

A level and AS results 2019: England

A levels:

Key points:

- Entries to all A level subjects in England decreased slightly to 1.2%
- Overall results in England are slightly lower at grade A and above compared to last year (25.2% in 2019 compared with 26.2% in 2018). This is likely to reflect changes in the A level cohort and students' subject choices
- The pass rate (grades A* to E) in England was down by 0.1% on last year, at 97.5%.
- While the number of 18-year-olds taking A levels in England has decreased by around 0.3% this year, the overall 18-year-old cohort has decreased by just under 3%. This suggests that proportionally more 18-year-olds are taking A levels this year.
- The numbers of both males and females taking Stem (science, technology and maths) subjects accounted for 21% of all A-level entries, up from 19.2% in 2018.

Rise in science entries:

- Entries for the sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) continue to rise, reaching 20.9% of all A Levels (154,528) up from 19.2%, continuing the strong trend in recent years.
- Chemistry entries were up by 9.4%, Biology, up by 9.4% and Physics up by 3.4%.
- Female entries have overtaken male entries, reaching 50.2% (compared to 49.6% in 2018) for the first time.

Languages:

- Spanish entries increased by 4.5% to 7,932 and French decreased by 3.4% to 7,607. German entries remained level.
- Achievement in French at grades A*-A has decreased by 2pp (to 36.4%).
- Achievement in German at grades A*-A has increased by 2pp (to 40.4%)
- Achievement in Spanish at grades A*-A has decreased by 0.8pp (to 34.9%)

Mathematics:

- Entries to mathematics were down by 5.8%, although it remains the most popular subject with a total of 84,965 entries.
- Outcomes were mixed; a small improvement at A* with 16.3% achieving this grade (compared to 15.9% in 2018), whilst the number achieving A*-A declined by 1.6pp to 40.5%.

English language and English Literature:

- English Literature entries declined by 8.1% to 37,179.
- English Language saw a larger decrease in entries of 22.2% to 13,689.
- The outcomes at both A* and A*-A have largely remained unchanged in all English subjects.

Other subjects:

- Student choice has led to an increase in entries in other subjects, for example Political Studies (+10.6), Sociology (+9.7%), Computing (+9.0%) and Psychology (+8.0%).
- Decreases in entries were seen in a number of subjects including Media/Film/TV Studies (-13.9%), Classical subjects (-9.2%), Drama (-8.8%), Music (-5.8%) and Religious Studies (-4.8%)

AS levels:

- As expected, the decline in AS Level entries has continued with recent policy changes in England, with total entries in England declining 56.2%.
- This makes it much more difficult to interpret any changes in year-on-year results.
- The outcomes for AS Levels were down, with A grades declining to 20.1% in 2019 from 28.7%, a decline of 8.6pp.