



Press Release

2010 GCSE results released

This year's GCSE-level results were released today and show improved performance for Maths and English, as well as a general increase in achievement overall. Achievement for language GCSEs has noticeably increased according to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), with 0.7% more students getting a grade A*-A, and 1.5% more students getting a grade A*-C.

The results from JCQ for languages show that candidates for Spanish GCSE are up by nearly 1% compared to 2009 although the number of candidates for other language GCSEs has fallen (French by 5.9%, German by 4.5%, and other languages by 1.3%) meaning a drop in the number of candidates taking language GCSEs overall. The number of students taking a GCSE in French has fallen below 180,000, meaning that it has dropped out of the top ten largest GCSE subjects for the first time, but French still remains the 11th most popular subject, and the most popular language choice for GCSE.

In general though, greater diversity is being seen in the languages entries, with many lesser taught languages seeing increases in the number of candidates taking GCSE, such as Chinese, Portuguese, Polish and Turkish; and in the marked growth in GCSE short courses in languages (since 2009, the number of German candidates doing a short course GCSE has increased by 139%, French by 63% and Spanish by 19%).

Chair of ALL's Secondary special interest group and former ALL president, Helen Myers, said: "This continuing fall in numbers at GCSE emphasises the need for Government and Ofqual to take action to create a level playing field with regard to the grading of GCSE Modern Languages ("severe grading") so that the efforts of students and teachers in languages are being fairly rewarded. Currently grading for students in languages is typically a grade below their grades for subjects such as maths, science and history."

"We'd like to congratulate languages teachers and their students on these great results - we know how hard teachers and learners work to achieve them," said Linda Parker, Director of the Association for Language Learning. "We hope that the recent change of government will enable us to take a fresh look at language learning generally in our secondary schools. Language skills and cultural understanding are vital in our global society and economy, and we need stronger practical support for language learning. We need to convince



students and school leaders that languages are valuable and useful, and schools need to know that pupils can achieve as well in languages as in other subjects. Then we will get students back into language learning.”

More information, news and views can be found here:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/education/10/exam_results/gcse_fc/html/all_subjects.stm

<http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/news/news%20items/secondary/gcse%20language%20entries.aspx>

<http://www.education.gov.uk/news/news/gcse-results2010>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2010/aug/24/gcse-results-ministers-language-teaching-review>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2010/aug/24/who-still-wants-learn-languages>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/aug/25/modern-language-decline>.

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Notes to Editors:

The Association for Language Learning (ALL)

ALL is the UK-wide subject association for language teachers – of whatever language, at any level. It is run by teachers and other professionals actively involved in language learning and teaching. It exists to represent and support language teachers.

www.all-languages.org.uk

<http://tinyurl.com/ALLonFacebook>