

ALL Statement on 2026 A level results

The number of students studying A level languages continues to be a matter of grave concern. Whilst the overall number of A level entries for all subjects has increased substantially since 2019 (906,425 v 804,851) the total number taking French, German or Spanish has actually declined (17,616 v 20,013; 1.9 % of total v 2.5%).

The overall number of entries for all subjects has increased by 2.9% since 2025. The increase in German entries, which exceeds this, is welcome, but it is still down by 25% compared with the 2019 entry numbers. Although Spanish and French entries have increased by 1.3% and 0.4% respectively, these rises are lower than the overall increase. This raises concerns about the UK's ability to produce enough qualified linguists for the country's needs. It is vital that steps are taken to ensure students get a broader and richer post-16 experience including a language.

These low numbers studying French, German and Spanish at A level reinforce the need for the continuing severe grading in ML at GCSE to be addressed by Ofqual and DfE so that more students are encouraged to continue with a language to GCSE and then on to A level. Systematically, arising from a historical anomaly, students on average get half a grade lower in their GCSE ML compared with their other EBacc subjects, leading to a false perception that they are not as good at ML as at other subjects. They are therefore less likely to take it at A level. We appeal to all stakeholders to keep raising this matter, especially in this year when there are new GCSEs specifications being examined for the first time in French, German and Spanish. It is important to remember that however pedagogy and the nature of exams may change, the approach of comparable outcomes means that severe grading will persist.

We are pleased to see that entries for 'Other Modern Languages' continue to climb back towards pre-pandemic levels. It is helpful that this year Ofqual has released the same level of detailed breakdown of grades for each of the 'Other Modern Languages'. We are following up the concerns raised previously by Ofqual with Pearson about the papers and the grading in A Level Chinese, especially for non-native speakers.

ALL Co-Presidents, Anna Lise Gordon and Steven Fawkes, speaking about this year's A and AS results in England, Wales and Northern Ireland said, 'We congratulate all those receiving their A Level languages exam results today. You have reached a milestone in your learning! We hope you have also found a connection with the language(s) you have been learning which will remain with you in your future life. The skills you have already developed in learning your language(s) will be of great use in helping you to explore other languages in the world of study or work or in your own community.'

'We thank all the teachers who have shared their passion for languages to inspire students, and guided them with their rich knowledge and expertise. Their success is a testament to your work.

'Along with the wider Languages community, we hope your exam grades are everything you hoped they would be, and that they will encourage students to continue their adventures with languages, even if they are not the main focus of study going forward. Languages take you a very long way beyond the exam.

'Being able to communicate in another language, overcoming the fear of making mistakes, developing intercultural understanding and making global connections will serve you in a host of different ways, whatever your future holds in store'.

ALL's webpage for school-aged students is here: [Languages for living](#)

Appendix with detailed numbers

The overall number of A level entries in all subjects has increased by 2.9% to 906,425 in 2026 from 882,509 in 2025, having decreased by 0.5% from 886,514 in 2024. The 2026 overall entry figures have increased from 804,851 in 2019 (13% increase).

French entries have increased by 0.4% to 6,888 in 2026 from 6,858 in 2025, having decreased by 9.8% from 7,544 in 2024.

German entries have increased by 3.1% to 2,294 in 2026 from 2,224 in 2025, having decreased by 8.5% to 2,224 in 2025 from 2,431 in 2024.

Spanish entries have increased by 1.3% to 8,434 in 2026 from 8,325 in 2025, having increased by 1.1% to 8,325 in 2025 from 8,238 in 2024.

'Other Modern Languages' entries have increased by 4.1% to 6,944 in 2026 from 6,672 in 2025, having increased by 3.8% to 6,672 in 2025 from 6,429 in 2024.

This is all in the context of a demanding subject such as Further Mathematics having over 21,000 entries.

Comparing entry numbers between 2026 and 2019 (pre-pandemic) there is a clear decline. French has dropped by 17.6%, German by 24.4%, Spanish by 2.2% and 'Other Modern Languages' by 16.2%. By contrast, in the same period, Economics has risen by 53% to 47,157, and Psychology by 22.6 % to 79,201.

These numbers are taken from the JCQ UK cumulative figures published Thursday 13th August 2026.

Appendix with links

JCQ has created a new page named 'Exam results data' from which you can access current and past statements and data by selecting the year in which you are interested, [click here](#).

Direct links to the press notice (pdf) and 3 results tables relevant to Modern Languages (Excel spreadsheets) are as follows:

- Level 3 Press notice 2026: [Click here](#)
- A level by subject age sex country, 2026 (Table 1): [Click here](#)
- AS level by subject sex country, 2026 (Table 2): [Click here](#)
- GCE Miscellaneous, 2026 (Table 3) [Note that this includes data about 'Other Languages' in Tab 3d]: [Click here](#)
- A level interactive results dashboard: [Click here](#)

Ofqual, Pearson – A level Chinese.

[Ofqual fines Pearson £2 million for rule breaches affecting thousands of students](#)

Ofqual has shared a range of comments and analysis as follows (links embedded):

- [Ofqual blog](#)
- [Summer results: 2026 statistical release](#)
- [Interactive analytics](#) for A levels, VTQ Performance Table qualifications and Technical Qualifications

Thursday 13 August 2026, 11:00am