

GCSE Results: ALL Member Update 26/08/11

ALL was represented at the JCQ Briefing for Stakeholders on Thursday 25th August, where detailed information was issued about 2011 GCSE results. This was the first year of the new GCSE specifications, and especially the new arrangements for the speaking exam reflecting the recommendations of the Dearing Review in 2006.

As an Association, we are very aware of the enormous efforts made by language teachers to prepare for and to deliver the new specifications, and to make a success of the new speaking exams which were designed to enable candidates to show better what they could achieve. The hope had been that these changes would increase both the numbers entering, and the numbers gaining higher grades as they had had more opportunity to meet the criteria. Sadly, this has not been the case either in terms of numbers or of the grades obtained.

The numbers entered for modern languages has shown a further decline:

	2010	2011	% Change
French	177,860	154,221	↓ 13%
German	70,174	60,887	↓ 13%
Spanish	67,778	66,021	↓ 3%

The pattern is the same in England as in the UK as a whole. French and German are now under half of the numbers entered in 2002.

An unexpected factor in the figures released by JCQ is the **drop in A* grades** in French, German and Spanish in both **percentages** and **actual numbers**:

	% A* grades 2010	% A* grades 2011	number A* grades 2010	number A* grades 2011
French	10.8	10.1	17,635	14,289
German	9.4	8.9	6,306	5,196
Spanish	16.3	14.8	10,201	8,994

This drop is deeply concerning, and ALL will be pressing for more information.

The year-on-year increase in the **percentage** of candidates gaining A*-C has **steadied** (see below). There had been a steady rise as a consequence of the dramatic drop in the number of lower-attaining pupils being entered, but the cohort profile would now appear to be similar in 2010 and 2011 (but we will not get the figures to confirm this until late in the Autumn Term).

	2010	2011
French	71.6%	72.1%
German	75.0%	75.7%
Spanish	74.6%	74.2%

Additional Information:

Colleagues may be interested in the subject matrices available on the Ofsted website (in the Library section) which give the numbers of pupils attaining each GCSE grade from a given KS2 level, which is very helpful in taking account of the different cohort ability profile in individual schools:

<https://www.raiseonline.org/documentlibrary/ViewDocumentLibrary.aspx> > Target-setting>Transition matrices for KS2 to 4

Transition Matrix Type

KS2-4 Subject TMs

Proportion of Cohort

All Pupils

School Prior Attainment Band

All Schools

Subject

French

Average KS2 sub-level in English, Maths and Science

Attainment at the End of KS4 in French

Number of Pupils	U	G	F	E	D	C	B	A	A*	TOTAL
B*	49	129	185	126	86	45	34	19	7	680
N*	49	129	185	126	86	45	34	19	7	680
2*	49	129	185	126	86	45	34	19	7	680
3c	26	93	183	175	120	55	22	8	4	686
3b	27	163	331	419	340	178	44	28	8	1,538
3a	43	273	623	963	949	555	121	50	14	3,591
4c	67	329	975	1,863	2,686	1,895	419	121	40	8,395
4b	76	354	1,090	2,858	5,269	5,162	1,717	429	132	17,087
4a	45	257	905	2,754	7,215	10,052	4,859	1,752	470	28,309
5c	38	124	374	1,473	5,401	11,119	9,358	5,279	1,684	34,850
5b	9	36	101	388	1,860	5,748	8,172	8,260	4,874	29,448
5a	0	0	3	11	54	267	668	1,402	1,817	4,222

*Pupils with an average KS2 sub-level of 'B', 'N' and Level 2 in English, Maths and Science have been grouped together. This explains why the numbers of pupils are the same for these KS2 sub-levels

These subject matrices also confirm the significant extent of severe grading in modern languages, reported in the QCA report in February 2008. The changes recommended by Dearing have now been implemented with the exception of bringing the grading for modern languages into line with other traditional academic subjects; these figures show that the Government must now act to create a level playing field for modern language pupils and teachers.