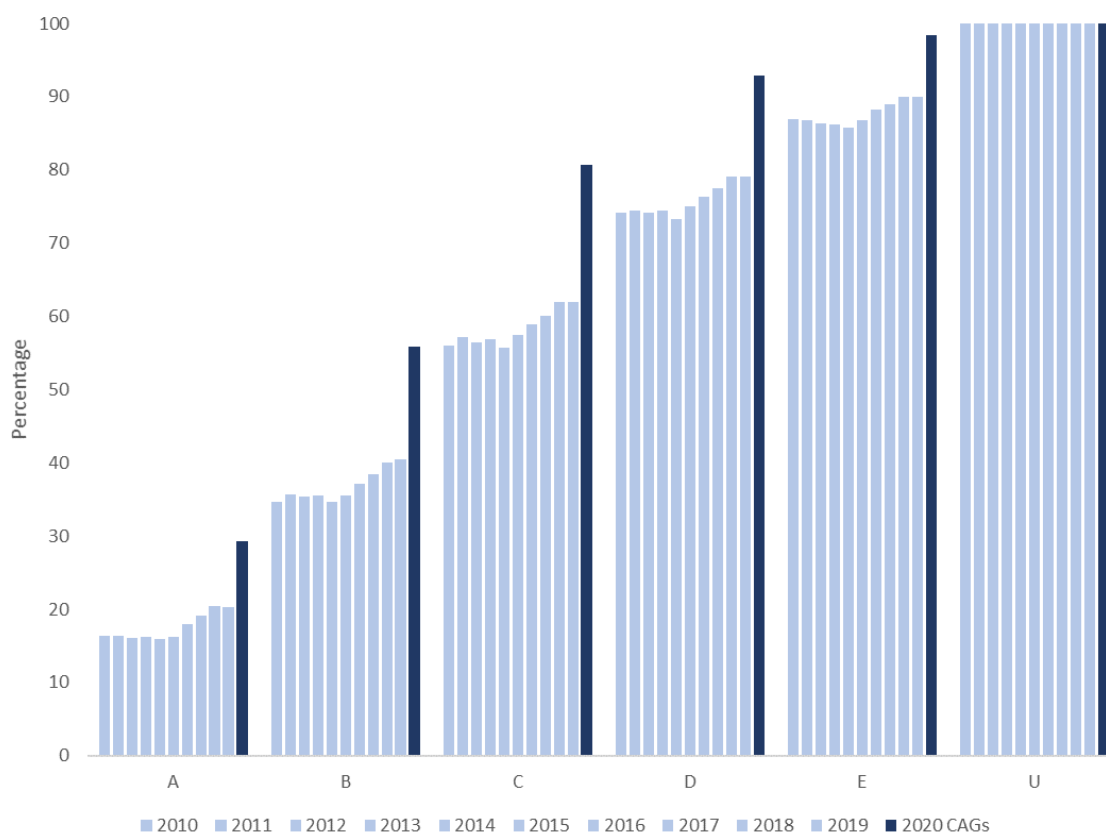
Source: Awarding Bodies

- (1) Please note that the number of grades may not match exactly with other figures due to the timing of data extracts

AS

Figure six shows that the CAGs would produce atypically high cumulative outcomes not seen in the previous ten years. The difference between the CAGs and the 2019 outcomes for AS is larger than that seen in A level CAGs.

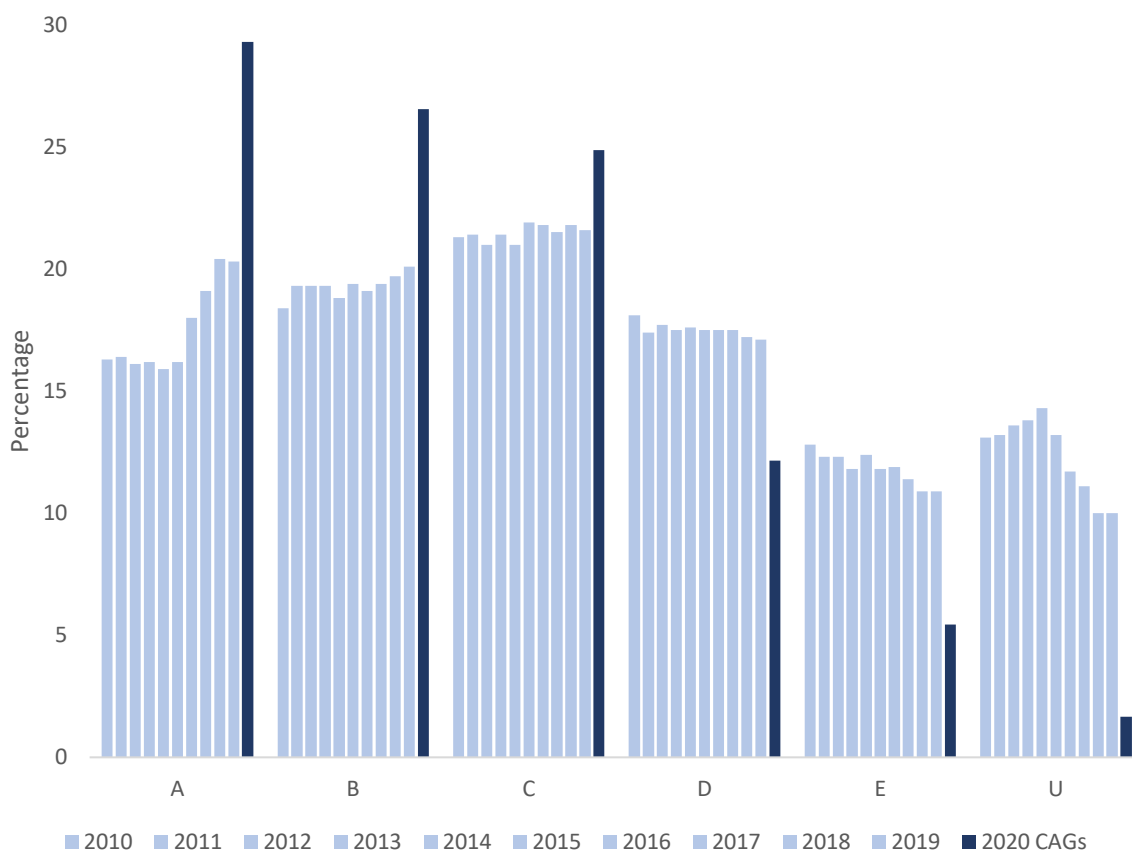
Figure 6. Provisional Summer GCE AS Cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020)



Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Figure seven shows the same data on a non-cumulative basis. This shows that the CAGs would produce atypically high outcomes at A, B, and C, and atypically low outcomes at D, E, and U.

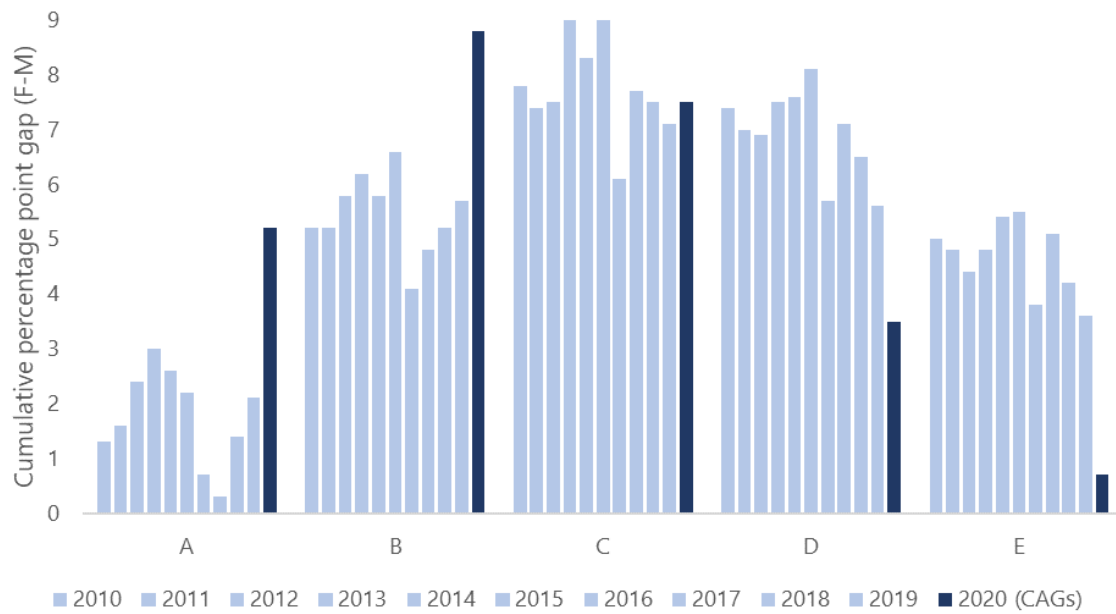
Figure 7. Provisional Summer GCE AS Non-cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020)



Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Figure eight shows the difference (females – males) in cumulative outcomes. This shows that the CAGs would give atypical gender gaps at A, B, D, and E.

Figure 8. Gender Gap (F – M), Provisional Summer GCE AS Cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020)



Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Table 2 below shows the final AS grades in relation to CAGs by free school meal status. This shows that across all learners, 42.9% of the final AS grades were lower than the CAGs. For learners eligible for free school meals, 45.7% of the final AS grades were lower than the CAGs, compared to 43.7% for learners not eligible for free school meals.

Table 2. Final AS grades in relation to CAGs by eligibility for free school meal status⁽¹⁾, all learners

Free School Meal Status	Lower than CAG	Same as CAG	Higher than CAG	Grades ⁽²⁾
Eligible	45.7%	51.7%	2.5%	2,215
Not eligible	43.7%	54.0%	2.3%	35,790
Unknown	36.9%	60.8%	2.4%	5,895
Total	42.9%	54.8%	2.3%	43,900

Source: Awarding Bodies

(1) Note that the free school meal eligibility data may not be available for all learners and where it is available it may not be data from the current year.

(2) Due to the timing of data extracts, the total number of grades in this table may not exactly match the figure presented in other sections of this paper.

Table 2a below shows the final AS grades in relation to the CAGs. This shows that, across all learners, 54.7% of the final grades were the same as the CAGs, and 89.0% were within one grade of the CAG.

Table 2a. Final AS grades in relation to CAGs (e.g. Final = C, CAG = B, difference = -1), all learners⁽¹⁾

	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	Total	Within one grade
Grades	35	765	4,120	14,340	24,545	1,030	25	*	44,855	39,915
Percentage	0.1%	1.7%	9.2%	32.0%	54.7%	2.3%	0.1%	0.0%	100.0%	89.0%

Source: Awarding Bodies

(1) Please note that the number of grades may not match exactly with other figures due to the timing of data extracts

Tables

Table 3. Provisional Summer GCE A level Cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020)

Year	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
2010	6.5	24.4	49.6	73.8	89.9	97.1	100.0
2011	6.3	23.9	49.2	74.1	90.1	97.2	100.0
2012	6.0	23.6	49.9	75.0	90.8	97.6	100.0
2013	6.0	22.9	49.3	75.2	90.8	97.6	100.0
2014	6.7	23.3	49.7	75.2	90.9	97.5	100.0
2015	7.3	23.1	49.0	74.3	90.2	97.3	100.0
2016	6.6	22.7	48.1	73.8	90.1	97.3	100.0
2017	8.3	25.0	50.1	75.3	90.9	97.7	100.0
2018	8.7	26.3	52.0	76.3	91.0	97.4	100.0
2019	9.1	27.0	52.4	76.3	91.3	97.6	100.0
2020 (CAGs)	15.4	40.4	68.3	90.1	98.0	99.9	100.0

Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Table 4. Provisional Summer GCE A level Non-cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020)

Year	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
2010	6.5	17.9	25.2	24.2	16.1	7.2	2.9
2011	6.3	17.6	25.3	24.9	16.0	7.1	2.8
2012	6.0	17.6	26.3	25.1	15.8	6.8	2.4
2013	6.0	16.9	26.4	25.9	15.6	6.8	2.4
2014	6.7	16.6	26.4	25.5	15.7	6.6	2.5
2015	7.3	15.8	25.9	25.3	15.9	7.1	2.7
2016	6.6	16.1	25.4	25.7	16.3	7.2	2.7
2017	8.3	16.7	25.1	25.2	15.6	6.8	2.3
2018	8.7	17.6	25.7	24.3	14.7	6.4	2.6
2019	9.1	17.9	25.4	23.9	15.0	6.3	2.4
2020 (CAGs)	15.4	25.0	27.9	21.8	7.9	1.9	0.2

Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Table 5. Provisional Summer GCE A level Non-cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020) (gap is in percentage points)

Year		A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
2010	Female	6.5	24.5	51.0	75.7	91.1	97.5	100.0
	Male	6.6	24.3	47.8	71.5	88.3	96.5	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	-0.1	0.2	3.2	4.2	2.8	1.0	0.0
2011	Female	6.3	24.8	51.6	76.8	91.9	97.7	100.0
	Male	6.2	22.7	46.2	70.8	87.9	96.6	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	0.1	2.1	5.4	6.0	4.0	1.1	0.0
2012	Female	5.8	24.1	52.5	77.8	92.4	98.0	100.0
	Male	6.3	22.9	46.7	71.5	88.8	96.9	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	-0.5	1.2	5.8	6.3	3.6	1.1	0.0
2013	Female	5.8	23.9	51.9	78.0	92.6	98.1	100.0
	Male	6.2	21.6	46.1	71.8	88.6	97.0	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	-0.4	2.3	5.8	6.2	4.0	1.1	0.0
2014	Female	6.5	24.0	52.0	78.1	92.8	98.1	100.0
	Male	7.1	22.5	46.9	71.7	88.6	96.7	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	-0.6	1.5	5.1	6.4	4.2	1.4	0.0
2015	Female	6.9	23.5	51.4	76.9	91.7	97.9	100.0
	Male	7.8	22.6	46.0	71.1	88.3	96.6	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	-0.9	0.9	5.4	5.8	3.4	1.3	0.0
2016	Female	6.5	23.3	50.2	76.6	91.8	97.8	99.9
	Male	6.7	22.0	45.4	70.1	87.7	96.4	99.9
	Gap (F-M)	-0.2	1.3	4.8	6.5	4.1	1.4	0.0
2017	Female	7.8	24.9	51.9	77.7	92.4	98.2	100.0
	Male	8.9	25.2	47.9	72.3	88.9	97.0	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	-1.1	-0.3	4.0	5.4	3.5	1.2	0.0
2018	Female	8.1	26.0	53.6	78.7	92.5	98.0	100.0
	Male	9.4	26.6	50.0	73.3	89.1	96.7	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	-1.3	-0.6	3.6	5.4	3.4	1.3	0.0
2019	Female	8.6	27.4	54.7	78.7	92.9	98.1	100.0
	Male	9.8	26.5	49.4	73.2	89.2	96.9	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	-1.2	0.9	5.3	5.5	3.7	1.2	0.0
2020 (CAGs)	Female	15.2	42.1	71.0	91.7	98.5	99.9	100.0
	Male	15.7	38.2	64.8	88.0	97.4	99.9	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	-0.5	3.9	6.2	3.7	1.1	0.0	0.0

Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Table 6. Provisional Summer GCE AS Cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020)

Year	A	B	C	D	E	U
2010	16.3	34.7	56.0	74.1	86.9	100.0
2011	16.4	35.7	57.1	74.5	86.8	100.0
2012	16.1	35.4	56.4	74.1	86.4	100.0
2013	16.2	35.5	56.9	74.4	86.2	100.0
2014	15.9	34.7	55.7	73.3	85.7	100.0
2015	16.2	35.6	57.5	75.0	86.8	100.0
2016	18.0	37.1	58.9	76.4	88.3	100.0
2017	19.1	38.5	60.0	77.5	88.9	100.0
2018	20.4	40.1	61.9	79.1	90.0	100.0
2019	20.3	40.4	62.0	79.1	90.0	100.0
2020 (CAGs)	29.3	55.9	80.7	92.9	98.3	100.0

Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Table 7. Provisional Summer GCE AS Non-cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020)

Year	A	B	C	D	E	U
2010	16.3	18.4	21.3	18.1	12.8	13.1
2011	16.4	19.3	21.4	17.4	12.3	13.2
2012	16.1	19.3	21.0	17.7	12.3	13.6
2013	16.2	19.3	21.4	17.5	11.8	13.8
2014	15.9	18.8	21.0	17.6	12.4	14.3
2015	16.2	19.4	21.9	17.5	11.8	13.2
2016	18.0	19.1	21.8	17.5	11.9	11.7
2017	19.1	19.4	21.5	17.5	11.4	11.1
2018	20.4	19.7	21.8	17.2	10.9	10.0
2019	20.3	20.1	21.6	17.1	10.9	10.0
2020 (CAGs)	29.3	26.6	24.9	12.2	5.5	1.7

Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Table 8. Provisional Summer GCE AS Non-cumulative Percentage Results (2010-19) and CAGs (2020) (gap is in percentage points)

Year		A	B	C	D	E	U
2010	Female	16.9	37.1	59.6	77.5	89.2	100.0
	Male	15.6	31.9	51.8	70.1	84.2	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	1.3	5.2	7.8	7.4	5.0	0.0
2011	Female	17.1	38.1	60.5	77.7	89.0	100.0
	Male	15.5	32.9	53.1	70.7	84.2	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	1.6	5.2	7.4	7.0	4.8	0.0
2012	Female	17.2	38.1	59.9	77.3	88.4	100.0
	Male	14.8	32.3	52.4	70.4	84.0	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	2.4	5.8	7.5	6.9	4.4	0.0
2013	Female	17.6	38.4	61.0	77.8	88.4	100.0
	Male	14.6	32.2	52.0	70.3	83.6	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	3.0	6.2	9.0	7.5	4.8	0.0
2014	Female	17.1	37.4	59.5	76.8	88.2	100.0
	Male	14.5	31.6	51.2	69.2	82.8	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	2.6	5.8	8.3	7.6	5.4	0.0
2015	Female	17.2	38.5	61.5	78.6	89.3	100.0
	Male	15.0	31.9	52.5	70.5	83.8	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	2.2	6.6	9.0	8.1	5.5	0.0
2016	Female	18.3	38.9	61.6	79.0	90.0	100.0
	Male	17.6	34.8	55.5	73.3	86.2	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	0.7	4.1	6.1	5.7	3.8	0.0
2017	Female	19.3	40.6	63.5	80.7	91.2	100.0
	Male	19.0	35.8	55.8	73.6	86.1	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	0.3	4.8	7.7	7.1	5.1	0.0
2018	Female	21.0	42.4	65.2	82.0	91.9	100.0
	Male	19.6	37.2	57.7	75.5	87.7	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	1.4	5.2	7.5	6.5	4.2	0.0
2019	Female	21.2	42.9	65.1	81.5	91.6	100.0
	Male	19.1	37.2	58.0	75.9	88.0	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	2.1	5.7	7.1	5.6	3.6	0.0
2020	Female	31.6	59.7	84.0	94.4	98.6	100.0
	Male	26.4	50.9	76.5	90.9	97.9	100.0
	Gap (F-M)	5.2	8.8	7.5	3.5	0.7	0.0

Source: 2010-2019 JCQ; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Annex C: Initial Equalities Impact Analysis

In the sections below, further detail is given on the initial attainment gap analysis. The attainment gaps for eligibility for free school meals, gender and age are analysed.

It was not possible to robustly analyse the attainment gaps by ethnicity as in most broad ethnicity groups the number of learners is insufficient to support a robust initial analysis (see Table 9) and will require a more detailed analysis to account better for small sample sizes and confounding factors.

Table 9. Broad Ethnicity⁽¹⁾ of all learners in 2020 data

Broad Ethnicity	Percentage
Asian/Asian British	2.6
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	0.7
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	2.1
Other Ethnic group	1.0
Unknown or not stated	0.5
White	93.1
Total	100.0

Source: Welsh Government

(1) Categorized as per Government Statistical Service advice

(<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/policy-store/ethnicity/#wales->).

It should be noted that the data for eligibility for free school meals is the most recent available, however, for some learners this data will be from when they were in Yr11 and so is not current for all learners.

To provide a historical context for the attainment gaps data from the Welsh Examinations Database and Pupil Level Annual School Census (WEDPLASC) was used. To ensure comparability, the 2020 data was subset to only those centres that were also present in the WEDPLASC data. This means that the following analyses are based on learners in maintained centres. However, an analysis of the data shows that the data accounts for a reasonable proportion of the all-learner data.

It is important to note that differences in attainment between groups of learners may arise due to differences in the underlying ability of the learners and so when analysing attainment gaps it is helpful to take account of any changes in ability in an ability-adjusted analysis. It was not possible to produce this detailed ability-adjusted analysis here and so only high-level overall differences in attainment are presented in this initial analysis. The attainment gaps below should be interpreted carefully as they have not been ability adjusted.

A level

In the charts and tables below the data for the U category appear empty. The U category is the final category in a cumulative analysis and so it is included to be transparent and consistent with similar presentations from other organisations. It appears empty because all learners receive at least a U so there are not gaps at U.

Eligibility for Free School Meals

Table 10 shows that the following data accounts for over half of the all-learner data.

Table 10. A level, Free School Meal attainment gap (Not EFSM – EFSM), 18yo, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Centres	155	155	140	140	140	145
18yo data	23,385	23,215	20,665	19,770	19,230	18,675
All learners data	36,035	35,535	33,295	32,445	31,485	30,450
18yo data as percentage of all learners data	64.9%	65.3%	62.1%	60.9%	61.1%	61.3%

Source: 2014/15-18/19 WEDPLASC; 2020 WJEC; All learners JCQ

The attainment gaps by eligibility for free school meals have changed slightly from 2019 and are not atypical from those over the past five years.

Figure 9. A level, Free School Meal attainment gap (Not EFSM – EFSM, percentage points), 18yo, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data

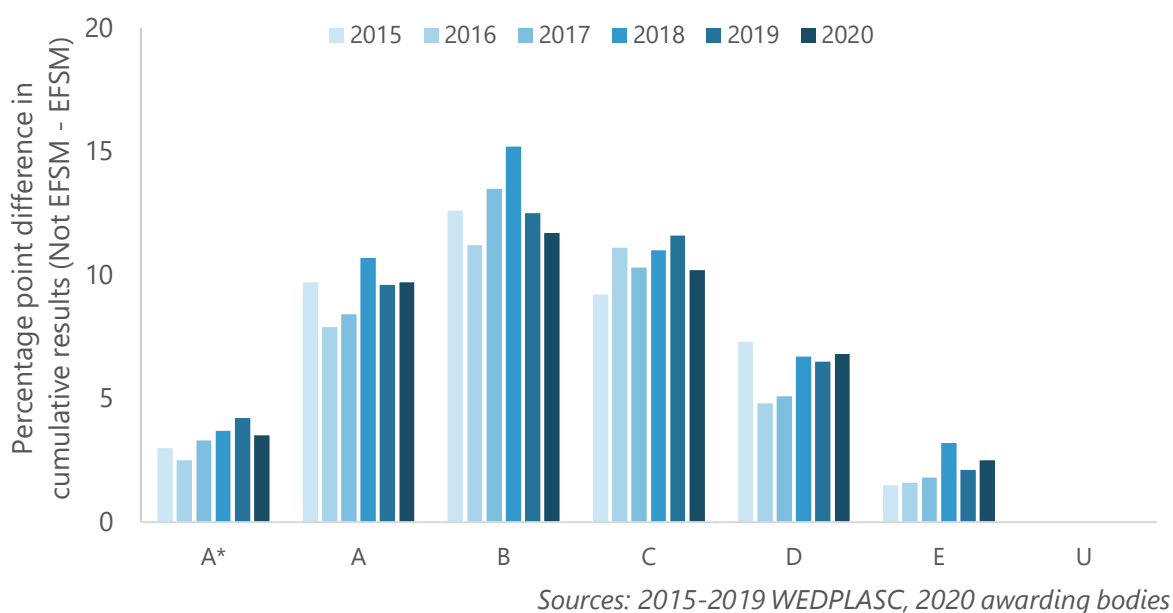


Table 11. A level, Free School Meal attainment gap (Not EFSM – EFSM), 18yo, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data (percentage points)

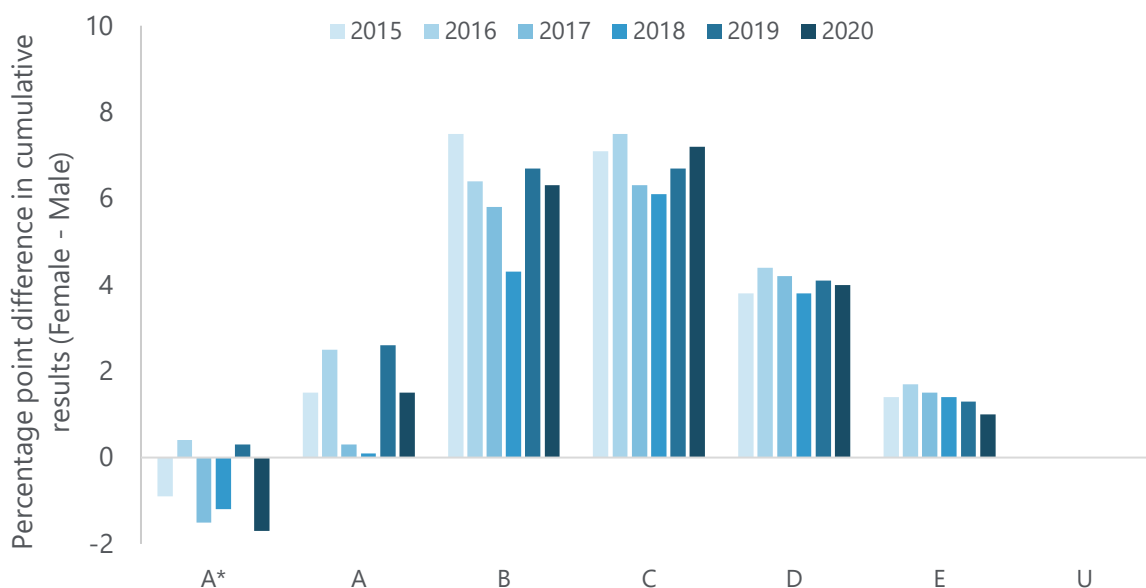
Year	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
2015	3.0	9.7	12.6	9.2	7.3	1.5	0.0
2016	2.5	7.9	11.2	11.1	4.8	1.6	0.0
2017	3.3	8.4	13.5	10.3	5.1	1.8	0.0
2018	3.7	10.7	15.2	11.0	6.7	3.2	0.0
2019	4.2	9.6	12.5	11.6	6.5	2.1	0.0
2020	3.5	9.7	11.7	10.2	6.8	2.5	0.0

Source: 2014/15-18/19 WEDPLASC; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Gender

The attainment gaps by gender have changed slightly from 2019 and are not atypical from those over the past five years.

Figure 10. A level, Gender attainment gap (Female – Male, percentage points), 18yo, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data



Sources: 2015-2019 WEDPLASC, 2020 awarding bodies

Table 12. A level, Gender attainment gap (Female - Male), 18yo, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data (percentage points)

Year	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
2015	-0.9	1.5	7.5	7.1	3.8	1.4	0.0
2016	0.4	2.5	6.4	7.5	4.4	1.7	0.0
2017	-1.5	0.3	5.8	6.3	4.2	1.5	0.0
2018	-1.2	0.1	4.3	6.1	3.8	1.4	0.0
2019	0.3	2.6	6.7	6.7	4.1	1.3	0.0
2020	-1.7	1.5	6.3	7.2	4.0	1.0	0.0

Source: 2014/15-18/19 WEDPLASC; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Age

Table 13 shows that the following data accounts for over half of the all-learner data.

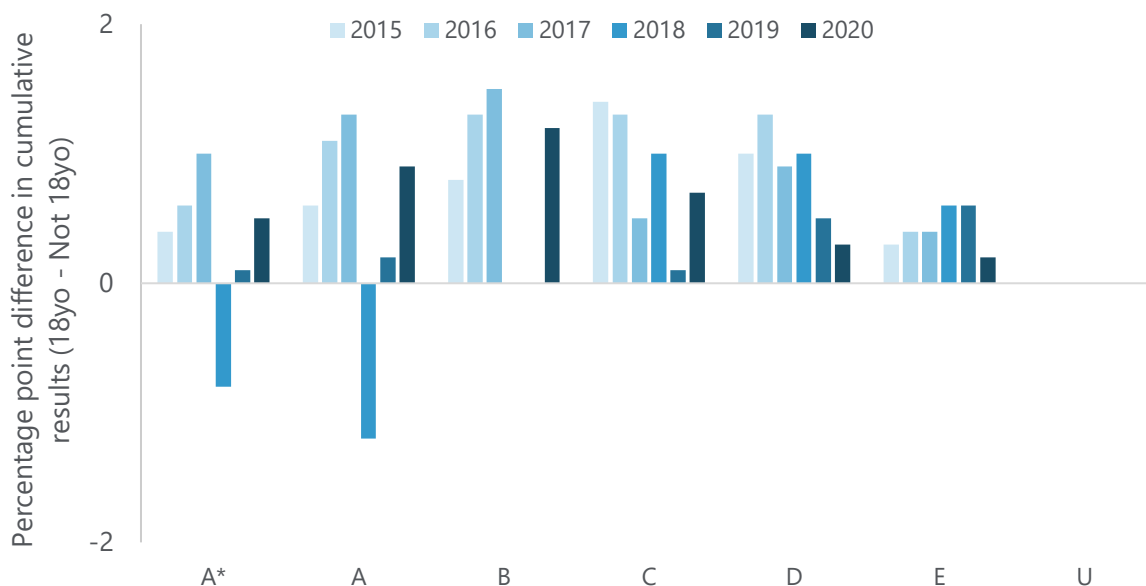
Table 13. A level, Age attainment gap (18yo – Not 18yo), All learners, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Centres	155	155	140	140	140	145
Analysis data	25,525	25,390	22,05	21,310	20,49	18,93
			0		5	5
All learners data	36,035	35,535	33,29	32,445	31,48	30,45
			5		5	0
Analysis data as percentage of all learners data	70.8%	71.5%	66.2	65.7%	65.1	62.2
			%		%	%

Source: 2014/15-18/19 WEDPLASC; 2020 WJEC; All learners JCQ

The attainment gaps by age have changed from 2019 and are not atypical from those over the past five years.

Figure 11. A level, Age attainment gap (18yo – Not 18yo, percentage points), All learners, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data



Sources: 2015-2019 WEDPLASC, 2020 awarding bodies

Table 14. A level, Age attainment gap (18yo – Not 18yo), All learners, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data (percentage points)

Year	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
2015	0.4	0.6	0.8	1.4	1.0	0.3	0.0
2016	0.6	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.4	0.0
2017	1.0	1.3	1.5	0.5	0.9	0.4	0.0
2018	-0.8	-1.2	-0.0	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.0
2019	0.1	0.2	-0.0	0.1	0.5	0.6	0.0
2020	0.5	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.0

Source: 2014/15-18/19 WEDPLASC; 2020 Awarding Bodies

AS

In the charts and tables below the data for the U category appear empty. The U category is the final category in a cumulative analysis and so it is included to be transparent and consistent with similar presentations from other organisations. It appears empty because all learners receive at least a U so there are not gaps at U.

Eligibility for Free School Meals

Table 15 shows that the following data accounts for over half of the all-learner data.

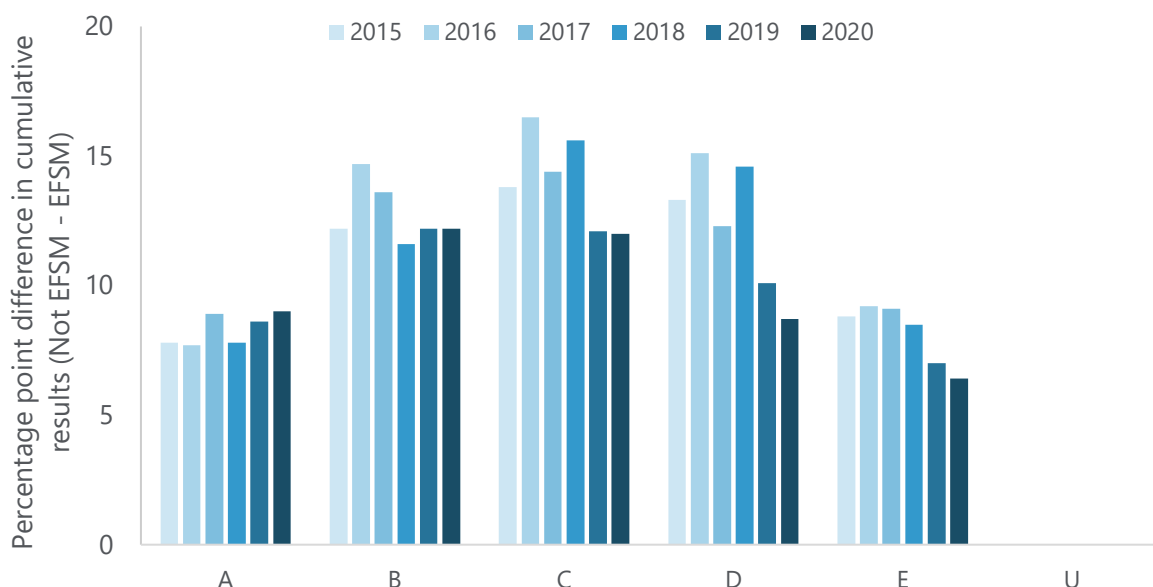
Table 15. AS, Free School Meal attainment gap (Not EFSM – EFSM), 17yo, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Centres	145	145	135	140	135	145
17yo data	29,370	25,440	23,415	22,605	20,625	26,355
All learners data	52,770	49,145	46,125	42,915	39,645	45,435
17yo data as percentage of all learners data	55.7%	51.8%	50.8%	52.7%	52.0%	58.0%

Source: 201415-18/19 WEDPLASC; 2020 WJEC; All learners JCQ

The eligibility for free school meals attainment gaps have changed slightly from 2019 and are not atypical from those over the past five years.

Figure 12. AS, Free School Meal attainment gap (Not EFSM – EFSM, percentage points), 17yo, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data



Sources: 2015-2019 WEDPLASC, 2020 awarding bodies

Table 16. AS, Free School Meal attainment gap (Not EFSM – EFSM), 17yo, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data (percentage points)

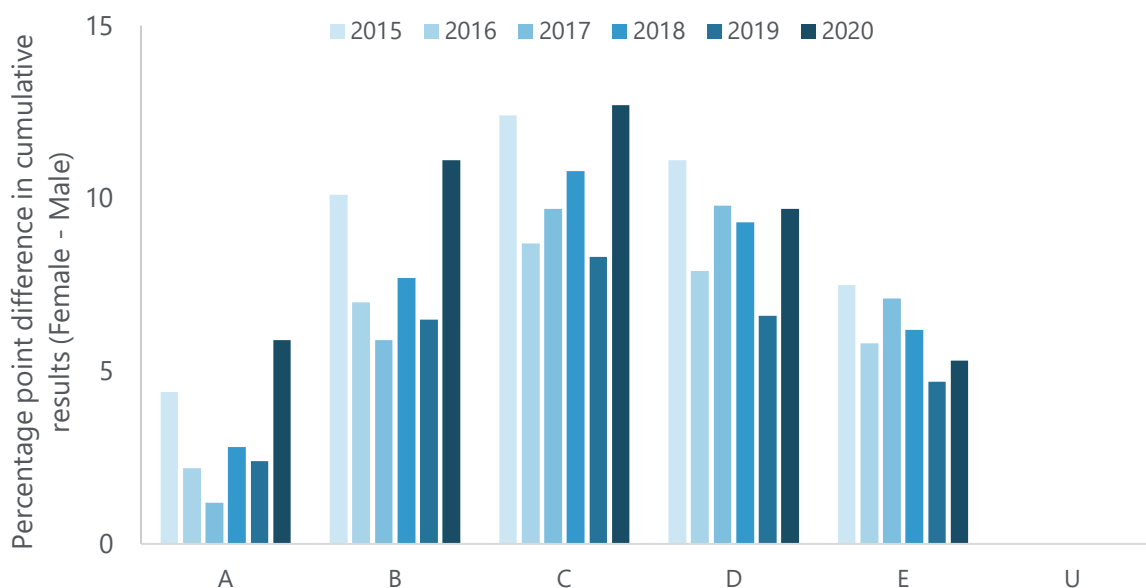
Year	A	B	C	D	E	U
2015	7.8	12.2	13.8	13.3	8.8	0.0
2016	7.7	14.7	16.5	15.1	9.2	0.0
2017	8.9	13.6	14.4	12.3	9.1	0.0
2018	7.8	11.6	15.6	14.6	8.5	0.0
2019	8.6	12.2	12.1	10.1	7.0	0.0
2020	9.0	12.2	12.0	8.7	6.4	0.0

Source: 201415-18/19 WEDPLASC; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Gender

The gender attainment gaps have changed from 2019 and are not atypical from those over the past five years.

Figure 13. AS, Gender attainment gap (Female – Male, percentage points), 17yo, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data



Sources: 2015-2019 WEDPLASC, 2020 awarding bodies

Table 17. AS, Gender attainment gap (Female - Male), 17yo, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data (percentage points)

Year	A	B	C	D	E	U
2015	4.4	10.1	12.4	11.1	7.5	0.0
2016	2.2	7.0	8.7	7.9	5.8	0.0
2017	1.2	5.9	9.7	9.8	7.1	0.0
2018	2.8	7.7	10.8	9.3	6.2	0.0
2019	2.4	6.5	8.3	6.6	4.7	0.0
2020	5.9	11.1	12.7	9.7	5.3	0.0

Source: 201415-18/19 WEDPLASC; 2020 Awarding Bodies

Age

Table 18 shows that the following data accounts for over half of the all-learner data.

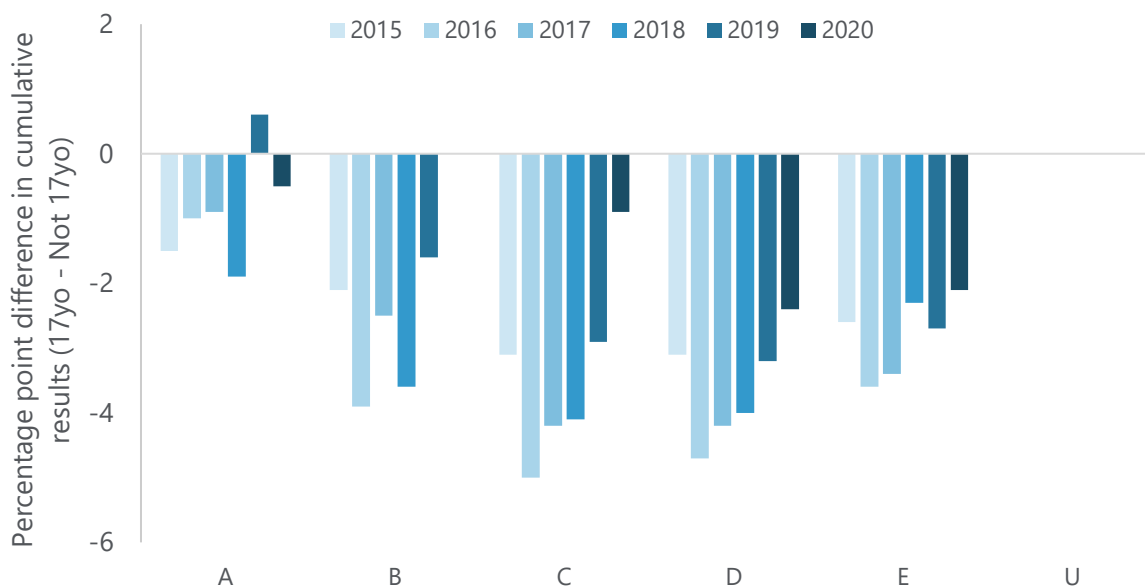
Table 18. AS, Age attainment gap (17yo – Not 17yo), All learners, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Centres	155	160	140	140	140	145
Analysis data	37,030	33,025	29,845	28,250	25,900	30,730
All learners data	52,770	49,145	46,125	42,915	39,645	45,435
Analysis data as percentage of all learners data	70.2%	67.2%	64.7%	65.8%	65.3%	67.6%

Source: 201415-18/19 WEDPLASC; 2020 WJEC; All learners JCQ

The age attainment gaps have changed from 2019 and are not atypical from those over the past five years.

Figure 14. AS, Age attainment gap (17yo – Not 17yo, percentage points), All learners, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data



Sources: 2015-2019 WEDPLASC, 2020 awarding bodies

Table 19. AS, Age attainment gap (17yo – Not 17yo), All learners, Summer, Maintained centres in 2015-2020 data (percentage points)

Year	A	B	C	D	E	U
2015	-1.5	-2.1	-3.1	-3.1	-2.6	0.0
2016	-1.0	-3.9	-5.0	-4.7	-3.6	0.0
2017	-0.9	-2.5	-4.2	-4.2	-3.4	0.0
2018	-1.9	-3.6	-4.1	-4.0	-2.3	0.0
2019	0.6	-1.6	-2.9	-3.2	-2.7	0.0
2020	-0.5	0.0	-0.9	-2.4	-2.1	0.0

Source: 201415-18/19 WEDPLASC; 2020 Awarding Bodies