



2021 Alternative Certification Model: Equalities Monitoring Report

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1 Purpose and structure of this report

1.1 The Equalities Monitoring report

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) has a strategic objective and a statutory duty to consider the equality impacts of its activities. During the course of developing the awarding approach for 2021 therefore, SQA undertook a number of Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs), to identify and seek to mitigate potential equality impacts of the approach.

The purpose of this Equalities Monitoring Report is not to repeat assessment undertaken in those EqIAs, but to report on the outcomes of the 2021 awarding process from an equalities perspective.

Accordingly, this report should be read alongside the other publications released by SQA on Results Day 2021, including the official statistics publications that set out national 2021 attainment outcomes. This report is intended to be an important supplement to those publications, in that it provides additional reporting on how the 2021 results are distributed across groups of learners who share particular characteristics.

1.2 Structure of the report

The main body of the report provides background and other contextual information for the descriptive analyses presented in Section 5 of this report. Amongst other things, the main body provides a brief re-cap¹ of the approach to awarding in 2021, and the steps that SQA took during development of that approach to consider and mitigate possible equalities impacts.

The descriptive analyses of the distribution of 2021 results across specific groups of learners, and the methodology underpinning those analyses, are set out in Section 5.

It should be noted that the report does not set out to explain or attribute causes for the distribution of results presented in Section 5.

Understanding the causes of the patterns of distribution would require a significant programme of research and further analyses. It was not feasible in the time available to produce this report, to undertake the detailed research that would be required ascertain the various contributions of a range of explanatory factors to the distribution of results in 2021.

¹ The *National Qualifications 2021 Alternative Certification Model (ACM) - Methodology Report* provides a detailed summary of the awarding approach for 2021.

2 Background and context

2.1 Scottish Qualifications Authority

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) is an executive non-departmental public body (NDPB) established by statute to carry out administrative, commercial, executive and accreditation functions on behalf of Government. As an NDPB, SQA is responsible for making its own operational decisions.

The Education (Scotland) Act 1996 — as amended by the Scottish Qualifications Authority Act (2002) — sets out SQA's functions and provides the foundations for SQA's activities in accrediting, regulating and awarding qualifications.

SQA is sponsored by the Scottish Government's Learning Directorate and is the statutory awarding body for qualifications in Scotland. Its duties are to develop, validate, quality assure and award a national framework of qualifications for Scotland. In addition, SQA has statutory duties both as the regulator and awarding body for National Qualifications in Scotland as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Amongst other things, section 96(7) of the Equality Act 2010 gives SQA, as the appropriate regulator of general qualifications in Scotland, a power to specify provisions, criteria or practices in relation to which the duty to make reasonable adjustments does not apply and publish where specific 'reasonable adjustments' to National Qualifications should not be made.

Reasonable adjustments are steps taken to avoid a disadvantage to a disabled person. The relevant General Qualifications in Scotland covered by section 96 of the Equality Act 2010 are:

- ◆ National Courses (National 1 to National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher)
- ◆ Scottish Baccalaureates
- ◆ Skills for Work Courses
- ◆ Non-vocational Awards

As an awarding body, SQA works with schools, colleges, universities, employers and government, to ensure that qualifications are inclusive and accessible to all, recognise the achievements of learners, and provide clear pathways to further learning or employment.

SQA maintains a broad portfolio of qualifications including National Courses across a range of subject areas and a more vocationally oriented range of Awards, National Progression Awards, National Certificates and Professional Development Awards. The organisation also has a proud history of developing Higher National Certificates and Diplomas, which are equivalent to the first and second year of Scottish university degree programmes.

2.2 Cancellation of the 2021 National Qualifications (NQ) examinations diet

On 5 October 2020, as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic, the Deputy First Minister announced the cancellation of National 5 exams for 2021, and commissioned SQA to develop an alternative certification model (ACM) based on teacher judgment and supported by assessment resources and quality assurance, to replace 2021 exams for National 5.

On 8 December 2020, the Deputy First Minister announced the further cancellation of 2021 exams for Higher and Advanced Higher, and asked SQA to extend the 2021 ACM to Higher and Advanced Higher.

2.3 National Qualifications 2021 Group

The National Qualifications 2021 group was established to co-create and implement the Alternative Certification Model (ACM) for 2021 which would be based on teacher and lecturer judgement supported by assessment resources and quality assurance.

The National Qualifications 2021 group's membership comprised representatives from the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), Colleges Scotland, Education Scotland, the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), School Leaders Scotland (SLS), the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS), the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the Scottish Government, the National Parent Forum of Scotland, and the Scottish Youth Parliament.

2.4 Brief overview of the 2021 ACM

A brief re-cap of the 2021 ACM is provided below. A detailed explanation of the 2021 ACM is provided in the [National Qualifications 2021 Alternative Certification Model \(ACM\) — Methodology Report](#).

In summary, the 2021 ACM was based on the following:

- ◆ *Demonstrated Assessment*: A key tenet of the 2021 ACM was that awards are based on demonstrated attainment, with teachers and lecturers given flexibility using quality assured assessment evidence to determine provisional results.
- ◆ Provision of assessment support to teachers: Tools were designed and provided to assist centres with the model. This included the development and publication of assessment resources for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher qualifications, and subject-specific guidance on the evidence that centres could use to produce provisional results for learners.
- ◆ *Quality assurance*: This included internal quality assurance in schools, colleges and training providers with schools engaging in local authority, Regional Improvement Collaboratives, subject networks and inter-school quality assurance processes; as well as a national quality assurance exercise undertaken by SQA before the submission of provisional results. The national quality assurance involved the sampling of assessment evidence from centres delivering graded national qualifications, and subsequently

providing individual subject-specific feedback to centres and key message reports to all centres.

- ◆ *Submission of provisional results:* Centres were required to submit provisional results for each of their entries to SQA by Friday 25 June 2021. Once received by SQA, the provisional results were not modified.
- ◆ *Appeals:* After discussing their provisional results with their teacher or lecturer, and if they deem it appropriate to do so, learners can register that they want to appeal directly on SQA's website.

There are three grounds for appeals, namely:

- an appeal against the academic judgement made
- an appeal against an unresolved administrative error
- an appeal on grounds of discrimination

3 SQA's equalities obligations

3.1 Obligations under the Equalities Act

Section 149 (1) of the Equality Act 2010 requires SQA to have due regard to a number of needs, including the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The SQA Equality of Access to SQA Qualifications policy outlines the organisation's commitment to promoting and facilitating access to our qualifications. In practice this means that SQA takes every reasonable step to ensure that it:

- ◆ produces qualifications based on national standards, which are as accessible as possible. This involves undertaking equality reviews of qualifications to identify any adverse impacts on learners who share particular characteristics, and seeking to remove such adverse impacts, wherever possible, or minimise them where it is not possible to remove them altogether
- ◆ develops methods of assessment and quality assurance, which are sensitive to the needs of all candidates, but which do not compromise SQA's overarching aims of fairness and consistency
- ◆ provides assessment arrangements to allow disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs to access the assessment without compromising its integrity. For disabled candidates, this includes making reasonable adjustments in accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010

Additionally, in its accreditation role, SQA accredits vocational qualifications that are offered across Scotland, including Scottish Vocational Qualifications, and approves bodies that wish to award them.

3.2 Public sector equality duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires SQA to have due regard to the need to:

- ◆ eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- ◆ advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not; and
- ◆ foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not

SQA takes a number of steps to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty. This includes working with schools, colleges, universities, industry and government, to ensure that qualifications, including National Courses, are inclusive and accessible to all, recognise the achievements of learners, and enable progression to further learning or employment.

3.3 SQA's Code of Practice

SQA's Code of Practice guides SQA's approach for ensuring that its qualifications are of a high quality and are fit for purpose, and that the assessment of these qualifications is monitored and maintained to a consistently high standard. It sets out the framework by which SQA safeguards the integrity of qualifications and assessment standards to ensure public confidence.

The Code of Practice is based on a set of 13 Governing Principles that govern how SQA meets its statutory duties and regulates its activities. These principles also apply to SQA qualifications that are regulated by other organisations.

In the context of equalities, Governing Principle 7 of the Code of Practice states that:

SQA will ensure that all qualifications and assessments are as fair and accessible as possible and that the needs of candidates are met in the administration of its assessments.

4 Equality Impact Assessment of the 2021 ACM

As part of developing the 2021 ACM, SQA completed equality impact assessments (EqIAs) and Children's Rights and Wellbeing Assessments (CRWIAs) for the full end-to-end process. The aim was to ensure identification and mitigation of any potential impacts of the ACM on one or more groups of candidates with protected characteristics.

The EqIAs considered and acted upon key equalities evidence throughout the development and finalisation of the 2021 ACM, as well as in the development and finalisation of the 2021 Appeals Service and Incomplete Evidence Contingency arrangement.

4.1 EqIA of the modifications to NQ course assessments for session 2020–21

Due to ongoing disruption as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the decision was taken to modify existing course assessments at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher for session 2020–21.

This was undertaken in line with Scottish Government's [*Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): strategic framework for reopening schools, early learning and childcare provision*](#), and was intended to support delivery and assessment within the contexts of COVID-19 restrictions, whilst maintaining the original rationale, purpose and aims of courses.

In addition to a full consultation on the proposals, an EqIA was undertaken on the planned modifications to National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher course assessments for session 2020–21.

The [EqIA](#) summarised details of how the intended modifications would re-shape course assessments, the potential equality impacts that might result, and the mitigations that could be put in place for any identified disadvantage.

SQA's qualifications teams and senior appointees considered existing the EqIA's findings as part of the process of developing and finalising proposed modifications.

Following the subsequent decision to cancel 2021 exams for graded national qualifications, the modifications formed the basis for guidance to centres on generating valid and reliable evidence for quality assuring and finalising centre-generated provisional results for learners.

Going forward into 2022 and beyond, SQA's qualifications teams will continue to consider this guidance and revisit Equality Review Forms as necessary, to ensure any further proposed course modification meet equality principles and maintain the integrity of qualifications. A summary of these reviews is available [here](#).

4.2 EqIA of the 2021 ACM

The EqIA of the 2021 ACM considered the potential impact of the 2021 ACM on candidates who share protected characteristics and assessed how these impacts could be mitigated.

Other groups of candidates, such as those who are socio-economically disadvantaged, or who experience other circumstances that present barriers to accessing qualifications, were also considered in this assessment.

The EqIA found that the 2021 ACM may have a potential negative impact on some candidates with protected characteristics, but that there were actions that centres could take to mitigate these actions. Some of the potential negative impacts reflected unknown but possible consequences of the model, such as a possible risk of bias in assessment decisions. There was also a potential negative impact on some candidates, where COVID-19 or other circumstances meant they were unable to generate the required evidence to demonstrate their ability. However, the assessment determined that the flexibility of the ACM meant that, in most cases, centres would be able to take actions to mitigate these impacts.

A summary of potential impacts and mitigating actions taken in the design and implementation of the 2021 ACM are set out in the table below. Some of the potential impacts reflected unknown but possible consequences of the model, such as a possible risk of bias in assessment decisions.

Impacts and mitigation actions identified in the EqIA of the 2021 ACM

Potential impact	Group(s) of candidates who may be impacted	Mitigating actions
<p>It may not be possible to provide results for all candidates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Potential impact on those with protected characteristics of disability, pregnancy and maternity, and race ◆ Potential impact on assessment-only or home-schooled candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Flexibility built into 2021 ACM to provide as many opportunities as possible to generate evidence ➤ Options to defer or match evidence against other qualifications
<p>Bias may affect some assessment decisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Potential impact on all candidates including those with protected characteristic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Quality assurance — at all levels of the system, was central to the 2021 ACM, to mitigate risks of bias ➤ The 2021 ACM's Appeals process allows for learners to appeal a result if they believe that they have been subject to unlawful discrimination

<p>Some candidates may have difficulty in demonstrating attainment through coursework-type tasks due to absence, disrupted learning support or inadequate resources</p> <p>Some candidates may have difficulty in demonstrating attainment through question-paper type tasks due to issues with stamina, concentration, stress or anxiety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Potential impact on those with protected characteristics of disability; potential impact on those who require additional support for learning or with mental health needs ◆ Potential impact on those with SIMD and other equalities related factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Flexibility built into 2021 ACM provides as many opportunities as possible to generate evidence and allows for development of localised arrangements for individual candidates ➤ Assessment arrangements can be provided in centre; reasonable adjustments can be agreed with SQA ➤ Recommended evidence represents reduction in assessment load which may reduce stress ➤ Assessments can be carried out across several occasions, reducing the demands on each occasion
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To assess the equalities outcomes of the 2021 ACM, SQA has undertaken detailed analyses of the distribution of 2021 results across groups who share particular characteristics.

The outcomes from these analyses are presented in Section 5.

5 Equalities monitoring and analyses of the 2021 ACM outcomes

5.1 Purpose of these analyses

This section sets out the descriptive analyses that SQA has conducted on the 2021 results for groups of learners who share specific equalities characteristics.

Additionally, analyses have been undertaken to assess the 2021 results based on learners' Urban/Rural status, and levels of deprivation as ranked by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

The full set of learner characteristics considered in this section are set out in the Methodology section below.

Note that the analyses in this section exclude 465 entries who have registered for the Incomplete Evidence Contingency (IEC) process, introduced as part of ACM 2021 to allow some learners who meet specific criteria, to undertake assessments and be awarded grades post-August 2021.

5.2 Methodology

5.2.1 Data sources

Personal, sensitive learner-level information, including protected sensitive characteristics data, is not held in SQA's statistical archives. For this reason, analysis relating to learners' protected characteristics was undertaken by Scottish Government² on SQA's request, and the output from this was provided to SQA.

Consequently, analyses based on protected characteristics presented in this report only represent learners from Education Authority (EA) schools, as Scottish Government only collects and holds protected characteristics data for those learners. For clarity, whilst the numbers and proportions from Scottish Government's analyses relating to protected characteristics have been used in this report, all commentary around those analyses has been produced by SQA.

It should be noted that analyses for Age, Sex and SIMD, were undertaken by SQA and are based on data for all learners.

Table 1 details the characteristics for which analyses were undertaken by either Scottish Government or SQA.

² Where analysis is undertaken by Scottish Government, the historic figures for 2017-2020 used for the Scottish Government analysis are the final results from December attainment data in the given year, provided to Scottish Government by SQA for the purpose of [Insight](#). The data for 2021 is from August attainment data. The differences between the August and December Insight datasets should be borne in mind when looking at the analyses undertaken by Scottish Government for this report.

Table 1: Characteristics covered

Equalities characteristics	Undertaken by	Cohort
Additional Support Needs (ASN)	Scottish Government	EA learners
Declared/Assessed disabled	Scottish Government	EA learners
Ethnicity	Scottish Government	EA learners
Age	SQA	All learners
Sex	SQA	All learners
Additional characteristics	Undertaken by	Cohort
Urban/Rural	Scottish Government	EA learners
SIMD	SQA	All learners

5.2.2 Sources of data for Protected Characteristics analyses

Equalities information was taken from the September 'Scottish Pupil Census', for the relevant year, for EA school learners. This does not include: learners attending publicly funded Special Schools; learners attending private Independent Schools; learners educated out with the school education system (for example at home) or adults attending publicly funded secondary schools. The census is carried out through the Scottish Exchange of Educational Data ([ScotXed](#)) project.

A range of information was collected for each individual learner. This includes:

- ◆ **Additional Support Needs status:** The pupil census collects information on whether learners require additional support. Candidates with an Additional Support Need (ASN) include learners who have a Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP), Individualised Education Programme (IEP), or child's plan, are assessed or declared disabled, or as having another support need.
- ◆ **Declared or Assessed Disabled status:** Learners may be assessed as having a disability by a qualified professional or be declared as having a disability by themselves or their parent/carer.
- ◆ **Ethnic background:** A student's ethnic background is recorded in the pupil census. For this report, the full list of categories has been aggregated into ten categories. These are: White - Scottish, White - non-Scottish, Mixed or multiple ethnic groups, Asian - Indian, Asian - Pakistani, Asian - Chinese, Asian - Other, African/ Black/ Caribbean. All other categories, Not Disclosed/Not known. The 'African/ Black/ Caribbean' category includes 'African', 'African - Other', and 'Caribbean or Black' categories and 'All other categories' includes 'Other - other' and 'Other - Arab'.

5.2.3 Sources of data for Urban/Rural classification

In addition to the Scottish Pupil Census, [Urban/Rural categories](#) were applied to Scottish Government data on learner postcodes.

A learner's home address is assigned to one of six categories for how urban or rural the area is. These categories are: Large Urban Areas, Other Urban Areas, Accessible Small Towns, Remote Small Towns, Accessible Rural, and Remote Rural.

5.2.4 Sources of data for Sex, Age and SIMD

SQA holds data on learner sex and age (derived from date of birth). Furthermore, SQA holds postcodes for learners and for the purpose of this analysis, these were merged with externally-held data from the [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation \(SIMD\)](#). SIMD ranks 'data zones' across Scotland based on their levels of deprivation on a range of measures. The Scottish Government's SIMD website provides a postcode lookup file for matching SIMD rank to SIMD quintile. These tools were used to match learners' postcodes held by SQA to SIMD quintiles.

To provide context for the 2021 analyses, SQA's operational candidate data on sex, age (date of birth) and postcode were merged with historical (2017 – 2020) August statistical attainment data. This enabled similar analyses to be undertaken for historic years.

The following should be noted with regard to the analyses by Age, Sex and SIMD:

- ◆ **Age:** A learner's date of birth was used to calculate that learner's age in years at an anchor date of 31 May (typically the completion date for NQs) in a given year.

The age categories were set as: '*below 15*', '*15–18*' and '*above 18*' years, with around 99% of learners falling in the age bracket of 15–18.

- ◆ **Sex:** SQA has adopted the International Organization for Standardisation (ISO), and Information Standards Board for Education, Skills and Children's Services (ISB) categories for legal sex type.

These allow the use of the following values: *Male*, *Female*, *Not Known*, and *Not Applicable*. Candidates with a legal sex status *Not Known* and *Not Applicable* were removed from the analysis due to extremely low numbers.

- ◆ **SIMD:** Candidates with no postcode or the same postcode as the centre were excluded from the analysis (<1% of dataset).

The most recent version of the SIMD tool, ie SIMD 2020, was used for all SIMD analyses in this report, as this provides the most up-to-date information about deprivation in learners' areas.

5.2.5 Further notes around the methodology

It should also be noted that separate datasets were used for each analysis. This was due to each dataset only removing learners who did not have the necessary data for each particular analysis, so for example a learner with no postcode data could still be included in Age analysis if their date of birth was known.

In contrast to the analyses of attainment by protected characteristics, the analyses of attainment by Sex, Age and SIMD covered entries from all candidates with a result in the years 2017 to 2021. Specifically, this means that these analyses include candidates from all centre types, ie Education Authority schools, Independent Schools, Colleges, and other.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the analyses examine each graded national qualifications level separately. Consequently, individual candidates may be counted more than once if they have been entered for qualifications at different levels.

'Percentage Point Difference' figures are calculated prior to percentage rounding and the figures may therefore not always sum to 100%.

5.2.6 Dataset notes

In 2021, the Scottish Government commissioned SQA to develop an Alternative Certification Model (ACM 2021) for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher for 2021. This model was developed by the National Qualifications 2021 Group, which had representatives from SQA, learner, parent and teacher groups, amongst others. It is based on teacher judgement, supported by assessment resources and quality assurance.

In 2020, the Deputy First Minister directed SQA to issue grades, primarily on the basis of teacher estimates. 9198 that had been adjusted upwards in an earlier [moderation process](#) were also retained.

Prior to 2020 and 2021, the Scottish examination system had been in a period of change since the introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), such as the Revised National Qualifications (RNQ) changes.

Note that 2017-2019 entry and attainment figures are derived from different awarding approaches to 2020 and, separately, 2021. Comparisons of entries, attainment volumes and attainment rates should only be made with full consideration and recognition of each of these different approaches. The above should be considered throughout this publication, where differences between years are presented and described for context.

5.3 National 5 entries by characteristics

5.3.1 National 5 entries by Age, Sex and SIMD

Table 2 below shows the proportion of entries by Age, Sex and SIMD for all learners entered for National 5 from 2017 to 2021.

Table 2: National 5 proportion of entries by Age, Sex and SIMD

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Age category					
Below 15	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
15 to 18	98.9%	98.8%	98.8%	98.9%	99.1%
Over18	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.7%
Sex					
Female	51.5%	51.7%	51.5%	51.1%	50.4%
Male	48.5%	48.3%	48.5%	48.9%	49.6%
SIMD quintile					
1 (most deprived): 0-20%	16.6%	16.6%	16.1%	16.3%	16.6%
2: 20-40%	17.4%	17.2%	17.1%	17.3%	16.8%
3: 40-60%	18.8%	18.6%	18.9%	18.7%	18.7%
4: 60-80%	22.6%	22.4%	22.4%	22.3%	22.5%
5 (least deprived): 80-100%	24.7%	25.2%	25.5%	25.3%	25.5%

From 2017 to 2021, the percentage of National 5 entries from candidates in the 15 to 18 age bracket ranged from 98.8 to 98.9%. In 2021, this has increased to 99.1% with the percentage of those over 18 showing a corresponding reduction.

In the period 2017 to 2020, a larger proportion of National 5 entries were from females relative to males. In that period the proportional difference in entries ranged from 2.3 percentage points to 3.4 percentage points in favour of females. In 2021, the proportion of male learners (49.6%) increased to be closer to females (50.4%); ie, a difference of 0.8 percentage point.

Historically, SIMD data has shown a higher proportion of entries from candidates from the least deprived SIMD quintiles. In the period 2017 to 2020, SIMD quintiles 3 to 5 accounted for between 66.1 to 66.8% of National 5 entries. This pattern persists in 2021, with SIMD quintiles 3 to 5 accounting for 66.6% of National 5 entries.

5.3.2 National 5 entries by Protected characteristics (EA Schools only)

Table 3 below shows the proportion of entries by protected characteristics for EA learners entered for National 5 from 2017 to 2021.

Table 3: National 5 proportion of entries by protected characteristics – EA learners

	2017 ²	2018 ²	2019 ²	2020 ²	2021
Additional Support Needs					
ASN	19.4%	21.4%	23.8%	26.4%	28.5%
No ASN	80.6%	78.6%	76.2%	73.6%	71.5%
Declared/Assessed disabled					
Not declared or assessed disabled	98.4%	98.4%	98.3%	98.3%	98.1%
Declared or assessed disabled	1.6%	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%	1.9%
Urban/Rural					
Large Urban Areas	29.8%	30.0%	29.6%	29.3%	30.1%
Other Urban Areas	38.5%	38.3%	38.3%	39.3%	38.2%
Accessible Small Towns	9.6%	9.5%	9.7%	9.8%	9.5%
Remote Small Towns	3.8%	3.6%	3.7%	3.4%	3.5%
Accessible Rural	12.1%	12.0%	12.6%	12.1%	12.4%
Remote Rural	6.2%	6.5%	6.2%	6.1%	6.2%
Ethnicity					
White - Scottish	84.9%	83.5%	83.1%	82.0%	81.3%
White - non-Scottish	7.8%	8.3%	8.9%	9.3%	9.4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.3%	1.4%
Asian - Indian	0.6%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%
Asian - Pakistani	2.2%	2.4%	2.2%	2.3%	2.2%
Asian - Chinese	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%
Asian - Other	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%
African/ Black/ Caribbean	0.9%	1.1%	1.1%	1.3%	1.5%
All other categories	0.4%	0.6%	0.6%	0.8%	0.8%
Not Disclosed/Not known	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.2%

From 2017 to 2021, the percentage of National 5 entries from EA learners with Additional Support Needs (ASN) increased year-on-year, with corresponding decreases in learners with no ASN identified via the Pupil Census. The pupil census attributes these increases as 'likely due in part to continued improvements in recording and the introduction of the additional need types', rather than any change in the population.

For National 5, in 2017 the percentage of entries with ASN was 19.4%. In 2021 the percentage of entries with ASN was 28.5%.

The percentage of entries declared or assessed disabled has increased from 2017 to 2021 for National 5. In 2017, the percentage of entries declared or assessed disabled was 1.6%. In 2021, the percentage of entries declared or assessed disabled increased to 1.9%. The percentage breakdowns of entries from different Urban/Rural categories has remained

relatively stable and within 2017-2020 ranges on the whole. There has been an increase in the proportion of entries from large urban areas and a decrease in the proportion of entries from other urban areas in 2021 on historic ranges.

The percentage of White-Scottish has reduced over the period 2017-2021, with increases in the percentages of some other ethnicity groups (notably White Non-Scottish and African/ Black/ Caribbean).

5.4 Higher entries by characteristics

5.4.1 Higher entries by Age, Sex and SIMD

Table 4 below shows the proportion of entries by Age, Sex and SIMD for all learners entered for Higher from 2017 to 2021.

Table 4: Higher proportion of entries by Age, Sex and SIMD

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Age category					
Below 15	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
15 to 18	97.2%	97.2%	97.7%	98.1%	98.5%
Over18	2.8%	2.8%	2.3%	1.8%	1.5%
Sex					
Female	55.0%	55.6%	56.0%	55.8%	54.8%
Male	45.0%	44.4%	44.0%	44.2%	45.2%
SIMD quintile					
1 (most deprived): 0-20%	13.0%	13.4%	13.6%	13.3%	13.4%
2: 20-40%	15.6%	15.3%	15.3%	15.2%	15.4%
3: 40-60%	18.6%	18.4%	18.1%	18.5%	18.3%
4: 60-80%	24.1%	24.0%	23.8%	23.7%	23.6%
5 (least deprived): 80-100%	28.5%	28.8%	29.1%	29.3%	29.3%

From 2017 to 2020, an increasing percentage of entries for Higher were from candidates in the 15 to 18 age bracket, rising from 97.2% in 2017 to 98.1% in 2020. In 2021, there has been a further increase of entries from this age bracket to 98.5%, with the percentage of entries from candidates aged over 18 showing a corresponding reduction.

In the period 2017 to 2020, a larger proportion of Higher entries were from females relative to males. In that period, the proportional difference in entries ranged from 10.0 to 11.9 percentage points in favour of female learners. This pattern persisted in 2021, with 54.8% of entries coming from female learners and 45.2% coming from male learners.

In the period 2017 to 2020, relative to SIMD quintiles 1 and 2, there was a larger proportion of Higher entries from candidates from SIMD quintiles 3 to 5. In those years, these quintiles accounted for 71.1 to 71.5% of Higher entries. This pattern persists in 2021, where SIMD quintiles 3 to 5 account for 71.2% of Higher entries.

5.4.2 Higher entries by protected characteristics (EA Schools only)

Table 5 below shows the proportion of entries by protected characteristics for EA learners entered for Higher from 2017 to 2021.

Table 5: Higher proportion of entries by protected characteristics

	2017 ²	2018 ²	2019 ²	2020 ²	2021
Additional Support Needs					
ASN	14.6%	16.8%	19.0%	21.5%	23.7%
No ASN	85.4%	83.2%	81.0%	78.5%	76.3%
Declared/Assessed disabled					
Not declared or assessed disabled	98.8%	98.8%	98.7%	98.5%	98.6%
Declared or assessed disabled	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.5%	1.4%
Urban/Rural					
Large Urban Areas	29.1%	30.1%	30.7%	30.4%	30.5%
Other Urban Areas	38.2%	38.1%	37.9%	37.6%	38.4%
Accessible Small Towns	10.1%	9.8%	9.6%	9.9%	9.8%
Remote Small Towns	3.4%	3.5%	3.3%	3.3%	3.1%
Accessible Rural	12.6%	12.5%	12.2%	12.7%	12.3%
Remote Rural	6.6%	6.0%	6.3%	6.1%	5.9%
Ethnicity					
White - Scottish	84.4%	83.5%	81.9%	81.3%	80.5%
White - non-Scottish	7.8%	8.2%	8.8%	9.2%	9.4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.4%
Asian - Indian	0.7%	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
Asian - Pakistani	2.1%	2.4%	2.6%	2.7%	2.6%
Asian - Chinese	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%
Asian - Other	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	0.8%	0.9%
African/ Black/ Caribbean	1.0%	1.0%	1.2%	1.3%	1.5%
All other categories	0.5%	0.5%	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%
Not Disclosed/Not known	0.9%	1.0%	1.1%	1.2%	1.1%

From 2017 to 2021, the percentage of entries from Education Authority learners with Additional Support Needs (ASN) has increased year on year with corresponding decreases in learners with no ASN identified via the Pupil Census.

For Higher, in 2017 the percentage of entries with ASN was 14.6%. In 2021 the percentage of entries with ASN was 23.7%. The pupil census attributes these increases as 'likely due in part to continued improvements in recording and the introduction of the additional need types', rather than any change in the population.

The percentage of entries declared or assessed disabled has increased from 2017 to 2020 for Higher. In 2017, the percentage of entries declared or assessed disabled was 1.2%. In 2020, the percentage of entries declared or assessed disabled was 1.5%. In 2021, this has decreased to 1.4%.

The proportion of entries from Other Urban areas has increased in 2021 over historic levels (2017-2020). Remote Small Town entry proportions and rural categories have seen some corresponding decreases.

The percentage of entries from White-Scottish learners has reduced over the period 2017-2021, with increases in the percentages of some other ethnicity groups (notably White Non-Scottish, Asian-Pakistani and African/ Black/ Caribbean).

5.5 Advanced Higher entries breakdown by characteristics

5.5.1 Advanced Higher entries by Age, Sex and SIMD

Table 6 below shows the proportion of entries by Age, Sex and SIMD for all learners entered for Advanced Higher from 2017 to 2021.

Table 6: Advanced Higher proportion of entries by Age, Sex and SIMD

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Age category					
Below 15	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-	0.0%
15 to 18	99.6%	99.4%	99.6%	99.6%	99.6%
Over18	0.4%	0.6%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Sex					
Female	54.9%	55.3%	56.2%	56.0%	56.6%
Male	45.1%	44.7%	43.8%	44.0%	43.4%
SIMD quintile					
1 (most deprived): 0-20%	8.0%	7.8%	8.1%	8.7%	8.4%
2: 20-40%	11.2%	11.4%	11.0%	11.2%	11.1%
3: 40-60%	16.6%	16.4%	16.6%	15.8%	16.9%
4: 60-80%	24.8%	25.5%	25.6%	25.0%	24.7%
5 (least deprived): 80-100%	39.3%	38.9%	38.7%	39.4%	38.8%

From 2017 to 2021, the percentage of Advanced Higher entries from candidates in the 15 to 18 age bracket ranged from 99.4 to 99.6%. A similar pattern of entries is observed in 2021, with 99.6 % of entries coming from candidates in the 15 to 18 age bracket.

In the period 2017 to 2020, a larger proportion of Advanced Higher entries were from females relative to males. In that period, the proportional difference in entries ranged from 9.7 to 12.3 percentage points. This difference increased in 2021, with 56.6% of entries coming from female candidates and 43.1% coming from male candidates, ie. a difference of 13.1 percentage points.

In the period 2017 to 2020, relative to SIMD quintiles 1 and 2, there was a higher proportion of Advanced Higher entries from candidates from SIMD quintiles 3 to 5. In those years, these quintiles accounted for 80.2 to 80.9% of Advanced Higher entries. Furthermore, from 2017 to 2019, candidates in the least deprived SIMD quintile, ie SIMD quintile 5, accounted for between 38.7% to 39.4% of Advanced Higher entries.

This pattern of entries persists in 2021, with SIMD quintiles 3 to 5 accounting for 80.4% of Advanced Higher entries; and of those, SIMD quintile 5 alone accounts for 38.8%.

5.5.2 Advanced Higher entries by protected characteristics (EA Schools only)

Table 7 below shows the proportion of entries by protected characteristics for EA learners entered for Advanced Higher from 2017 to 2021.

Table 7: Advanced Higher proportion of entries by Age, Sex and SIMD

	2017 ²	2018 ²	2019 ²	2020 ²	2021
Additional Support Needs					
ASN	11.5%	15.1%	16.9%	18.9%	20.9%
No ASN	88.5%	84.9%	83.1%	81.1%	79.1%
Declared/Assessed disabled					
Not declared or assessed disabled	98.8%	98.9%	98.9%	98.7%	98.8%
Declared or assessed disabled	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%	1.3%	1.2%
Urban/Rural					
Large Urban Areas	29.9%	30.5%	31.5%	33.0%	32.3%
Other Urban Areas	34.9%	34.4%	33.9%	33.9%	33.3%
Accessible Small Towns	10.4%	10.8%	10.8%	10.3%	10.9%
Remote Small Towns	3.3%	3.2%	3.3%	2.6%	3.2%
Accessible Rural	14.6%	14.2%	14.1%	13.2%	13.8%
Remote Rural	6.9%	6.9%	6.3%	6.9%	6.6%
Ethnicity					
White - Scottish	82.4%	80.2%	79.4%	77.3%	77.4%
White - non-Scottish	8.8%	10.1%	10.3%	11.1%	11.5%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	1.3%	1.5%	1.7%	1.4%	1.7%
Asian - Indian	1.2%	1.1%	1.3%	1.7%	1.4%
Asian - Pakistani	2.2%	2.1%	2.5%	2.8%	2.7%
Asian - Chinese	1.0%	1.5%	1.3%	1.3%	1.0%
Asian - Other	0.8%	0.9%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%
African/ Black/ Caribbean	0.9%	1.0%	0.9%	1.3%	1.2%
All other categories	0.7%	0.7%	0.5%	1.0%	0.9%
Not Disclosed/Not known	0.9%	0.8%	1.0%	1.1%	1.2%

From 2017 to 2021, the percentage of entries from Education Authority learners with Additional Support Needs (ASN) has increased year on year with corresponding decreases in learners with no ASN identified via the Pupil Census. The pupil census attributes these increases as 'likely due in part to continued improvements in recording and the introduction of the additional need types', rather than any change in the population.

For Advanced Higher, in 2017 the percentage of entries with ASN was 11.5%. In 2021 the percentage of entries with ASN was 20.9%.

The percentage of entries declared or assessed disabled has remained relatively stable from 2017 to 2021 for Advanced Higher. In 2017, the percentage of entries declared or assessed disabled was 1.2%. In 2021, this percentage of entries is 1.2%.

The percentage breakdowns of entries from most Urban/Rural categories have remained relatively stable and within 2017-2020 ranges. Other Urban Areas has seen a decrease in its proportion of entries in 2021 on historic ranges, with a corresponding increase in the proportion of entries from accessible small towns.

The percentage of entries from White-Scottish learners has reduced over the period 2017-2020, with increases in the percentages of some other ethnicity groups (notably White Non-Scottish and Asian-Pakistani).

5.6 Distribution of 2021 Attainment across different groups

2021 attainment by equalities characteristics is assessed in the subsections below. As with other analyses undertaken in this report, historic attainment, ie for 2017 to 2020, is also provided for contextualisation of 2021 outcomes.

Given the patterns of attainment in 2021, the discussion in this section focuses on grade A and grades A–C attainment rates.

Caution is advised in interpreting some of the percentage point changes for different groups over time. For some characteristics, the numbers on which the grade breakdowns are calculated are small and likely to be more variable as a result.

5.7 Attainment by Age characteristics

As previously shown, 99.1% of entries at National 5, 98.5% of entries at Higher and 99.6% at Advanced Higher are from learners aged between 15 and 18.

Due to the small numbers of entries from candidates aged below 15 and above 18, there is limited equalities analysis that can be conducted on the Age characteristic due to the risk of disclosing the identities and results of individual learners.

For certain qualification levels for example, 100% of the small number of results for candidate aged below 15 are within one grade. For this reason, analyses of attainment by the Age category is not undertaken.

5.8 Attainment by Sex type

This section outlines 2021 attainment outcomes by legal sex type. For context, 2017 to 2020 attainment outcomes are also provided.

5.8.1 National 5 grade distribution by sex type

Table 8 below shows the grade distribution at National 5 by sex type for the past five years.

Table 8: National 5 grade distribution by Sex

Sex	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
Female	2017	41.1%	23.3%	17.0%	5.9%	12.6%	81.4%
	2018	39.1%	23.0%	18.0%	11.1%	8.8%	80.1%
	2019	39.2%	23.3%	17.8%	11.4%	8.3%	80.2%
	2020	46.4%	24.0%	20.0%	6.2%	3.4%	90.4%
	2021	51.5%	19.5%	16.2%	7.4%	5.4%	87.2%
Male	2017	32.8%	24.3%	20.3%	7.2%	15.5%	77.4%
	2018	30.9%	23.1%	20.6%	13.8%	11.6%	74.5%
	2019	30.8%	24.5%	20.8%	13.7%	10.3%	76.0%
	2020	38.2%	25.3%	24.1%	8.1%	4.4%	87.6%
	2021	41.8%	22.0%	20.5%	9.2%	6.5%	84.3%

As shown above, females had higher A–C and A attainment rates than males at National 5 for each year in the period 2017 to 2020. This remains the case in 2021.

The year-on-year percentage point change in the A attainment rate was broadly similar between males and females in each year between 2017 and 2020. For example, in 2020, the A attainment rate for females increased by 7.2 percentage points on 2019, with the A attainment rate for males increasing by 7.4 percentage points. In 2021, females have seen a greater year-on-year increase in the A attainment rate at National 5 of 5.2 percentage points, compared to males whose A attainment rate increased by 3.6 percentage points.

In the period 2017 to 2020, the difference in A rate attainment between males and females ranged between 8.2 to 8.4 percentage points in favour of females. In 2021, the difference in the A attainment rate between females and males has increased to 9.8 percentage points.

The year-on-year percentage point change in the A–C attainment rate between males and females was more varied between 2017 and 2020. In 2021 however, there has been a similar year-on-year reduction in the A–C rate for females and males, a decrease of 3.2 percentage points and 3.3 percentage points respectively.

The overall difference in the A–C attainment rate between males and females has reduced from 4.2 percentage points in 2019 to 2.8 and 2.9 percentage points in 2020 and 2021 respectively.

5.8.2 Higher grade distribution by sex type

Table 9 below shows the grade distribution at Higher by sex type for the past five years.

Table 9: Higher grade distribution by Sex

Sex	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
Female	2017	31.8%	25.9%	21.9%	7.8%	12.6%	79.6%
	2018	31.1%	26.0%	22.4%	8.0%	12.5%	79.5%
	2019	30.3%	24.4%	22.0%	14.3%	9.0%	76.8%
	2020	43.3%	26.9%	20.7%	6.0%	3.1%	90.9%
	2021	52.1%	21.6%	15.7%	6.0%	4.6%	89.4%
Male	2017	24.9%	25.1%	23.8%	9.2%	16.9%	73.8%
	2018	25.1%	24.5%	23.9%	9.7%	16.8%	73.4%
	2019	25.6%	23.6%	22.9%	16.3%	11.5%	72.2%
	2020	35.9%	26.9%	24.4%	8.2%	4.6%	87.2%
	2021	42.2%	22.9%	19.7%	8.3%	6.9%	84.8%

From 2017 to 2020, females had higher A–C and A attainment rates than males. This remains the case in 2021.

In 2021, females have seen a greater year-on-year increase in the A attainment rate at Higher (8.9 percentage points) compared to males (6.3 percentage points). Looking further back, the 2021 A attainment rate for females is an increase of 21.8 percentage points on 2019 and an increase of 16.6 percentage points for males.

In 2019, the difference in A attainment rate between males and females had fallen to 4.7 percentage points. In 2020, the difference in the A attainment rate between males and females increased to 7.4 percentage points. In 2021 the difference in the A attainment rate increased to 9.9 percentage points.

With regards to changes to A–C rates, males saw a greater year-on-year reduction in A–C attainment rates at -2.4 percentage points relative to females who saw a year-on-year reduction of -1.5 percentage points in 2021. Looking further back, 2021 A–C rates increased by 12.6 percentage points on 2019 for both males and females.

In 2019, the difference in the Higher A–C attainment rate between males and females was 4.6 percentage points. In 2020, the difference was 3.7 percentage points; and in 2021, the difference is 4.6 percentage points.

5.8.3 Advanced Higher grade distribution by sex type

Table 10 below shows the grade distribution at Advanced Higher by sex type for the past five years.

Table 10: Advanced Higher grade distribution by Sex

Sex	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
Female	2017	32.5%	26.5%	23.3%	8.0%	9.7%	82.4%
	2018	33.3%	26.7%	23.5%	7.4%	9.1%	83.5%
	2019	32.0%	25.8%	23.6%	8.2%	10.4%	81.4%
	2020	47.6%	29.1%	17.8%	3.8%	1.7%	94.4%
	2021	53.2%	23.8%	15.2%	4.7%	3.1%	92.2%
Male	2017	30.8%	24.2%	22.1%	8.3%	14.6%	77.1%
	2018	31.1%	24.8%	20.8%	8.8%	14.4%	76.7%
	2019	31.5%	23.8%	21.5%	8.5%	14.6%	76.8%
	2020	44.8%	26.1%	20.5%	5.6%	3.0%	91.4%
	2021	48.1%	22.6%	17.0%	6.6%	5.8%	87.6%

From 2017 to 2020, females typically had higher A–C and A attainment rates than males. The exception to this was in 2019 when the A attainment rate for males (31.5%) achieved near equivalence with females (32%). In 2021, as in 2020, both A–C and A rates for females were higher than for males.

In 2021, females saw a greater year-on-year increase in the A attainment rate at Advanced Higher (5.6 percentage points) compared to males (3.3 percentage points). Looking further back, the 2021 A attainment rate for females is an increase of 21.2 percentage points on 2019, and an increase of 16.5 percentage points for males.

In 2019, the difference in the A attainment rate between males and females was 0.5 percentage point. In 2020, the difference was 2.8 percentage points, and in 2021, the difference is 5.1 percentage points.

In 2021, males saw a greater year-on-year reduction in A–C attainment rates at -3.8 percentage points, relative to females who saw a year-on-year reduction of -2.2 percentage points. Looking further back, 2021 A–C rates increased by 10.8 percentage points on 2019, for both males and females.

In 2019, the difference in Advanced Higher A–C attainment rate between males and females was 4.6 percentage points. In 2020, the difference was 3.1 percentage points; and in 2021, 4.6 percentage points.

5.9 Attainment by SIMD quintile

This section outlines 2021 attainment outcomes by SIMD quintile. For context, 2017 to 2020 attainment outcomes are also provided.

Caution is advised in interpreting some of the percentage point changes for different SIMD quintiles over time. For example, the numbers on which the grade distribution has been calculated for Advanced Higher are small and likely to be more variable as a result.

5.9.1 National 5 grade distribution by SIMD quintile

Table 11 below shows the grade distribution at National 5 by SIMD for the past five years.

Table 11: National 5 grade distribution by SIMD

SIMD quintile	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
1	2017	24.3%	24.3%	22.7%	8.7%	19.9%	71.4%
1	2018	22.3%	23.2%	23.7%	16.4%	14.5%	69.1%
1	2019	21.2%	23.8%	23.7%	17.4%	13.8%	68.8%
1	2020	29.3%	27.1%	28.4%	9.7%	5.4%	84.9%
1	2021	33.7%	23.6%	23.9%	11.0%	7.8%	81.3%
2	2017	28.6%	24.5%	21.4%	7.8%	17.7%	74.5%
2	2018	26.3%	23.3%	22.0%	15.4%	13.0%	71.6%
2	2019	26.3%	24.4%	22.2%	15.1%	11.9%	72.9%
2	2020	34.4%	26.4%	25.5%	8.8%	4.9%	86.3%
2	2021	38.9%	22.3%	21.4%	10.0%	7.3%	82.7%
3	2017	34.9%	24.6%	19.4%	6.8%	14.3%	78.9%
3	2018	32.2%	23.8%	20.2%	13.1%	10.8%	76.2%
3	2019	32.5%	24.8%	20.1%	13.0%	9.6%	77.4%
3	2020	40.0%	25.5%	23.0%	7.5%	4.0%	88.5%
3	2021	44.1%	21.5%	19.1%	8.9%	6.5%	84.6%
4	2017	40.0%	23.8%	17.7%	5.9%	12.6%	81.6%
4	2018	38.5%	23.6%	18.1%	11.1%	8.7%	80.2%
4	2019	38.6%	24.0%	18.3%	11.2%	7.9%	80.9%
4	2020	45.6%	24.2%	20.4%	6.4%	3.4%	90.2%
4	2021	50.6%	19.8%	16.8%	7.5%	5.3%	87.2%
5	2017	50.7%	22.3%	14.1%	4.5%	8.4%	87.1%
5	2018	48.9%	21.8%	14.8%	8.4%	6.1%	85.5%
5	2019	48.8%	22.5%	14.6%	8.5%	5.6%	85.9%
5	2020	55.1%	21.6%	16.2%	4.7%	2.6%	92.8%
5	2021	58.8%	18.0%	13.5%	5.6%	4.2%	90.2%

For each year in the period 2017 to 2021, the A attainment rate increases progressively from SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) to SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived). In each of those years, learners in SIMD quintile 5 achieved an A attainment rate of more than 25 percentage points above those in SIMD quintile 1.

For each year in the period 2017 to 2021, the A–C rate increases progressively from SIMD quintile 1 to SIMD quintile 5. In 2019, the difference between the A–C rate for SIMD quintiles 1 and 5 was 17.1 percentage points. In 2020, the difference between the two groups was 7.9 percentage points; and in 2021, the difference is 9 percentage points.

Table 12 summarises the percentage point differences in A and A–C attainment at National 5 between learners in SIMD quintile 1 and SIMD quintile 5. (All reported percentage point differences are in favour of learners in SIMD quintile 5.)

Table 12: National 5 difference (percentage points) in A and AC attainment between SIMD quintile 1 and SIMD quintile 5

Attainment	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
A	26.3 pp	26.6 pp	27.5 pp	25.7 pp	25.1 pp
A–C	15.7 pp	16.4 pp	17.1 pp	7.9 pp	9.0 pp

5.9.2 Higher grade distribution by SIMD quintile

Table 13 below shows the grade distribution at Higher by SIMD for the past five years.

Table 13: Higher grade distribution by SIMD

SIMD quintile	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
1	2017	18.1%	23.6%	26.4%	11.2%	20.8%	68.1%
1	2018	17.2%	23.9%	27.0%	11.5%	20.4%	68.1%
1	2019	16.7%	22.4%	26.1%	20.2%	14.7%	65.1%
1	2020	28.8%	28.3%	28.5%	9.2%	5.2%	85.6%
1	2021	35.6%	24.6%	22.9%	9.4%	7.5%	83.1%
2	2017	21.7%	25.0%	24.9%	10.1%	18.3%	71.7%
2	2018	21.2%	23.9%	25.7%	10.7%	18.5%	70.8%
2	2019	20.0%	23.2%	25.4%	18.7%	12.8%	68.5%
2	2020	32.2%	28.1%	26.3%	8.8%	4.6%	86.6%
2	2021	39.4%	23.8%	21.1%	8.7%	6.8%	84.4%
3	2017	26.0%	25.5%	24.0%	9.0%	15.6%	75.4%
3	2018	25.7%	25.4%	24.0%	9.4%	15.6%	75.0%
3	2019	25.3%	24.3%	23.5%	16.2%	10.7%	73.1%
3	2020	37.8%	27.6%	23.3%	7.4%	3.9%	88.7%
3	2021	44.7%	23.0%	18.4%	7.6%	6.3%	86.1%
4	2017	29.9%	26.2%	22.4%	8.0%	13.5%	78.5%
4	2018	30.0%	26.0%	22.7%	8.3%	13.0%	78.7%
4	2019	29.7%	24.9%	22.0%	14.2%	9.1%	76.7%
4	2020	41.8%	26.8%	21.4%	6.4%	3.6%	90.0%
4	2021	49.7%	22.1%	16.3%	6.8%	5.2%	88.0%
5	2017	38.1%	26.2%	19.5%	6.3%	9.8%	83.8%
5	2018	38.0%	26.2%	19.5%	6.5%	9.9%	83.7%
5	2019	38.6%	24.6%	18.8%	11.1%	6.9%	82.0%
5	2020	49.1%	25.4%	17.6%	5.2%	2.8%	92.1%
5	2021	57.7%	19.7%	13.6%	4.9%	4.2%	91.0%

For each year in the period 2017 to 2021, the A and A–C attainment rate increases progressively from SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) to SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived).

In 2019, the difference between the A rate for SIMD quintile 1 and 5 was 21.9 percentage points. In 2020, the difference in the A attainment rates between the two groups was 20.2 percentage points; and in 2021, the difference is 22.1 percentage points.

In 2019, the difference between the A–C rate for SIMD quintiles 1 and 5 was 16.9 percentage points. In 2020, the difference in A–C attainment rates between the two groups was 6.5 percentage points; and in 2021, the difference is 7.9 percentage points.

Table 14 summarises the percentage point differences in A and A–C attainment at Higher between learners in SIMD quintile 1 and SIMD quintile 5. (All reported percentage point differences are in favour of learners in SIMD quintile 5.)

Table 14: Differences (percentage points) in A and AC attainment at Higher between learners in SIMD quintile 1 and those in SIMD quintile 5

Attainment	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
A	20.0 pp	20.9 pp	21.9 pp	20.2 pp	22.1 pp
A–C	15.8 pp	15.6 pp	16.9 pp	6.5 pp	7.9 pp

5.9.3 Advanced Higher grade distribution by SIMD quintile

Table 15 shows the grade distribution at Advanced Higher by SIMD for the past five years.

Table 15: Advanced Higher grade distribution by SIMD

SIMD quintile	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
1	2017	22.3%	24.6%	25.4%	10.8%	16.9%	72.3%
1	2018	22.0%	25.0%	26.6%	11.2%	15.3%	73.6%
1	2019	22.0%	22.4%	25.6%	10.1%	19.9%	69.9%
1	2020	35.9%	29.6%	25.7%	6.0%	2.7%	91.3%
1	2021	37.9%	27.5%	21.7%	7.5%	5.4%	87.1%
2	2017	24.0%	23.4%	27.5%	10.5%	14.6%	74.9%
2	2018	23.7%	25.2%	24.4%	10.8%	16.0%	73.2%
2	2019	25.2%	23.6%	25.0%	10.7%	15.5%	73.8%
2	2020	38.6%	30.1%	21.7%	6.5%	3.1%	90.5%
2	2021	42.0%	25.5%	18.6%	7.7%	6.3%	86.1%
3	2017	28.3%	25.1%	24.3%	9.1%	13.3%	77.6%
3	2018	28.1%	25.9%	24.2%	8.8%	13.0%	78.2%
3	2019	28.1%	24.6%	24.1%	9.6%	13.5%	76.8%
3	2020	43.1%	29.5%	20.0%	4.7%	2.6%	92.6%
3	2021	47.1%	25.3%	16.9%	6.4%	4.3%	89.3%
4	2017	31.1%	26.2%	22.9%	7.9%	11.9%	80.2%
4	2018	30.8%	26.9%	22.8%	8.3%	11.2%	80.5%
4	2019	30.7%	25.5%	23.3%	8.2%	12.3%	79.5%
4	2020	45.3%	28.8%	19.1%	4.5%	2.4%	93.1%
4	2021	49.6%	23.6%	16.6%	5.4%	4.8%	89.8%
5	2017	37.4%	26.1%	20.3%	6.7%	9.6%	83.7%
5	2018	39.3%	25.7%	19.9%	6.3%	8.9%	84.9%
5	2019	37.8%	25.5%	20.5%	7.0%	9.2%	83.8%
5	2020	52.3%	25.6%	16.3%	3.9%	1.9%	94.2%
5	2021	58.7%	20.8%	13.2%	4.2%	3.2%	92.6%

* See Table 2 for detail on SIMD quintiles

For any year in the period 2017 to 2021, the A and A–C attainment rate generally increases progressively from SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) to SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived).

However, in 2020, the overall A–C attainment rate for SIMD 1 learners increased to be higher (91.3%) than SIMD 2 learners (90.5%) and this has continued in 2021.

In 2019, the difference between the A rate for SIMD quintile 1 and 5 was 15.8 percentage points. In 2020, the difference in the A attainment rate between the two groups was 16.4 percentage points; and in 2021, the difference is 20.8 percentage points.

In 2019, the difference between the overall A–C rate for SIMD quintiles 1 and 5 was 13.9 percentage points. In 2020, the difference between the two groups was 3 percentage points; and in 2021, the difference is 5.5 percentage points.

Table 16 summarises the percentage point differences in A and A–C attainment at Advanced Higher between learners in SIMD quintile 1 and SIMD quintile 5. (The numbers should be read as being in favour of learners in SIMD quintile 5)

Table 16: Differences (percentage points) in A and AC attainment at Advanced Higher between learners in SIMD quintile 1 and those in SIMD quintile 5

Attainment	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
A	15.1 pp	17.3 pp	15.8 pp	16.4 pp	20.8 pp
A–C	11.5 pp	11.3 pp	13.9 pp	3.0 pp	5.5 pp

5.10 Attainment by Additional Support Needs

Tables 17, 18 and 19 below, present grade distribution for entries from learners with/without Additional Support Needs for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher respectively.

Caution is advised in interpreting some of the percentage point changes for different groups over time. For some characteristics, the numbers on which the percentage breakdowns for different levels are calculated are small and likely to be more variable as a result.

Table 17: National 5 grade distribution by Additional Support Needs

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
ASN	2017*	25.7%	24.7%	22.9%	8.6%	18.1%	73.3%
	2018*	23.1%	22.8%	22.8%	16.5%	14.9%	68.6%
	2019*	24.0%	23.7%	23.1%	15.8%	13.4%	70.9%
	2020*	30.6%	25.9%	28.0%	9.7%	5.8%	84.5%
	2021	33.7%	22.7%	23.4%	11.4%	8.9%	79.7%
No ASN	2017*	38.1%	24.5%	18.7%	6.3%	12.5%	81.2%
	2018*	35.7%	23.7%	19.3%	11.9%	9.4%	78.6%
	2019*	36.3%	24.6%	19.1%	11.6%	8.4%	80.0%
	2020*	44.2%	24.9%	21.1%	6.4%	3.4%	90.2%
	2021	49.0%	20.5%	17.3%	7.7%	5.5%	86.8%

* Based on December data

Table 18: Higher grade distribution by Additional Support Needs

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
ASN	2017*	22.1%	24.3%	25.6%	10.2%	17.8%	72.1%
	2018*	21.0%	24.3%	25.9%	10.6%	18.1%	71.3%
	2019*	20.3%	22.8%	24.8%	18.6%	13.4%	67.9%
	2020*	31.6%	27.1%	27.0%	9.2%	5.0%	85.7%
	2021	37.5%	23.3%	21.9%	9.3%	8.1%	82.7%
No ASN	2017*	28.4%	26.2%	23.1%	8.3%	14.0%	77.6%
	2018*	28.4%	26.1%	23.4%	8.6%	13.6%	77.8%
	2019*	27.8%	24.6%	22.9%	15.1%	9.7%	75.3%
	2020*	40.1%	27.5%	22.2%	6.6%	3.6%	89.8%
	2021	48.0%	22.5%	17.2%	7.0%	5.4%	87.7%

* Based on December data

Table 19: Advanced Higher grade distribution by Additional Support Needs

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
ASN	2017*	26.4%	24.8%	26.3%	9.7%	12.9%	77.4%
	2018*	25.1%	25.2%	25.1%	10.5%	14.0%	75.5%
	2019*	25.1%	24.4%	25.9%	9.5%	15.0%	75.5%
	2020*	38.0%	29.6%	23.0%	6.5%	2.8%	90.6%
	2021	41.6%	25.0%	20.7%	7.1%	5.6%	87.3%
No ASN	2017*	28.2%	25.6%	24.4%	8.8%	12.9%	78.2%
	2018*	29.2%	26.5%	23.6%	8.6%	12.1%	79.3%
	2019*	28.4%	25.4%	24.3%	9.0%	12.9%	78.1%
	2020*	42.8%	29.0%	20.5%	5.0%	2.6%	92.4%
	2021	48.3%	24.2%	16.8%	6.0%	4.7%	89.3%

* Based on December data

As in previous years, the A grade rate and A–C rate was greater for those with no Additional Support Needs (ASN) than those with an ASN for all levels.

The difference in A attainment rates between those with Additional Support Needs and those without ASN has increased in 2021 compared to each year in the period 2017 to 2020 for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. For example, the difference for National 5 in 2021 is 15.4 percentage points compared to a range of 12.3–13.6 percentage points (2017-2020).

The difference in A–C rates between those with and without ASN has increased on 2020 but generally remains lower than 2017 to 2019 levels for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. For example, the difference for National 5 in 2021 is 7.1 percentage points compared to 5.7 percentage points in 2020. The difference was 8 percentage points, 10 percentage points and 9.2 percentages points in 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively.

5.11 Attainment by Declared/Assessed Disabled

Tables 20, 21 and 22 below, present grade distribution for entries from Declared/Assessed Disabled learners for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher respectively.

Caution is advised in interpreting some of the percentage point changes for different groups over time. For Declared/Assessed Disabled entries, and in particular at Advanced Higher, the numbers on which the percentage breakdowns for different levels are calculated are small and likely to be more variable as a result.

Table 20: National 5 grade distribution by whether declared or assessed disabled

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A-C
Not declared or assessed disabled	2017*	35.8%	24.5%	19.5%	6.7%	13.5%	79.8%
	2018*	33.1%	23.5%	20.0%	12.9%	10.6%	76.6%
	2019*	33.5%	24.4%	20.0%	12.5%	9.5%	78.0%
	2020*	40.8%	25.2%	22.8%	7.3%	4.0%	88.7%
	2021	44.9%	21.1%	18.9%	8.7%	6.4%	84.9%
Declared or assessed disabled	2017*	25.8%	25.5%	23.0%	8.9%	16.8%	74.3%
	2018*	22.2%	24.0%	23.4%	16.6%	13.9%	69.5%
	2019*	21.5%	25.5%	23.9%	15.9%	13.1%	71.0%
	2020*	30.1%	25.5%	30.4%	9.3%	4.7%	86.0%
	2021	33.3%	23.3%	23.8%	11.6%	8.0%	80.3%

* Based on December data

Table 21: Higher grade distribution by whether declared or assessed disabled

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A-C
Not declared or assessed disabled	2017*	27.6%	25.9%	23.4%	8.6%	14.5%	76.9%
	2018*	27.2%	25.8%	23.7%	8.9%	14.3%	76.8%
	2019*	26.4%	24.3%	23.2%	15.7%	10.4%	74.0%
	2020*	38.4%	27.4%	23.1%	7.1%	3.9%	89.0%
	2021	45.6%	22.7%	18.3%	7.5%	6.0%	86.6%
Declared or assessed disabled	2017*	21.1%	24.8%	26.4%	9.3%	18.4%	72.3%
	2018*	20.4%	24.8%	26.7%	10.2%	17.7%	72.0%
	2019*	19.7%	23.3%	25.3%	19.9%	11.9%	68.2%
	2020*	31.2%	26.4%	28.9%	9.2%	4.3%	86.6%
	2021	34.7%	24.6%	22.1%	10.7%	7.8%	81.5%

* Based on December data

Table 22: Advanced Higher grade distribution by whether declared or assessed disabled

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
Not declared or assessed disabled	2017*	28.0%	25.5%	24.6%	8.9%	13.0%	78.1%
	2018*	28.7%	26.2%	23.8%	8.9%	12.4%	78.8%
	2019*	27.9%	25.3%	24.6%	9.1%	13.2%	77.7%
	2020*	41.9%	29.2%	21.0%	5.2%	2.7%	92.1%
	2021	47.0%	24.4%	17.6%	6.2%	4.8%	88.9%
Declared or assessed disabled	2017*	27.7%	26.8%	26.8%	9.8%	8.9%	81.3%
	2018*	20.7%	30.4%	25.8%	11.1%	12.0%	77.0%
	2019*	22.7%	21.8%	28.0%	8.9%	18.7%	72.4%
	2020*	40.4%	28.4%	22.4%	6.4%	2.4%	91.2%
	2021	42.8%	25.5%	18.1%	6.3%	7.4%	86.3%

* Based on December data

As in previous years, the A grade rate and A–C rate was greater for those not declared/assessed disabled compared to those declared/assessed disabled for all levels.

The difference in A–C rates between those declared/assessed disabled and those not declared or assessed disabled has increased on 2020 for all levels but remained below or within recent historic ranges (2017-2019).

The difference in A rates between those declared/assessed disabled and those not declared or assessed disabled has increased on 2020 for all levels. For most levels, this remained below or within recent historic ranges (2017-2019). For Higher, the difference in the A rate in 2021 (10.9 percentage points) exceeded the 2017-2020 range (6.5–6.8 percentage points).

5.12 Attainment by Urban/Rural learners

Tables 23, 24 and 25 below, present grade distribution for entries split by Urban/Rural learners for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher respectively.

Caution is advised in interpreting some of the percentage point changes for different groups over time. For some characteristics, such as remote small towns, the numbers on which the grade breakdowns for different levels are calculated are small and likely to be more variable as a result.

Urban/rural grade breakdowns of attainment are more variable over time and across levels. In general however, where one group outperformed another historically, this remained the case in 2021.

Table 23: National 5 grade distribution by Urban/Rural learners

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
Large Urban Areas	2017*	37.0%	23.9%	19.0%	6.6%	13.4%	79.9%
	2018*	34.7%	22.9%	19.5%	12.6%	10.4%	77.0%
	2019*	34.8%	23.5%	19.7%	12.3%	9.7%	78.0%
	2020*	42.1%	24.9%	22.2%	7.1%	3.7%	89.2%
	2021	46.2%	20.4%	18.1%	8.4%	7.0%	84.7%
Other Urban Areas	2017*	33.8%	25.0%	20.1%	6.9%	14.1%	78.9%
	2018*	31.1%	23.9%	20.6%	13.2%	11.1%	75.7%
	2019*	31.2%	24.6%	20.9%	13.1%	10.1%	76.8%
	2020*	38.9%	25.5%	23.5%	7.6%	4.5%	87.9%
	2021	43.3%	21.6%	20.1%	8.9%	6.0%	85.0%
Accessible Small Towns	2017*	36.5%	24.2%	19.2%	6.7%	13.4%	79.9%
	2018*	33.4%	23.6%	20.1%	12.9%	9.9%	77.2%
	2019*	35.3%	24.6%	19.3%	12.1%	8.7%	79.2%
	2020*	41.1%	25.3%	22.4%	7.1%	4.1%	88.8%
	2021	44.1%	21.3%	19.4%	8.5%	6.7%	84.8%
Remote Small Towns	2017*	33.0%	25.0%	21.2%	6.9%	13.9%	79.2%
	2018*	28.6%	24.0%	21.0%	14.6%	11.7%	73.7%
	2019*	30.4%	25.6%	20.5%	13.7%	9.9%	76.4%
	2020*	38.6%	25.9%	24.0%	8.3%	3.1%	88.5%
	2021	42.2%	21.6%	18.9%	10.7%	6.5%	82.8%
Accessible Rural	2017*	37.9%	24.5%	18.6%	6.2%	12.7%	81.0%
	2018*	34.9%	23.1%	19.4%	12.5%	10.1%	77.4%
	2019*	34.6%	25.1%	19.4%	12.1%	8.8%	79.2%
	2020*	41.5%	24.5%	23.0%	7.0%	3.9%	89.1%
	2021	45.4%	20.9%	18.4%	8.7%	6.6%	84.7%
Remote Rural	2017*	36.9%	24.5%	19.2%	6.9%	12.5%	80.6%
	2018*	34.2%	24.1%	19.5%	12.4%	9.7%	77.8%
	2019*	35.4%	24.9%	19.2%	12.0%	8.4%	79.6%
	2020*	43.3%	25.6%	21.6%	6.7%	2.8%	90.5%
	2021	46.0%	21.9%	17.7%	8.6%	5.8%	85.6%

* Based on December data

Table 24: Higher grade distribution by Urban/Rural learners

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
Large Urban Areas	2017*	29.3%	25.3%	22.7%	8.4%	14.4%	77.3%
	2018*	28.7%	25.7%	23.2%	8.6%	13.7%	77.6%
	2019*	28.3%	23.8%	22.2%	15.2%	10.5%	74.3%
	2020*	40.0%	26.7%	22.2%	7.1%	4.0%	89.0%
	2021	46.9%	21.8%	17.6%	7.2%	6.6%	86.3%
Other Urban Areas	2017*	25.6%	26.1%	24.4%	9.0%	15.0%	76.0%
	2018*	25.0%	26.0%	24.7%	9.2%	15.1%	75.7%
	2019*	23.9%	24.3%	24.1%	16.6%	11.1%	72.3%
	2020*	36.1%	27.7%	24.4%	7.5%	4.3%	88.2%
	2021	43.9%	23.3%	19.2%	7.8%	5.8%	86.4%
Accessible Small Towns	2017*	27.8%	25.9%	23.2%	8.5%	14.6%	77.0%
	2018*	28.5%	24.8%	23.8%	8.9%	14.0%	77.1%
	2019*	27.1%	24.4%	23.4%	15.3%	9.8%	74.9%
	2020*	40.0%	27.3%	22.5%	6.7%	3.5%	89.8%
	2021	45.6%	23.5%	18.4%	7.1%	5.5%	87.4%
Remote Small Towns	2017*	26.0%	26.1%	23.6%	9.2%	15.2%	75.6%
	2018*	25.5%	25.0%	24.0%	9.2%	16.3%	74.6%
	2019*	24.5%	24.1%	23.3%	17.7%	10.4%	71.9%
	2020*	36.7%	28.6%	24.1%	7.5%	3.1%	89.5%
	2021	44.6%	22.6%	18.3%	8.1%	6.4%	85.5%
Accessible Rural	2017*	28.5%	26.4%	23.1%	8.1%	13.9%	77.9%
	2018*	28.9%	26.2%	22.7%	8.7%	13.5%	77.8%
	2019*	27.9%	25.1%	22.8%	14.8%	9.3%	75.8%
	2020*	37.9%	27.9%	23.2%	7.0%	4.0%	89.0%
	2021	46.6%	22.5%	17.5%	7.6%	5.8%	86.6%
Remote Rural	2017*	28.8%	26.4%	22.7%	8.4%	13.7%	77.9%
	2018*	27.7%	26.5%	23.0%	8.9%	13.9%	77.2%
	2019*	28.4%	24.9%	23.8%	14.6%	8.3%	77.1%
	2020*	41.9%	27.8%	21.5%	6.0%	2.9%	91.2%
	2021	46.9%	22.4%	17.6%	7.6%	5.5%	86.9%

* Based on December data

Table 25: Advanced Higher grade distribution by Urban/Rural learners

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
Large Urban Areas	2017*	31.2%	26.1%	22.7%	8.1%	11.9%	80.0%
	2018*	31.4%	26.4%	22.5%	8.2%	11.6%	80.3%
	2019*	31.4%	25.5%	23.2%	8.1%	11.7%	80.1%
	2020*	44.7%	27.6%	19.8%	5.4%	2.5%	92.1%
	2021	51.0%	22.9%	15.5%	5.6%	5.0%	89.4%
Other Urban Areas	2017*	24.7%	24.9%	25.8%	9.7%	14.9%	75.4%
	2018*	25.3%	26.6%	24.8%	9.9%	13.4%	76.7%
	2019*	24.7%	24.0%	25.3%	10.2%	15.7%	74.1%
	2020*	39.9%	29.6%	22.4%	5.1%	3.0%	91.9%
	2021	44.6%	25.3%	18.9%	6.3%	4.9%	88.8%
Accessible Small Towns	2017*	28.6%	24.8%	24.5%	9.3%	12.8%	77.9%
	2018*	28.9%	24.1%	24.5%	9.0%	13.5%	77.6%
	2019*	26.1%	25.5%	25.6%	9.3%	13.4%	77.2%
	2020*	39.5%	31.2%	21.6%	5.2%	2.6%	92.2%
	2021	47.1%	24.5%	18.1%	5.9%	4.4%	89.7%
Remote Small Towns	2017*	28.0%	22.0%	25.7%	10.1%	14.2%	75.7%
	2018*	28.1%	23.9%	23.9%	10.2%	13.9%	75.9%
	2019*	28.0%	24.3%	26.2%	8.3%	13.2%	78.5%
	2020*	39.6%	33.0%	19.1%	6.3%	2.0%	91.8%
	2021	43.4%	24.1%	19.4%	8.2%	4.9%	87.0%
Accessible Rural	2017*	26.9%	26.3%	26.4%	8.5%	11.9%	79.7%
	2018*	28.9%	27.9%	23.7%	8.1%	11.3%	80.6%
	2019*	27.3%	26.6%	25.7%	8.9%	11.5%	79.6%
	2020*	41.3%	29.0%	21.5%	5.1%	3.1%	91.8%
	2021	44.2%	25.2%	18.6%	7.2%	4.8%	88.0%
Remote Rural	2017*	32.5%	27.0%	22.7%	8.7%	9.1%	82.2%
	2018*	32.0%	25.4%	24.4%	7.9%	10.4%	81.8%
	2019*	31.1%	26.8%	22.6%	8.6%	10.8%	80.5%
	2020*	43.9%	30.2%	18.7%	5.6%	1.6%	92.8%
	2021	46.1%	24.9%	17.3%	6.6%	5.1%	88.3%

* Based on December data

5.13 Attainment by Ethnicity

Tables 26, 27 and 28 below, present grade distribution for entries split by Ethnicity of learners for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher respectively.

Caution is advised in interpreting some of the percentage point changes for different groups over time. For most ethnicity groups (except White-Scottish and White-non-Scottish), the numbers on which the percentage breakdowns for different levels are calculated are small and likely to be more variable as a result.

Table 26: National 5 grade distribution by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
White - Scottish	2017*	35.3%	24.6%	19.6%	6.8%	13.7%	79.5%
	2018*	32.3%	23.7%	20.1%	13.1%	10.8%	76.1%
	2019*	32.8%	24.6%	20.2%	12.7%	9.7%	77.6%
	2020*	40.2%	25.3%	23.1%	7.3%	4.0%	88.6%
	2021	44.2%	21.3%	19.3%	8.8%	6.4%	84.8%
White - non- Scottish	2017*	38.1%	24.0%	18.6%	6.5%	12.7%	80.8%
	2018*	36.4%	22.2%	19.1%	12.0%	10.3%	77.6%
	2019*	35.7%	24.1%	18.7%	11.9%	9.5%	78.6%
	2020*	42.1%	25.1%	21.8%	7.2%	3.9%	89.0%
	2021	45.7%	20.8%	18.2%	8.7%	6.5%	84.8%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2017*	43.5%	22.4%	17.3%	4.8%	12.0%	83.1%
	2018*	37.0%	22.9%	18.3%	12.2%	9.6%	78.2%
	2019*	42.2%	22.8%	17.0%	10.7%	7.3%	82.0%
	2020*	47.7%	24.4%	18.3%	5.8%	3.8%	90.4%
	2021	53.5%	18.5%	14.5%	7.8%	5.8%	86.4%
Asian - Indian	2017*	46.2%	21.3%	15.3%	5.1%	12.1%	82.9%
	2018*	48.4%	20.4%	15.8%	8.5%	6.8%	84.7%
	2019*	44.9%	21.8%	16.6%	10.2%	6.5%	83.3%
	2020*	54.1%	21.9%	16.4%	4.5%	3.1%	92.4%
	2021	61.7%	17.5%	11.6%	5.2%	4.0%	90.8%
Asian - Pakistani	2017*	32.0%	25.3%	21.0%	7.3%	14.3%	78.3%
	2018*	32.6%	24.1%	21.1%	12.6%	9.6%	77.8%
	2019*	33.8%	24.1%	21.5%	11.9%	8.7%	79.4%
	2020*	39.5%	25.4%	22.9%	7.8%	4.5%	87.8%
	2021	44.1%	19.6%	19.1%	9.6%	7.7%	82.7%
Asian - Chinese	2017*	51.7%	23.1%	15.2%	3.9%	6.0%	90.1%
	2018*	55.7%	19.3%	12.2%	8.4%	4.4%	87.2%
	2019*	53.1%	21.8%	14.0%	6.8%	4.4%	88.9%
	2020*	61.5%	20.1%	13.8%	3.4%	1.2%	95.4%
	2021	68.1%	14.8%	10.1%	4.4%	2.6%	93.0%
Asian - Other	2017*	37.5%	24.8%	19.8%	6.5%	11.3%	82.1%
	2018*	37.0%	23.1%	19.7%	11.9%	8.3%	79.7%
	2019*	35.0%	23.6%	21.5%	12.7%	7.1%	80.2%
	2020*	41.8%	25.9%	22.2%	6.6%	3.5%	89.9%
	2021	49.1%	21.1%	17.0%	7.7%	5.2%	87.2%
African/ Black/ Caribbean	2017*	30.1%	23.8%	22.3%	8.5%	15.3%	76.2%
	2018*	29.3%	24.0%	22.2%	12.7%	11.7%	75.5%
	2019*	28.4%	23.7%	22.8%	14.3%	10.8%	74.9%
	2020*	38.0%	24.6%	24.3%	8.7%	4.4%	87.0%

All other categories	2021	41.8%	21.3%	19.2%	9.5%	8.2%	82.2%
	2017*	30.4%	25.5%	21.6%	6.9%	15.6%	77.5%
	2018*	38.3%	21.5%	20.8%	11.6%	7.8%	80.6%
	2019*	33.8%	21.3%	20.0%	13.3%	11.6%	75.1%
	2020*	41.2%	23.3%	22.9%	8.3%	4.4%	87.4%
Not Disclosed/Not known	2021	41.4%	19.6%	20.6%	9.2%	9.1%	81.7%
	2017*	36.7%	23.4%	19.6%	6.0%	14.3%	79.7%
	2018*	29.3%	24.0%	21.5%	13.3%	12.0%	74.7%
	2019*	28.1%	24.7%	21.8%	15.3%	10.0%	74.7%
	2020*	34.8%	25.2%	25.9%	8.8%	5.3%	85.9%
	2021	40.5%	22.5%	20.8%	9.5%	6.7%	83.8%

* Based on December data

Table 27: Higher grade distribution by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
White - Scottish	2017*	26.9%	26.0%	23.7%	8.7%	14.8%	76.6%
	2018*	26.7%	25.9%	23.9%	9.0%	14.5%	76.5%
	2019*	25.7%	24.4%	23.4%	16.0%	10.5%	73.5%
	2020*	37.8%	27.7%	23.4%	7.2%	3.9%	88.9%
	2021	45.1%	23.0%	18.6%	7.5%	5.8%	86.7%
White - non- Scottish	2017*	31.7%	25.8%	21.5%	7.9%	13.1%	79.0%
	2018*	30.9%	25.5%	22.5%	8.4%	12.7%	79.0%
	2019*	31.0%	23.6%	21.9%	13.9%	9.5%	76.5%
	2020*	41.7%	26.3%	22.0%	6.5%	3.5%	90.0%
	2021	47.5%	21.7%	16.9%	7.3%	6.6%	86.1%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2017*	35.8%	23.6%	19.3%	8.2%	13.0%	78.7%
	2018*	34.4%	25.1%	21.4%	8.1%	11.1%	80.9%
	2019*	30.3%	24.2%	22.3%	14.4%	8.8%	76.8%
	2020*	43.3%	26.4%	20.3%	6.7%	3.3%	90.0%
	2021	52.3%	19.7%	16.2%	6.3%	5.5%	88.2%
Asian - Indian	2017*	35.9%	24.0%	20.8%	7.1%	12.2%	80.7%
	2018*	37.4%	25.2%	21.2%	6.8%	9.5%	83.7%
	2019*	37.1%	24.2%	18.4%	12.5%	7.8%	79.7%
	2020*	45.7%	25.2%	19.5%	5.7%	3.9%	90.4%
	2021	54.2%	20.3%	14.8%	5.5%	5.2%	89.3%
Asian - Pakistani	2017*	24.5%	26.4%	23.9%	9.7%	15.5%	74.8%
	2018*	23.6%	25.9%	24.7%	9.2%	16.5%	74.2%
	2019*	23.8%	23.8%	24.3%	17.0%	11.1%	71.9%
	2020*	36.2%	26.5%	23.7%	8.4%	5.1%	86.5%
	2021	42.4%	21.9%	17.7%	8.5%	9.5%	82.0%
Asian - Chinese	2017*	41.5%	23.7%	20.4%	6.1%	8.3%	85.6%
	2018*	37.1%	26.6%	21.4%	6.6%	8.3%	85.2%
	2019*	44.7%	25.5%	16.6%	8.1%	5.1%	86.8%
	2020*	53.2%	24.4%	15.3%	4.6%	2.5%	92.8%
	2021	62.9%	18.0%	10.1%	5.7%	3.4%	91.0%
Asian - Other	2017*	25.1%	26.2%	24.4%	9.2%	15.1%	75.7%
	2018*	27.5%	27.1%	22.5%	9.0%	13.9%	77.1%
	2019*	26.4%	24.6%	22.3%	16.2%	10.4%	73.4%
	2020*	37.1%	26.0%	24.5%	6.7%	5.7%	87.6%
	2021	44.7%	20.7%	19.2%	7.9%	7.5%	84.6%
African/ Black/ Caribbean	2017*	22.9%	27.0%	26.0%	10.0%	14.0%	75.9%
	2018*	20.5%	23.5%	28.1%	10.4%	17.5%	72.1%
	2019*	18.9%	24.7%	26.8%	17.5%	12.1%	70.4%
	2020*	31.0%	28.3%	25.9%	9.5%	5.4%	85.1%

All other categories	2021	38.8%	23.7%	19.9%	9.7%	7.9%	82.4%
	2017*	30.5%	26.7%	20.2%	7.4%	15.2%	77.5%
	2018*	24.2%	25.5%	24.0%	9.4%	16.9%	73.7%
	2019*	29.8%	22.7%	21.7%	15.7%	10.1%	74.2%
	2020*	41.0%	24.0%	23.1%	7.4%	4.5%	88.2%
	2021	47.5%	22.7%	15.5%	7.2%	7.1%	85.7%
Not Disclosed/Not known	2017*	29.3%	24.5%	23.7%	8.4%	14.2%	77.4%
	2018*	27.3%	25.9%	21.5%	9.0%	16.4%	74.6%
	2019*	26.2%	25.1%	24.9%	13.8%	10.0%	76.1%
	2020*	37.3%	25.4%	24.4%	7.3%	5.6%	87.1%
	2021	44.1%	21.5%	20.7%	7.4%	6.3%	86.3%

* Based on December data

Table 28: Advanced Higher grade distribution by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A–C
White - Scottish	2017*	27.3%	25.5%	24.9%	9.0%	13.3%	77.7%
	2018*	27.9%	26.3%	24.2%	9.0%	12.6%	78.5%
	2019*	26.9%	24.9%	25.2%	9.3%	13.7%	76.9%
	2020*	41.8%	29.4%	21.2%	5.0%	2.6%	92.4%
	2021	46.6%	24.7%	17.9%	6.0%	4.7%	89.3%
White - non- Scottish	2017*	33.4%	26.0%	21.8%	8.0%	10.7%	81.3%
	2018*	33.1%	25.8%	21.7%	8.4%	11.0%	80.6%
	2019*	32.1%	26.5%	22.0%	7.7%	11.7%	80.6%
	2020*	45.2%	28.8%	19.3%	4.4%	2.3%	93.3%
	2021	48.2%	22.9%	16.4%	7.4%	5.2%	87.4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2017*	29.7%	20.8%	26.4%	9.3%	13.8%	77.0%
	2018*	37.5%	27.3%	21.7%	5.9%	7.6%	86.5%
	2019*	32.0%	30.5%	20.6%	11.1%	5.8%	83.1%
	2020*	43.1%	25.5%	20.4%	6.2%	4.7%	89.1%
	2021	55.8%	20.3%	14.5%	5.5%	3.9%	90.5%
Asian - Indian	2017*	37.5%	25.4%	15.8%	9.6%	11.7%	78.8%
	2018*	35.8%	29.6%	16.8%	8.4%	9.3%	82.3%
	2019*	32.5%	32.2%	22.4%	5.1%	7.8%	87.1%
	2020*	45.0%	30.7%	15.8%	5.6%	2.8%	91.6%
	2021	50.0%	22.4%	14.6%	5.5%	7.5%	87.0%
Asian - Pakistani	2017*	22.0%	27.1%	32.9%	8.1%	10.0%	81.9%
	2018*	20.0%	28.9%	27.2%	9.6%	14.3%	76.1%
	2019*	26.2%	27.9%	22.1%	11.2%	12.6%	76.2%
	2020*	33.2%	27.7%	23.2%	11.1%	4.7%	84.1%
	2021	38.8%	23.5%	20.0%	8.4%	9.3%	82.3%
Asian - Chinese	2017*	40.8%	25.4%	17.4%	8.0%	8.5%	83.6%
	2018*	37.5%	20.5%	21.2%	9.8%	11.1%	79.2%
	2019*	40.4%	19.6%	21.6%	8.2%	10.2%	81.6%
	2020*	59.8%	22.9%	10.8%	4.0%	2.4%	93.6%
	2021	62.2%	17.8%	13.0%	2.2%	4.8%	93.0%
Asian - Other	2017*	35.1%	24.5%	23.8%	8.6%	7.9%	83.4%
	2018*	26.6%	28.1%	18.2%	13.0%	14.1%	72.9%
	2019*	29.6%	21.6%	26.8%	7.5%	14.6%	77.9%
	2020*	33.2%	26.6%	27.6%	9.5%	3.0%	87.4%
	2021	47.2%	20.8%	19.0%	7.8%	5.2%	87.0%
African/ Black/ Caribbean	2017*	20.5%	26.9%	23.4%	13.5%	15.8%	70.8%
	2018*	21.6%	27.9%	27.5%	7.8%	15.2%	77.0%
	2019*	22.3%	27.4%	25.1%	12.8%	12.3%	74.9%
	2020*	29.5%	31.1%	25.6%	9.8%	3.9%	86.2%

All other categories	2021	39.1%	31.0%	16.1%	7.7%	6.1%	86.2%
	2017*	23.6%	25.7%	27.1%	8.3%	15.3%	76.4%
	2018*	27.4%	24.4%	24.4%	9.6%	14.1%	76.3%
	2019*	34.6%	27.1%	20.6%	5.6%	12.1%	82.2%
	2020*	44.3%	24.1%	19.2%	6.9%	5.4%	87.7%
	2021	49.5%	24.8%	15.3%	6.9%	3.5%	89.6%
Not Disclosed/Not known	2017*	31.4%	24.0%	25.7%	9.1%	9.7%	81.1%
	2018*	34.3%	25.0%	23.8%	5.8%	11.0%	83.1%
	2019*	36.3%	20.9%	24.9%	5.5%	12.4%	82.1%
	2020*	35.3%	31.6%	26.5%	3.7%	2.8%	93.5%
	2021	49.2%	26.0%	16.0%	5.3%	3.4%	91.2%

* Based on December data

In general, where one group outperformed another group historically, this remained the case in 2021. For example in 2021, as in previous years, the A grade rate and A–C rate was greater for Asian-Chinese compared to other ethnicity groupings.