



Attainment Statistics (August)

2017

Scottish Qualifications Authority

EMBARGO: Not for broadcast or publication under any circumstances before 09:30 Tuesday 8 August 2017

Notes

- All percentages are rounded separately and breakdowns may consequently not sum to 100 per cent.
 - 'Percentage Point Change' figures are calculated prior to percentage rounding.
 - National Qualifications include the following course types
 - National 2 - 5
 - Access 2 – 3 – 2016 was the last year these were available
 - Intermediate 1 – 2 – 2015 was the last year these were available
 - Skills for Work
 - Personal Development
 - Previous Higher – 2015 was the last year these were available
 - Higher
 - Previous Advanced Higher – 2015 was the last year these were available
 - Advanced Higher
 - Scottish Baccalaureate
 - Attainment statistics for National Qualifications presented in this paper relate to information as of August and are subject to change later in the year.
 - Attainment statistics for Awards, National Progression Awards and National Certificate qualifications detail the number of certificated entries between 1st August 2016 and 30 June 2017 and are therefore subject to change when attainment across the complete academic year is published in the Attainment Statistics (December) report.
 - For each qualification type, a breakdown of candidates by stage group has been provided. The reported stage groups cover third, fourth, fifth and sixth year school candidates, Other School candidates (which includes first year, second year and adults attending school), Further Education Colleges, and Other (which covers candidates outwith school or college, for example workplace candidates).
 - Skills for Work and Personal Development courses are reported separately. Personal Development Courses now fall within the SQA 'Award' qualifications, previously being part of SQA NQ provision. This move is reflected in the Skills for Work and Personal Development table, which, for the later academic years, reflect attainment exclusively from Skills for Work qualifications, with Personal Development 'Awards' now being recorded within the 'Award' table.
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The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) today (Tuesday 8 August 2017) releases the Attainment Statistics (August) report. A detailed statistical breakdown of attainment is provided in Appendix 1.

In academic year 2016-17, there is a mix of the current National Courses (National 2 to National 5, Highers, Advanced Highers) as well as Skills for Work, Awards, National Progression Awards, and National Certificates taken by candidates in schools and colleges.

The table below shows overall entries for each National Qualification type.

Table 1: Entries for each National Qualification type, 2012 - 2017

	Entries					
	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
SCQF level 2						
Access 2	-	20	104	416	1,586	1,915
National 2	1,896	2,449	1,865	1,217	-	-
Skills for Work and Personal Development	-	-	-	117	246	204
SCQF level 3						
Access 3	-	3	3,340	10,939	32,963	35,350
National 3	17,114	18,475	17,268	16,587	-	-
Skills for Work and Personal Development	15	32	39	467	439	327
SCQF level 4						
Intermediate 1	-	-	1,553	18,679	63,190	67,721
National 4	116,032	122,961	130,876	122,716	-	-
Skills for Work and Personal Development	3,767	4,218	5,361	5,667	6,428	6,706
SCQF level 5						
Intermediate 2	-	-	10,678	97,122	140,577	137,158
National 5	293,220	295,083	288,016	213,595	-	-
Skills for Work and Personal Development	6,126	5,372	5,207	4,586	3,791	2,888
SCQF level 3-5						
Standard Grade	-	-	-	-	308,243	319,986
SCQF level 6						
Previous Higher	-	-	92,555	191,850	182,601	180,912
Higher	194,813	197,774	107,295	-	-	-
Skills for Work and Personal Development	433	386	1,276	1,228	713	656
SCQF level 7						
Previous Advanced Higher	-	-	23,348	22,430	22,120	21,587
Advanced Higher	24,112	23,795	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	657,528	670,568	688,781	707,616	762,897	775,410
Scottish Baccalaureate (SCQF level 7)	161	140	122	176	191	182

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) helps people to understand and compare different qualifications in Scotland.

Key Points

- The overall entries for National Qualifications numbered 657,528 in 2017. This is a decrease of 13,040 on 2016.
- Entries at Higher (SCQF level 6) have decreased by 2,961 and Advanced Higher (SCQF level 7) have increased by 317.
- There were 161 entries for the Scottish Baccalaureate this year; an increase of 21 from 2016.
- National 4 entries include those awarded through the Recognising Positive Achievement (RPA) process.

The table below lists Grade A-C attainment rate for each National Qualification type¹.

Table 2: Grade A-C attainment rates for each National Qualification type, 2012 - 2017

	Grade A-C Attainment Rate ¹					
	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
SCQF level 2						
Access 2	-	95.0%	46.2%	63.0%	71.1%	63.9%
National 2	81.6%	75.5%	79.8%	73.6%	-	-
Skills for Work and Personal Development	-	-	-	49.6%	69.9%	49.5%
SCQF level 3						
Access 3	-	100.0%	95.3%	95.0%	93.8%	93.3%
National 3	90.8%	90.2%	91.2%	89.8%	-	-
Skills for Work and Personal Development	100.0%	75.0%	89.7%	96.4%	80.0%	78.3%
SCQF level 4						
Intermediate 1	-	-	75.3%	73.2%	77.9%	76.5%
National 4	92.8%	93.2%	93.3%	93.0%	-	-
Skills for Work and Personal Development	79.2%	83.2%	81.6%	75.3%	76.5%	72.7%
SCQF level 5						
Intermediate 2	-	-	73.3%	77.9%	81.8%	80.3%
National 5	79.5%	79.4%	79.8%	81.1%	-	-
Skills for Work and Personal Development	86.7%	87.0%	84.6%	78.6%	82.8%	75.5%
SCQF level 3-5						
Standard Grade ²	-	-	-	-	98.9%	98.9%
SCQF level 6						
Previous Higher	-	-	76.7%	77.1%	77.4%	76.9%
Higher	77.0%	77.2%	79.2%	-	-	-
Skills for Work and Personal Development	82.4%	79.3%	91.3%	88.6%	86.4%	87.3%
SCQF level 7						
Previous Advanced Higher	-	-	80.9%	81.0%	82.1%	80.1%
Advanced Higher	80.0%	81.7%	-	-	-	-
Scottish Baccalaureate (SCQF level 7)	85.7%	73.6%	80.3%	81.8%	85.9%	79.1%

¹ For National 2-4, Access 2-3, Skills for Work and Personal Development courses, which are all ungraded, the attainment rate is based on entries which have resulted in a pass.

² For historic Standard Grade courses the attainment rate refers to the percentage of learners attaining a grade 1 – 6.

The table below shows overall attainment for Awards, National Certificates, and National Progression Awards.

Table 3: Attainment for Awards, National Certificates and National Progression Awards, 2012 - 2017

	Attainment					
	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
SCQF level 1						
Awards	290	283	207	178	152	-
SCQF level 2						
Awards	1,167	750	493	301	130	22
National Progression Awards	88	77	64	101	121	87
SCQF level 3						
Awards	4,303	3,863	3,205	2,263	1,216	563
National Certificates	1	18	7	17	6	4
National Progression Awards	177	135	119	161	129	141
SCQF level 4						
Awards	10,834	11,391	9,673	7,887	4,542	2,177
National Certificates	345	371	273	89	130	167
National Progression Awards	4,803	4,958	4,336	4,111	4,153	3,788
SCQF level 5						
Awards	3,662	2,907	1,952	1,514	578	199
National Certificates	2,691	4,103	3,219	2,582	2,454	2,360
National Progression Awards	4,395	4,958	4,120	4,206	3,685	3,448
SCQF level 6						
Awards	3,523	2,710	1,305	801	588	419
National Certificates	3,585	4,920	3,989	2,729	2,664	3,025
National Progression Awards	1,619	1,611	969	701	554	463
TOTAL	41,483	43,055	33,931	27,641	21,102	16,863

Key Points

- The overall attainment for Awards, National Certificates, and National Progression Awards numbered 41,483 in 2017. This is a decrease of 1,572 on 2016.
- Awards, NC and NPA are undertaken by learners from a large number of different stages, by many centre types, throughout the year.

The following sections highlight aspects of the entries and /or attainment for each qualification type and includes the previous qualifications at each SCQF level. This provides an overview of the full set of National Qualifications since 2012.

National 2

National 2 courses (SCQF level 2) were introduced in 2014. National 2 courses require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units in a particular subject.

Table 4: Entries and attainment rate at National 2 (SCQF level 2), 2014 - 2017

	2017	2016	2015	2014
Entries	1,896	2,449	1,865	1,217
Attainment	1,547	1,849	1,488	896
Attainment rate	81.6%	75.5%	79.8%	73.6%

Key Points

- Entries were made in 15 National 2 Courses.
- Entries numbered 1,896 in 2017 with attainment of 1,547, giving an attainment rate of 81.6%.
- 48.8% of candidates entered for National 2 courses in 2017 were 4th year candidates, 23.2% were from 5th year, 12.8% 6th year, with the remaining entries coming from other stages.

Access 2

Access 2 (SCQF level 2) courses required the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units in a particular subject. 2016 was the last year of Access 2 Courses. The final Access 2 awards were certificated in 2016.

Table 5: Entries and attainment rate at Access 2 (SCQF level 2), 2012 - 2016

	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Entries	20	104	416	1,586	1,915
Attainment	19	48	262	1,128	1,223
Attainment rate	95.0%	46.2%	63.0%	71.1%	63.9%

National 3

National 3 courses (SCQF level 3) were introduced in 2014. National 3 courses require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units in a particular subject.

Table 6: Entries and attainment rate at National 3 (SCQF level 3), 2014 - 2017

	2017	2016	2015	2014
Entries	17,114	18,475	17,268	16,587
Attainment	15,543	16,659	15,756	14,898
Attainment rate	90.8%	90.2%	91.2%	89.8%

Key Points

- Entries were made in 35 National 3 Courses.
- Entries numbered 17,114 in 2017 with attainment of 15,543, giving an attainment rate of 90.8%.
- 85.3% of candidates entered for National 3 courses in 2017 were 4th year candidates, 6.9% 5th year, with the remaining entries coming from other stages.

Access 3

Access 3 courses (SCQF level 3) required the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units in a particular subject. 2016 was the last year of Access 3 Courses. The final Access 3 awards were certificated in 2016.

Table 7: Entries and attainment rate at Access 3 (SCQF level 3), 2012 - 2016

	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Entries	3	3,340	10,939	32,963	35,350
Attainment	3	3,184	10,391	30,908	32,986
Attainment rate	100%	95.3%	95.0%	93.8%	93.3%

National 4

National 4 courses (SCQF level 4) were introduced in 2014. National 4 courses require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units, including an Added Value unit, in a particular subject.

Table 8: Entries and attainment rate at National 4 (SCQF level 4), 2014 - 2017

	2017	2016	2015	2014
Entries	116,032	122,961	130,876	122,716
Attainment	107,631	114,635	122,071	114,173
Attainment rate	92.8%	93.2%	93.3%	93.0%

Key Points

- Entries were made in 43 National 4 Courses.
- Entries numbered 116,032 in 2017 with attainment of 107,631, giving an attainment rate of 92.8%.
- 65.6% of candidates entered for National 4 courses in 2017 were 4th year candidates, 22.9% from 5th year, and 8.5% from 6th year, with the remaining entries coming from other stages.
- National 4 figures include those awarded through the Recognising Positive Achievement (RPA) process.

Intermediate 1

Intermediate 1 courses (SCQF level 4) required the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units and a course assessment which, in most cases, will be externally assessed through an examination and/or coursework. 2015 was the last year of the Intermediate 1 courses.

Table 9: Entries and Grade A-C attainment rate at Intermediate 1 (SCQF level 4), 2012 - 2015

	2015	2014	2013	2012
Entries	1,553	18,679	63,190	67,721
Grade A-C attainment	1,170	13,666	49,220	51,784
Grade A-C attainment rate	75.3%	73.2%	77.9%	76.5%

National 5

National 5 courses (SCQF level 5) were introduced in 2014. National 5 courses require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units and a course assessment which, in most cases, will be externally assessed through an examination and/or coursework.

Table 10: Entries and Grade A-C attainment rate at National 5 (SCQF level 5), 2014 - 2017

	2017	2016	2015	2014
Entries	293,220	295,083	288,016	213,595
Grade A-C attainment	233,005	234,160	229,870	173,131
Grade A-C attainment rate	79.5%	79.4%	79.8%	81.1%

Key Points

- Entries were made in 48 National 5 Courses.
- Entries numbered 293,220 in 2017 with Grade A-C attainment of 233,005, giving a Grade A-C attainment rate of 79.5%.
- 54.1% of candidates entered for National 5 courses in 2017 were 4th year candidates, 28.4% in 5th year, 12.9% in 6th year, with the remaining entries coming from other stages.

Intermediate 2

Intermediate 2 courses (SCQF level 5) require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units and a course assessment which, in most cases, was externally assessed through an examination and/or coursework. 2015 was the last year of the Intermediate 2 courses.

Table 11: Entries and Grade A-C attainment rate at Intermediate 2 (SCQF Level 5), 2012 - 2015

	2015	2014	2013	2012
Entries	10,678	97,122	140,577	137,158
Grade A-C attainment	7,828	75,689	114,934	110,175
Grade A-C attainment rate	73.3%	77.9%	81.8%	80.3%

Standard Grade

Standard Grades were typically taken by learners during third and fourth year of secondary education. Standard Grade qualifications spanned SCQF levels 3-5. Entries at Standard Grade were not made at a specific SCQF level, instead, learners typically were presented for both 'Credit' and 'General' levels or 'General' and 'Foundation' levels. Learners were graded in a number of assessment elements and then an overall grade was determined based on a weighted average of the grades obtained for each element. 2013 was the last year of Standard Grades.

Table 12: Attainment for Standard Grades, 2012 – 2013

	2013	2012
Entries	308,243	319,986
Grade 1-6 attainment	304,981	316,332
Percentage obtaining grade 1 to 6	98.9%	98.9%

Higher

The Higher courses (SCQF level 6) have been designed to reflect the purposes and principles of Curriculum for Excellence. The current Higher qualification was first introduced in 2015. The courses require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units and a course assessment which, in most cases, will be externally assessed through an examination and/or coursework.

Table 13: Entries and Grade A-C attainment rate at Higher (SCQF level 6), 2015 - 2017

	2017	2016	2015
Entries	194,813	197,774	107,295
Grade A-C attainment	150,010	152,701	85,019
Grade A-C attainment rate	77.0%	77.2%	79.2%

Key Points

- Entries were made in 46 Higher Courses.
- Entries numbered 194,813 in 2017 with Grade A-C attainment of 150,010 giving a Grade A-C attainment rate of 77.0%.
- 51.7% of candidates entered for Higher courses in 2017 were 5th year candidates. There was also a substantial proportion of candidates from 6th year (39.4%). The proportion of candidates from FE College was 7.0%, with the remaining entries coming from other stages.

Previous Higher

Previous Higher courses (SCQF level 6) required the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units and a course assessment which, in most cases, was externally assessed through an examination and/or coursework. 2015 was the last year of the previous Higher courses.

Table 14: Entries and Grade A-C attainment rate at existing Higher (SCQF level 6), 2012 - 2015

	2015	2014	2013	2012
Entries	92,555	191,850	182,601	180,912
Grade A-C attainment	70,981	147,899	141,257	139,125
Grade A-C attainment rate	76.7%	77.1%	77.4%	76.9%

Advanced Higher

The current Advanced Higher qualification was first introduced in 2016. Advanced Higher courses (SCQF level 7) require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units and a course assessment which, in most cases, will be externally assessed through an examination and/or coursework.

Table 15: Entries and Grade A-C attainment rate at Advanced Higher (SCQF level 7), 2016 - 2017

	2017	2016
Entries	24,112	23,795
Grade A-C attainment	19,283	19,443
Grade A-C attainment rate	80.0%	81.7%

Key Points

- Entries were made in 34 Advanced Higher Courses.
- Entries numbered 24,112 in 2017 with Grade A-C attainment of 19,283, giving a Grade A-C attainment rate of 80.0%.
- 95.7% of candidates entered for Advanced Higher courses in 2017 were 6th year candidates, with the remaining entries coming from other stages.

Previous Advanced Higher

Previous Advanced Higher courses (SCQF level 7) required the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units and a course assessment which, in most cases, was externally assessed through an examination and/or coursework. 2015 was the last year of the previous Advanced Higher courses.

Table 16: Entries and Grade A-C attainment rate at Advanced Higher (SCQF level 7), 2012-2015

	2015	2014	2013	2012
Entries	23,348	22,430	22,120	21,587
Grade A-C attainment	18,899	18,171	18,162	17,299
Grade A-C attainment rate	80.9%	81.0%	82.1%	80.1%

Scottish Baccalaureate

The Scottish Baccalaureate is available in four subject areas (Science, Languages, Social Sciences and Expressive Arts) and consists of a coherent group of Higher and Advanced Higher qualifications, and an Interdisciplinary Project. Candidates must attain a grade A-C result in at least two Advanced Highers and one Higher in the eligible Courses, as well as a grade A-C result in the Interdisciplinary Project.

Table 17: Entries and attainment rate for The Scottish Baccalaureate SCQF level 7), 2012 - 2017

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Entries	161	140	122	176	191	182
Attainment	138	103	98	144	164	144
Attainment rate	85.7%	73.6%	80.3%	81.8%	85.9%	79.1%

Key Points

- Entries were made in 4 Scottish Baccalaureate courses.
- Entries numbered 161 in 2017 with attainment of 138, giving an attainment rate of 85.7%.
- All recorded Scottish Baccalaureate entries were from sixth year candidates in 2017.

Skills for Work and Personal Development

Skills for Work and Personal Development courses are available across SCQF level 2-6. Skills for Work courses involve a strong element of learning through involvement in practical activities which are directly related to a particular vocational area, and they develop knowledge and skills that are important to employment. Skills for Work and Personal Development courses require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units in a particular subject.

Table 18: Entries and attainment rate for Skills for Work and Personal Development courses, 2012 - 2017

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Entries	10,341	10,008	11,883	12,065	11,617	10,781
Attainment	8,665	8,513	9,980	9,465	9,198	7,986
Attainment rate	83.8%	85.1%	84.0%	78.5%	79.2%	74.1%

Key Points

- Entries were made in 27 Skills for Work and Personal Development courses across SCQF levels 2 – 6.
- Entries numbered 10,341 in 2017 with attainment of 8,665, giving an attainment rate of 83.8%.
- 17.9% of entries for Skills for Work and Personal Development courses in 2017 were from 4th year candidates, 19.6% were 5th year candidates and 51.1% were from FE colleges, with the remaining entries coming from other stages.

Awards

SQA Awards recognise the life and work skills that learners gain from activities they might already be taking part in at school, at college or elsewhere - such as sport, mentoring, voluntary work or fund-raising activities. In common with some other qualifications in SQA's portfolio they have been designed to recognise wider achievement. Awards require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units in a particular subject.

Table 19: Attainment for Awards, 2012 – 2017

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Attainment	23,779	21,904	16,835	12,944	7,206	3,380

Key Points

- Entries were made in 19 Awards courses across SCQF levels 1 – 6.
- Attainment numbered 23,779 in 2017
- 10.4% of candidates were 3rd year candidates, 29.2% were 4th year candidates, 19.4% 5th year candidates and 15.4% 6th year candidates. 7.6% were FE College candidates, with the remaining coming from other stages.

National Certificates

National Certificates are primarily aimed at 16-18 year olds and adults in education, normally at a college. They offer learners a full time programme of vocational study. National Certificates require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units in a particular subject.

Table 20: Attainment for National Certificates, 2012 – 2017

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Attainment	6622	9,412	7,488	5,417	5,254	5,556

Key Points

- Entries were made in 73 National Certificates courses across SCQF levels 3 – 6.
- Attainment numbered 6,622 in 2017.
- 97.4% of candidates entered for National Certificates in 2016 were from FE colleges, with the remaining coming from other stages.

National Progression Awards

National Progression Awards are designed to develop and assess a defined set of skills and knowledge in specialist vocational areas. They are linked to National Occupational Standards - the basis of Scottish Vocational Qualifications. National Progression Awards require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally-assessed units in a particular subject.

Table 21: Attainment for National Progression Awards, 2012 – 2017

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Attainment	11,082	11,739	9,608	9,280	8,642	7,927

Key Points

- Entries were made in 164 National Progression Awards courses.
- Attainment numbered 11,082 in 2017.
- 39.2% of candidates entered for National Progression Awards courses in 2017 were from outwith schools or FE colleges, for example workplace candidates. 31.0% were from FE colleges. The remaining candidates come from other stage groups (school based learners).