

Variation in GCSE, AS and A level qualification results: Summer 2022



23 September 2022

About this release

This release presents statistics on changes in overall GCSE, AS and A level outcomes seen by maintained schools in the summer series for the main age group taking the qualification. It also presents analysis that compares A level grades to the AS grade achieved by the same learner in the same subject, for learners of all ages in maintained schools and further education. Due to different awarding arrangements, statistics for 2020, and 2021 are not directly comparable. Despite the data not resulting from directly comparable assessment systems, comparisons are being made to help users understand how different national results in 2020 2021 and 2022 have played out at a school level compared to previous years. Limitations on comparability should be kept in mind when interpreting changes in results. The analysis in this release mainly compares consecutive years, but also compares 2022 results with 2019 results, as this was the last summer that exams took place before 2022.

Key Statistics

- Compared to 2021, overall centre results for GCSE, AS and A level decreased in summer 2022, but some centres saw an increase.
- Compared to 2019, the last summer when formal exams were sat, overall centre results for GCSE, AS and A level increased in summer 2022. However, some centres saw a decrease in results.
- The average change in centre results is consistent with national results, which were awarded broadly midway between 2019 and 2021.
- There was substantial variation in changes across centres. Generally, there were larger changes in centre results at AS and A level than GCSE. This is also consistent with the changes in national results.
- Across GCSE, AS and A level, centres which saw an increase in 2021 tended to see a larger decrease in outcomes in 2022. The strength of this pattern varies between qualification types and grade thresholds.

Quick links:

[GCSE](#)

[AS](#)

[A level](#)

[Relationship between AS and A level grades](#)

Statistician:

Hannah Williams 01633 373 292
statistics@qualificationswales.org

Media enquiries:

01633 373 222
media@qualificationswales.org

Next update: September 2023

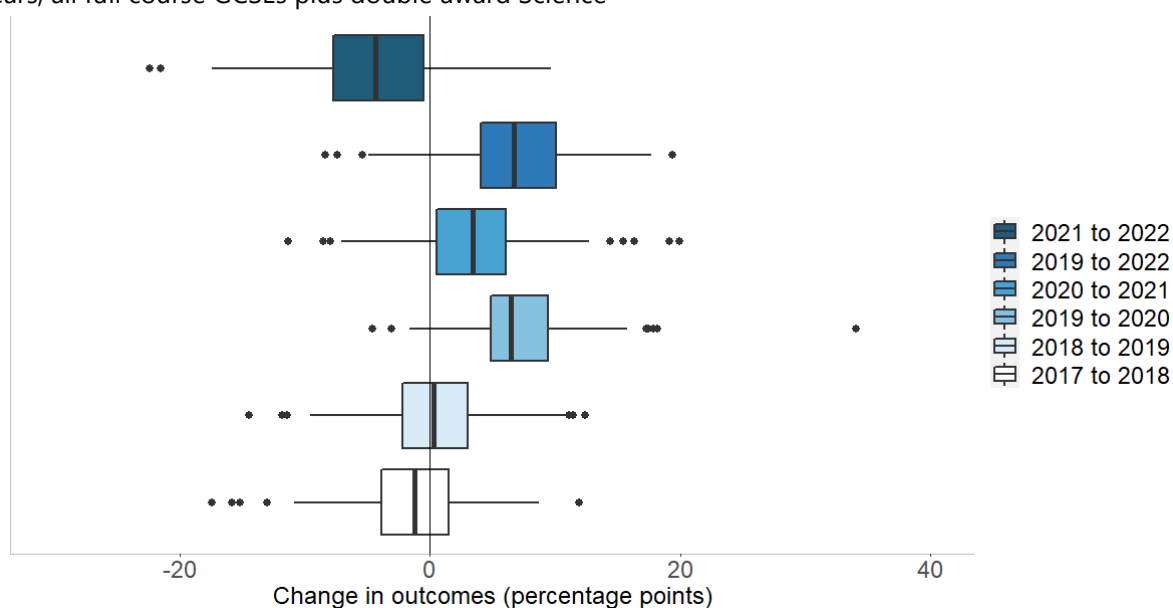
GCSE

This analysis includes all single award GCSEs plus Double Award Science, including legacy GCSEs and GCSEs that use the 9-1 grade scale. As the 9-1 and A*-G grade scales do not directly align at all grades, key grade thresholds have been used in the analysis. Grades for Double Award Science GCSEs are counted twice to reflect the achievement of two grades in the subject.

- In 2022, on average, centre outcomes at grade A/7 or above decreased by 4.4 percentage points (pp) compared to 2021 and increased by 6.5pp compared to 2019, the last summer when GCSE exams were sat.
- At grade C/4 or above, centre outcomes on average decreased by 4.4pp compared to 2021 and increased by 5.6pp compared to 2019.
- At grade G/1 or above, centre outcomes on average decreased by 0.9pp compared to 2021 and stayed the same as in 2019.
- While overall results were lower than 2022 and higher than 2019, some centres saw higher results this summer compared to 2021, and some centres saw lower results than in 2019.
- Centres which saw an increase in 2021 tended to see a larger decrease in 2022. This pattern was stronger at grades A/7 or above and C/4 or above, with correlations of -0.57 and -0.50 respectively, than at G/1 or above, with a correlation of -0.38.

Figure 1: Distribution of changes in centre outcomes at grade A/7 or above

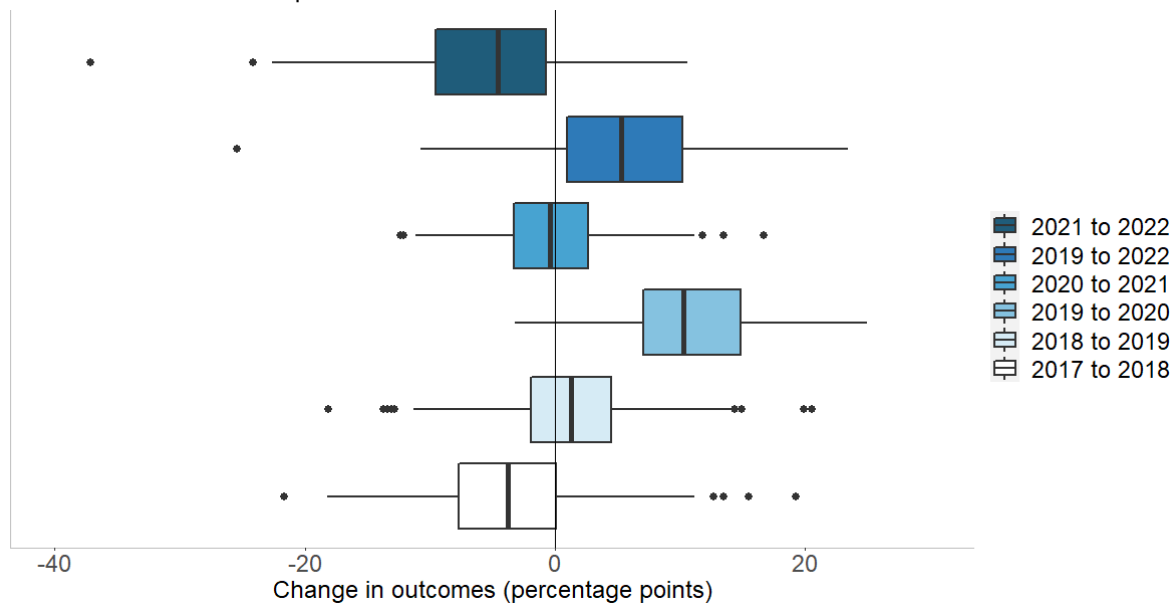
16-year-olds, summer series, maintained schools with at least 100 GCSE entries in both comparison years, all full course GCSEs plus double award Science



Source: Qualifications Wales data collection from awarding bodies, Welsh Examinations Database

Figure 2: Distribution of changes in centre outcomes at grade C/4 or above

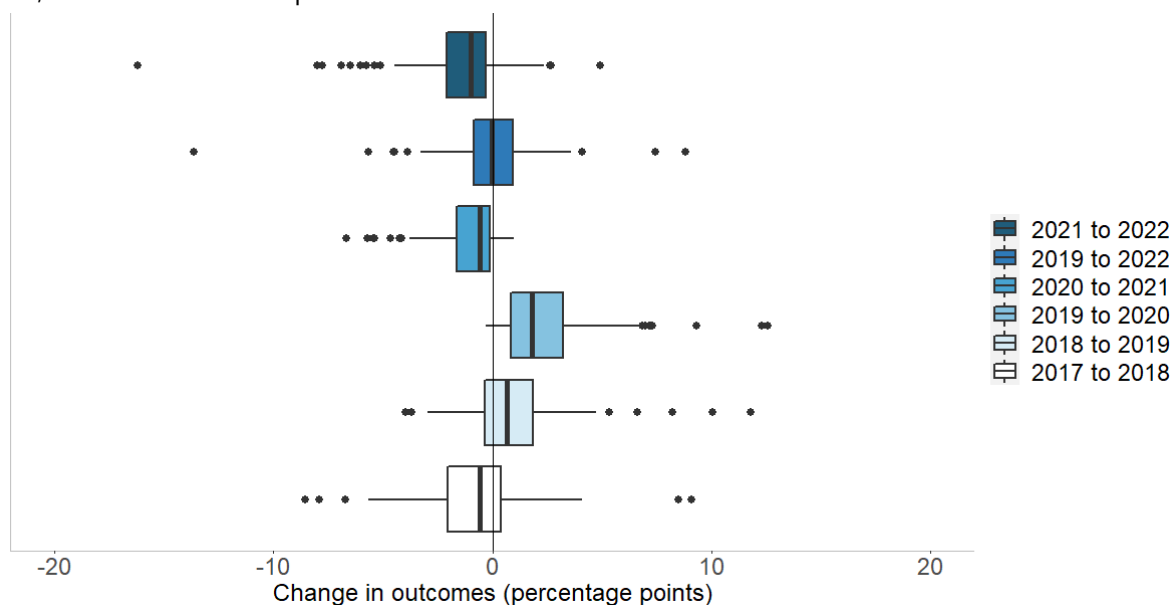
16-year-olds, summer series, maintained schools with at least 100 GCSE entries in both comparison years, all full course GCSEs plus double award Science



Source: Qualifications Wales data collection from awarding bodies, Welsh Examinations Database

Figure 3: Distribution of changes in centre outcomes at grade G/1 or above

16-year-olds, summer series, maintained schools with at least 100 GCSE entries in both comparison years, all full course GCSEs plus double award Science



Source: Qualifications Wales data collection from awarding bodies, Welsh Examinations Database

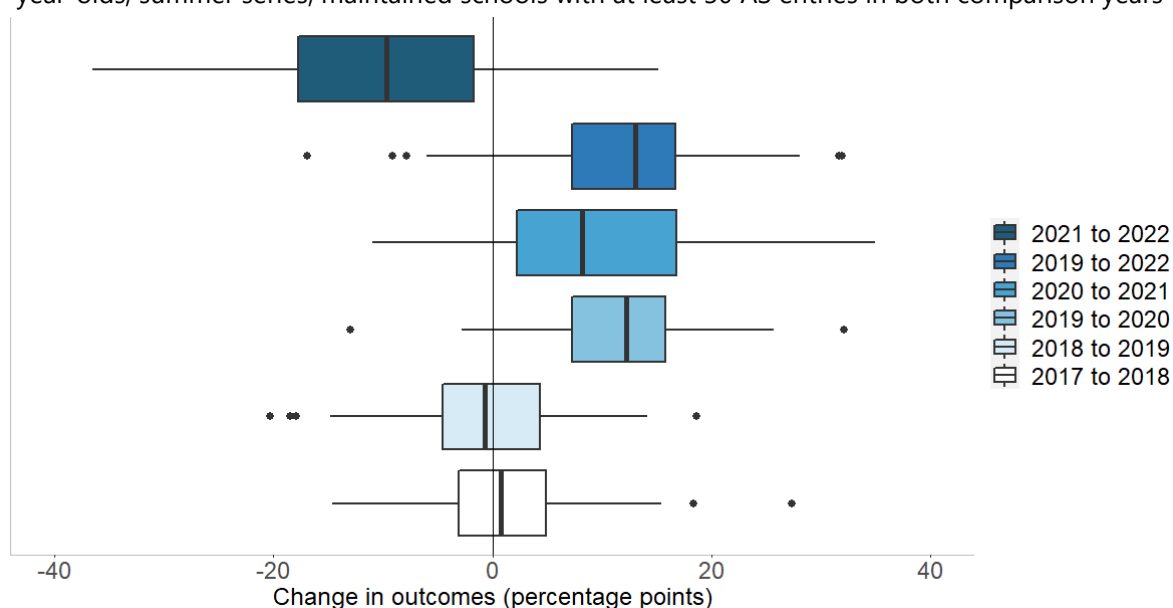
AS

This section presents data for all single award AS levels awarded in maintained schools in Wales, including legacy AS and AS levels designed for use in England.

- In 2022, on average, centre outcomes at grade A decreased by 9.6 percentage points (pp) compared to 2021 and increased by 13.1pp compared to 2019, the last summer when AS exams were sat.
- At grades A to C, centre outcomes on average decreased by 13.8pp compared to 2021 and increased by 13.0pp compared to 2019.
- At grades A to E, centre outcomes on average decreased by 4.1pp compared to 2021 and increased by 5.3pp compared to 2019.
- While overall results were lower than 2022 and higher than 2019, some centres saw higher results this summer compared to 2021, and some centres saw lower results than in 2019.
- Centres which saw an increase in 2021 tended to see a larger decrease in 2022, and this pattern was stronger at grade A with a correlation of -0.65, than at A to C or A to E, with correlations of -0.44 and -0.27 respectively.

Figure 4: Distribution of changes in centre outcomes at grade A

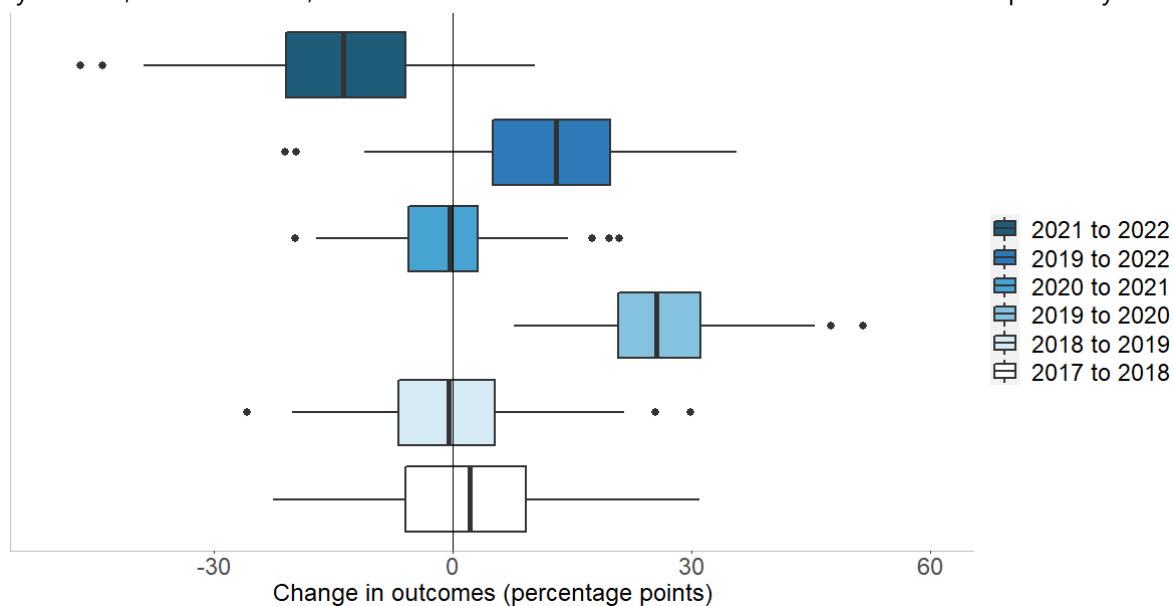
17-year-olds, summer series, maintained schools with at least 30 AS entries in both comparison years



Source: Qualifications Wales data collection from awarding bodies, Welsh Examinations Database

Figure 5: Distribution of changes in centre outcomes at grades A to C

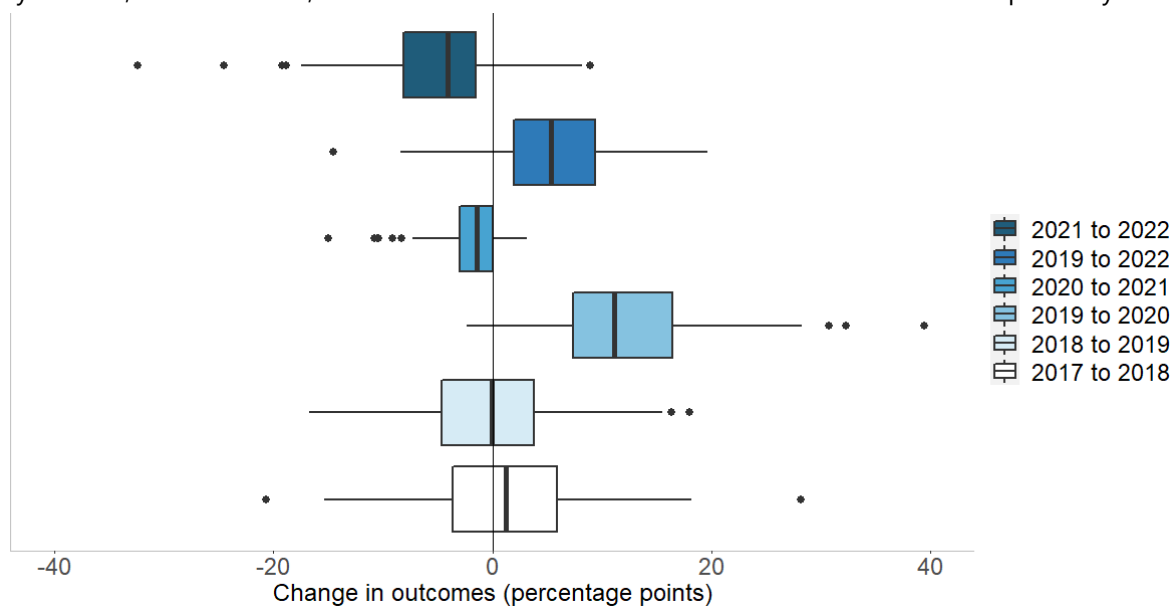
17-year-olds, summer series, maintained schools with at least 30 AS entries in both comparison years



Source: Qualifications Wales data collection from awarding bodies, Welsh Examinations Database

Figure 6: Distribution of changes in centre outcomes at grades A to E

17-year-olds, summer series, maintained schools with at least 30 AS entries in both comparison years



Source: Qualifications Wales data collection from awarding bodies, Welsh Examinations Database

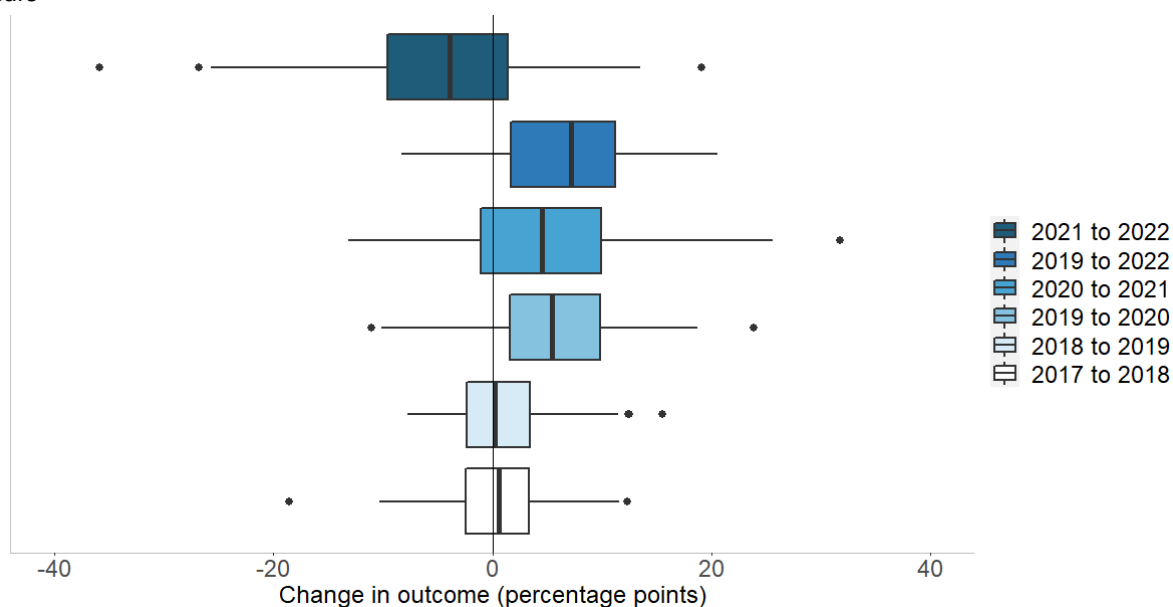
A level

This section presents data for all single award A levels awarded in maintained schools in Wales, including legacy A levels and A levels designed for use in England.

- In 2022, on average, centre outcomes at grade A* decreased by 3.9 percentage points (pp) compared to 2021 and increased by 7.1pp compared to 2019, the last summer when exams were sat.
- At grades A* to A, centre outcomes on average decreased by 10.7pp compared to 2021 and increased by 14.1pp compared to 2019.
- At grades A* to C, centre outcomes on average decreased by 5.5pp compared to 2021 and increased by 8.8pp compared to 2019.
- At grades A* to E, centre outcomes on average decreased by 1.1pp compared to 2021 and stayed the same as in 2019.
- While overall results were lower than 2022 and higher than 2019, some centres saw higher results this summer compared to 2021, and some centres saw lower results than in 2019.
- Centres which saw an increase in 2021 tended to see a larger decrease in 2022, and this pattern was stronger at higher grades, with a correlation of -0.74 at A*, -0.51 at A* to A, -0.40 at A* to C and -0.27 at A* to E.

Figure 7: Distribution of changes in centre outcomes at grade A*

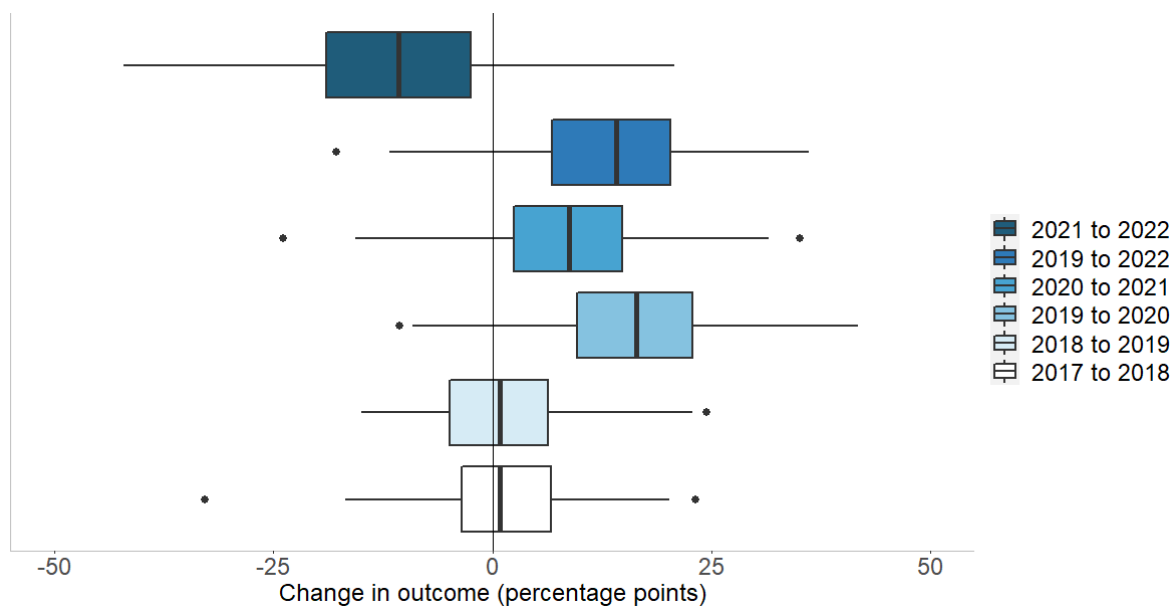
18-year-olds, summer series, maintained schools with at least 30 A level entries in both comparison years



Source: Qualifications Wales data collection from awarding bodies, Welsh Examinations Database

Figure 8: Distribution of changes in centre outcomes at grades A* and A

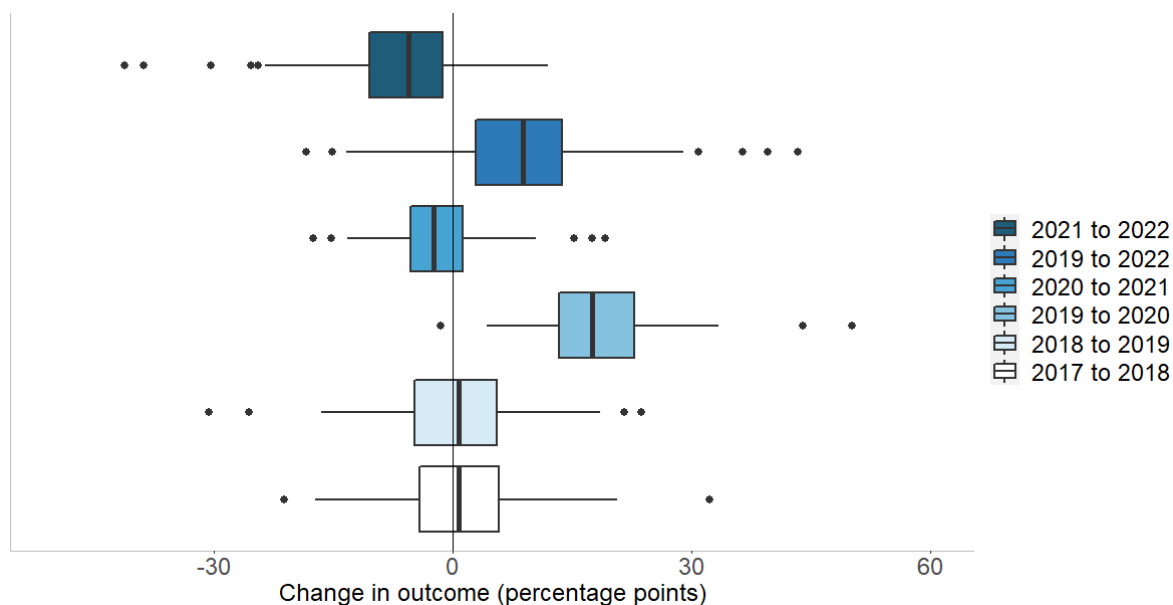
18-year-olds, summer series, maintained schools with at least 30 A level entries in both comparison years



Source: Qualifications Wales data collection from awarding bodies, Welsh Examinations Database

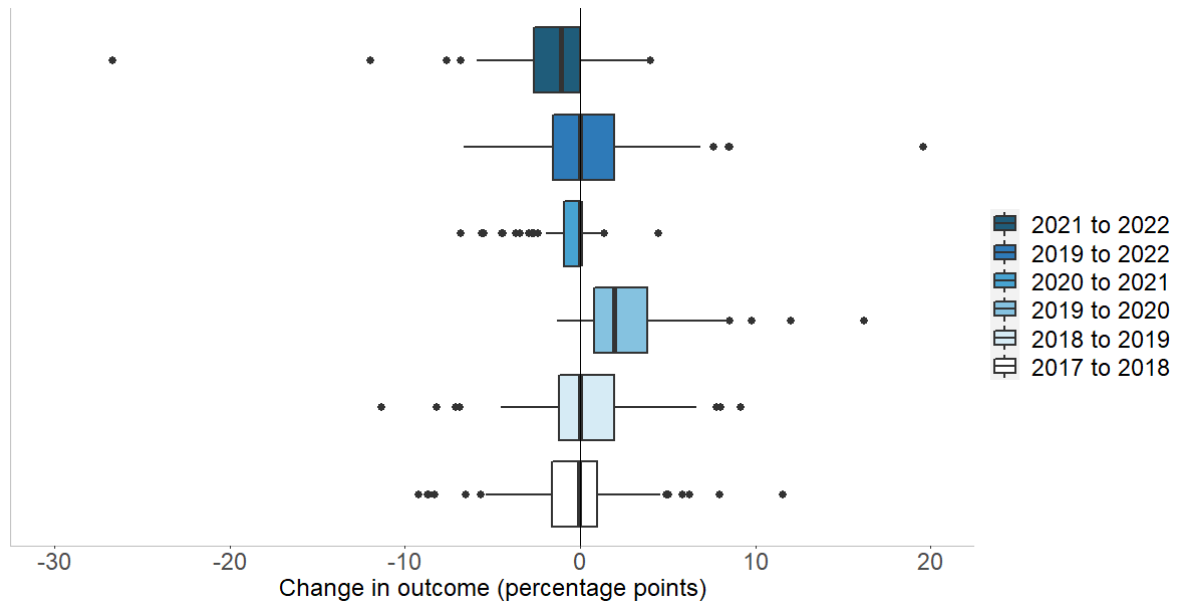
Figure 9: Distribution of changes in centre outcomes at grades A* to C

18-year-olds, summer series, maintained schools with at least 30 A level entries in both comparison years



Source: Qualifications Wales data collection from awarding bodies, Welsh Examinations Database

Figure 10: Distribution of changes in centre outcomes at grades A* to E
 18-year-olds, summer series, maintained schools with at least 30 A level entries in both comparison years



Source: Qualifications Wales data collection from awarding bodies, Welsh Examinations Database

Relationship between AS and A level grades

This section compares A level grades to the AS grade achieved by the same learner in the same subject. A level grades this year were based on A2 units only. This is because learners were unable to sit their AS units in summer 2021. Due to the different awarding arrangements, data for 2020 and 2021 has not been included. A* grades are not available at AS, so any A* grade at A level is higher than the corresponding AS grade by default. This should be considered when interpreting the changes.

In summer 2022, 70.4% of A level grades awarded were the same as or higher than the AS grade achieved by the same learner in the same subject in summer 2021. 29.6% were lower. In previous years, around a quarter of grades were lower.

The proportion of grades that were the same as the corresponding AS grade decreased by 13.1 percentage points compared to 2019. There was an increase in the proportion of larger differences between AS and A level grade in 2022 than in previous years: in 2019, 1.2% of A level grades were more than two grades higher or lower than the corresponding AS grade. In 2022, this figure is 4.6%.

Table 1: Comparison of A level grades to AS grade achieved in the previous year by the same learner in the same subject

Learners in maintained schools and FE colleges, all ages, all single award A levels

Difference between A level grade and AS grade	2017	2018	2019	2022
4 or more grades lower	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.8%
3 grades lower	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	2.4%
2 grades lower	2.6%	2.4%	2.9%	6.9%
1 grade lower	21.0%	20.6%	20.9%	19.6%
Same grade	47.1%	48.2%	47.2%	34.1%
1 grade higher	23.7%	23.4%	23.5%	28.8%
2 grades higher	4.5%	4.3%	4.3%	6.1%
3 grades higher	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	1.2%
4 or more grades higher	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Total grades	19,220	22,665	21,655	29,800

Source: Qualifications Wales data collection from awarding bodies, Welsh Examinations Database, Lifelong Learning Wales Records

© (2022) Permission is granted to reproduce provided reference is made to Qualifications Wales as the original source.