



Appeals 2022

06 December 2022

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1 Headlines

- ◆ 58,035 (11.0%) of the 526,610 certificated grades for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher were appealed in 2022.
- ◆ 1,420 appeal requests (2.4% of all appeals) were priority appeal requests, where the candidate required the outcome of an appeal for immediate progression to university, college, training or employment.
- ◆ 17,300 appeal requests (29.8% of all appeals) resulted in an upgrade and fewer than five (less than 0.05%) resulted in a downgrade.
- ◆ Where an appeal request resulted in a change of grade, 14,655 (84.7%) changed by one grade, 2,335 (13.5%) changed by two grades, 280 (1.6%) changed by three grades and 30 (0.2%) changed by four grades.
- ◆ Most appeals were from candidates at Education Authority centres (54,455 or 93.8% of all appeals). 3,095 appeals (5.3% of all appeals) were from candidates at Independent centres. 420 appeals (0.7% of all appeals) were from candidates at FE Colleges and 70 appeals (0.1% of all appeals) were from candidates at Other centres. The appeal rate varied by centre type. The appeal rate was 17.6% for Education Authority centres, 9.4% for FE Colleges, 24.6% for Independent centres and 33.7% for Other centres. Appeal outcomes also varied by centre type: upgrade rate was 29.6% for Education Authority centres, 34.0% for FE Colleges, 32.8% for Independent centres, and 26.1% for Other centres (though only 70 appeals were requested from this group of centres).
- ◆ Female candidates accounted for 54.0% of appeal requests, with male candidates accounting for 46.0%. Females had the highest appeal rate at 19.6% compared with 16.0% for males. Appeal outcomes also varied by sex with females having a higher upgrade rate (30.8%) than males (28.6%).
- ◆ SIMD quintile 1 (the 20% most deprived areas) accounted for 16.0% of appeal requests, with SIMD quintile 5 (the 20% least deprived areas) accounting for 24.8%. Appeal rate varied by SIMD quintile: SIMD 5 had the highest appeal rate at 20.1%. Appeal rates for the other SIMD quintiles ranged from 15.7% to 18.1%. Appeal outcomes did not vary significantly by SIMD quintile: upgrade rates were between 29.3% and 30.5% for all quintiles.

2 Background information

The purpose of Appeals 2022 was to provide candidates and centres with the opportunity to review an SQA National Course grade where a candidate had not achieved the grade estimated by their centre for the externally-assessed components of their course. Candidates were awarded the higher of two grades, based on either:

- ◆ a clerical check of their SQA assessments — exam script and/or coursework, or
- ◆ a review by SQA senior appointees — experienced markers who are also teachers and lecturers — of the assessment evidence submitted by their centre, taking into account their performance in any required coursework

In addition to grades going up or staying the same, there was the possibility that a grade could go down. This would have only been in the event of a clerical check identifying an error that reduced the original certificated grade, and the centre evidence not supporting the original certificated grade.

To be eligible for the Appeals 2022 service for a subject/level, candidates must have met the following criteria:

- ◆ The candidate's estimate was higher than their certificated grade — for example, the candidate's exam result was a grade C, but their estimate was a grade B.
- ◆ The candidate's centre had submitted an estimate to SQA for that subject and level. Estimated bands of zero or blank were not eligible.
- ◆ The candidate must have taken and/or submitted all coursework and formal assessments, including exams.
- ◆ At least one component of the course assessment must have been marked by SQA. Courses that were wholly internally assessed were not eligible for appeals — National 5 Practical Electronics, National 5 Practical Metalworking and National 5 Practical Woodworking courses.

Candidates who went through the Examination Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (EECCS) were excluded from the Appeals 2022 service for the same qualification. This is because the EECCS included a review, by SQA senior appointees, of the assessment evidence submitted by their centre, and also took into account the candidate's performance in any required coursework.

The operation of an appeals system has varied fundamentally in each of the last four years due to the alternative awarding arrangements that were in place to account for the COVID-19 pandemic. Further details of the awarding arrangements are given in the [statistical summary accompanying the provisional attainment statistics published in August](#). Further details about the arrangements and process for appeals in 2022 are available from publications on the SQA website: [Appeals 2022 – Update for schools, colleges and training providers](#) and [Appeals 2022](#)

[What you need to know. Further details about the arrangements and process for appeals in 2021 are available on the SQA website.](#)

A high-level summary of appeal requests and outcomes, with a breakdown by qualification level, was published on 3 November 2022 and is available on the [Statistics pages of the SQA website](#).

3 Terms used and rounding

- ◆ 'Upgrade' refers to an appeal request that resulted in a candidate receiving a higher grade.
- ◆ 'Downgrade' refers to an appeal request that resulted in a candidate receiving a lower grade.
- ◆ 'No Change' refers to an appeal request that did not result in a change to the grade awarded to the candidate.
- ◆ 'Applicable entries' refers to the number of entries after adjusting for entries that were unlikely to result in an appeal request (see [Original certificated grade](#) for further information).
- ◆ 'Appeal rate' refers to the number of appeals as a proportion of applicable entries.
- ◆ 'Upgrade/Downgrade/No Change rate' refers to the respective outcomes as a proportion of appeal requests.
- ◆ In some cases, the centre type categories used in these statistics result from the grouping of some related centre types. 'Education Authority — Secondary School' and 'Education Authority — Special School' are grouped as 'Education Authority'. 'Independent — Secondary School' and 'Independent — Special School' are grouped as 'Independent'. 'Further Education College' is reported as 'FE College'. All remaining centre types, including training providers, voluntary sector organisations, HM Armed Forces, prisons and primary schools are reported as 'Other'.
- ◆ The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a geography-based, relative measure of multiple deprivation which considers income, resources and opportunities to rank small geographical units (datazones) of roughly equal population size in terms of deprivation. SIMD quintiles split the datazones (geographical units) into five groups, each containing 20% of Scotland's datazones. SIMD 1 contains the 20% most deprived datazones. SIMD deciles split the datazones into 10 groups. [Further information about SIMD is available on the Scottish Government website](#).
- ◆ All figures are rounded to the nearest five. Totals are also rounded and the sum of rounded figures may differ from the total reported. Figures between one and four inclusive have been suppressed to protect against the risk of disclosing personal information. Suppressed figures are marked up with the shorthand '[c]'.
- ◆ Percentages are calculated using figures prior to rounding. Percentages with a value greater than zero and less than 0.05% are marked up with '<0.05%'.

4 Summary of appeal requests

4.1 Original certificated grade

- ◆ At each level, entries originally awarded at grade D were most likely to be the subject of an appeal.
- ◆ A grades could technically be appealed based on the band awarded (grades A to C and No Award contain upper and lower bands — see [‘Relationships between teacher estimates and results in Scotland’ for further details](#)). However, entries awarded a grade A are unlikely to be appealed since grade A is the top grade available. No appeal requests were received for entries originally awarded an A grade. *Entries that were awarded a grade A are removed from entry counts when calculating appeal rates in the following sections. Entry counts therefore only include entries originally awarded grades B, C, D and No Award and are referred to as ‘applicable entries’.*

The highest appeal rates were for entries originally awarded a grade D

Appeal requests as a proportion of applicable entries by original certificated grade.
Scotland, 2022

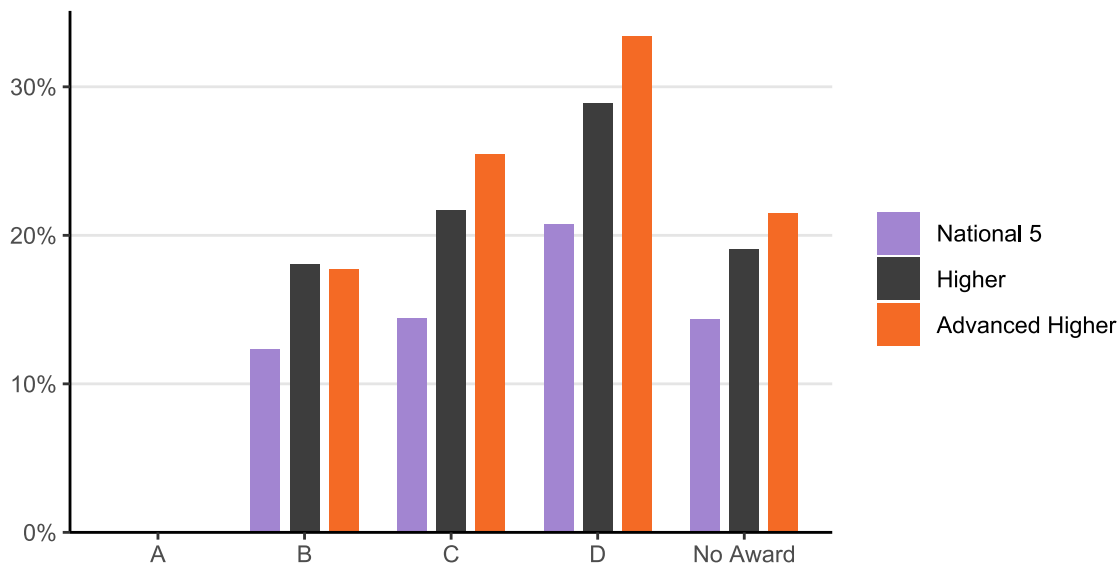


Table 1: Appeal request rates by qualification level for each grade, 2022

Level	Original grade	Entries	Appeals	Appeal rate
National 5	A	125,100	0	0.0%
National 5	B	71,225	8,775	12.3%
National 5	C	54,400	7,840	14.4%
National 5	D	34,825	7,240	20.8%
National 5	No Award	24,615	3,530	14.3%
Higher	A	65,540	0	0.0%
Higher	B	45,680	8,250	18.1%
Higher	C	37,320	8,110	21.7%
Higher	D	23,625	6,835	28.9%
Higher	No Award	16,060	3,065	19.1%
Advanced Higher	A	9,510	0	0.0%
Advanced Higher	B	7,350	1,300	17.7%
Advanced Higher	C	6,080	1,550	25.5%
Advanced Higher	D	3,420	1,145	33.4%
Advanced Higher	No Award	1,860	400	21.5%

4.2 Subject grouping

- ◆ Social Science subjects had the highest appeal rate (26.4%).
- ◆ Care subjects and Physical Education had the lowest appeal rates (12.7% and 12.3%).
- ◆ Appeal rates for other subject groupings ranged between 14.4% and 19.6%.

Appeal rates varied by subject grouping

Appeal requests as a proportion of applicable entries by subject grouping.
Scotland, 2022

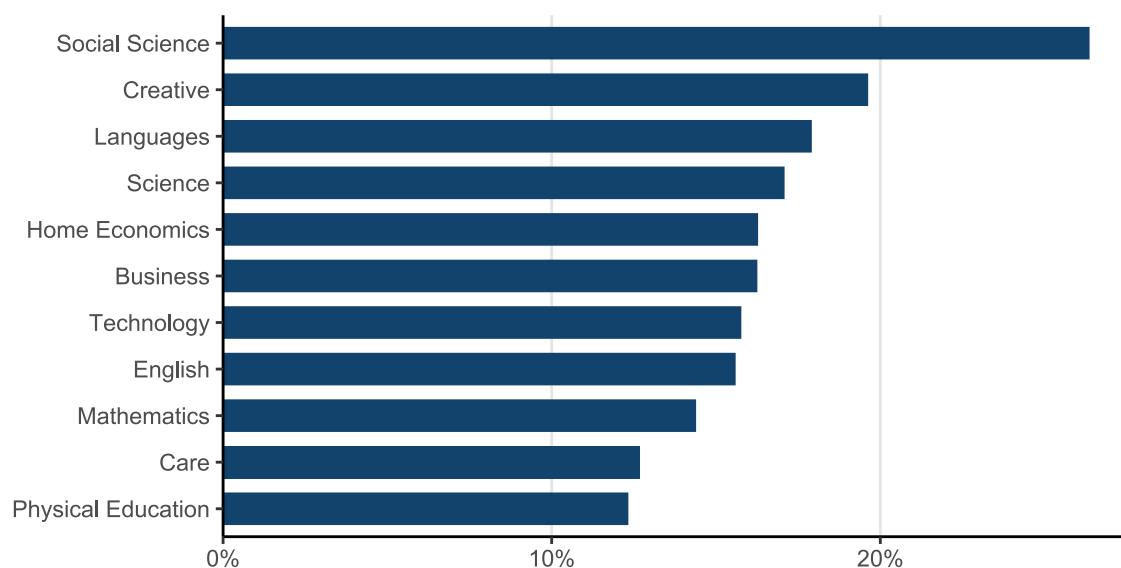


Table 2: Appeal requests by subject grouping, 2022

Subject grouping	Applicable entries	Appeals	Appeal rate
Social Science	54,070	14,255	26.4%
Creative	27,140	5,330	19.6%
Languages	10,305	1,845	17.9%
Science	60,535	10,345	17.1%
Home Economics	9,365	1,525	16.3%
Business	19,645	3,195	16.3%
Technology	24,895	3,925	15.8%
English	54,095	8,440	15.6%
Mathematics	47,980	6,905	14.4%
Care	665	85	12.7%
Physical Education	17,765	2,190	12.3%

4.3 Centre type

- ◆ 54,455 appeals were made by Education Authority centres (93.8% of all appeal requests), 3,095 appeals were made by Independent centres (5.3% of all appeal requests), 420 appeals were made by FE Colleges (0.7% of all appeal requests), and 70 appeals were made by Other centres (0.1% of all appeal requests).
- ◆ Appeal rates varied by centre type (Pearson's Chi-squared test: $X^2 = 653$, $df = 3$, $p < 0.001$).
- ◆ **Independent centres:** 24.6% of entries were appealed.
- ◆ **Education Authority centres:** 17.6% of entries were appealed.
- ◆ **FE Colleges:** 9.4% of entries were appealed.
- ◆ Among centre types, the highest appeal rate was from 'Other' centres (includes training providers, voluntary sector organisations, HM Armed Forces, prisons and primary schools) at 33.7%. However, there were only 205 applicable entries and 70 appeals from this group of centres.

Appeal rate varied by centre type

Appeal requests as a proportion of applicable entries by centre type. Scotland, 2022

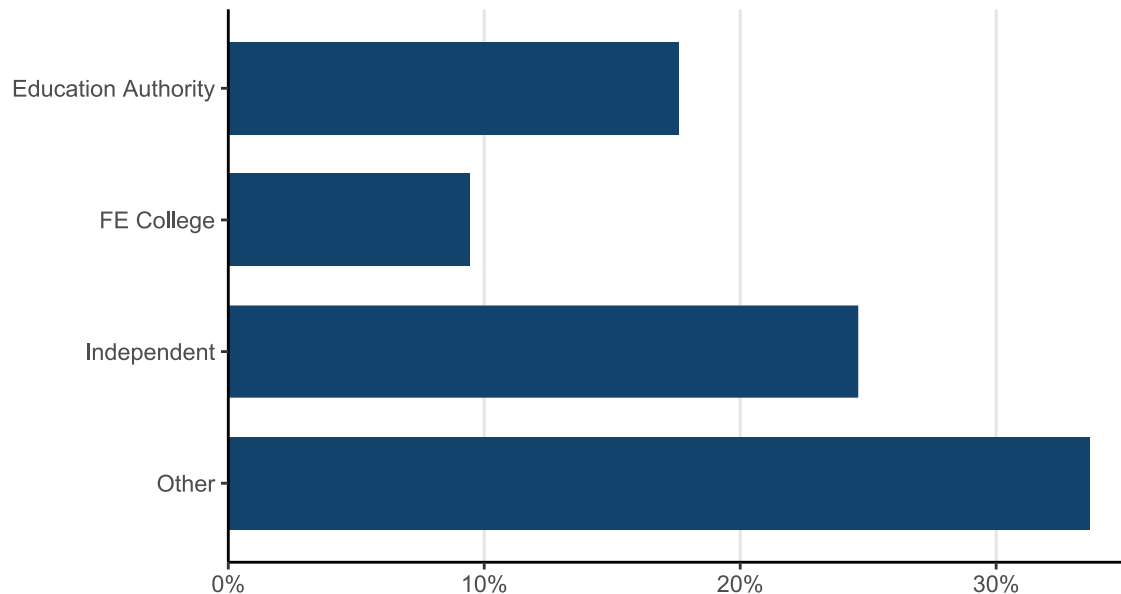


Table 3: Appeal requests by centre type, 2022

Centre type	Applicable entries	Appeals	Appeal rate
Education Authority	309,260	54,455	17.6%
FE College	4,425	420	9.4%
Independent	12,565	3,095	24.6%
Other	205	70	33.7%

4.4 Sex

- ◆ Appeal rates varied by sex (Pearson’s Chi-squared test: $X^2 = 716$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$).
- ◆ 31,315 appeals (19.6% of applicable entries) were from females.
- ◆ 26,720 appeals (16.0% of applicable entries) were from males.
- ◆ The Not Applicable and Not Known sex categories had small entry numbers (40 and 50 respectively) and each had fewer than five appeal requests. They are not included in analyses due to these small numbers which are unlikely to allow meaningful comparisons to be made.

Appeal rate was higher for females than males

Appeal requests as a proportion of applicable entries by sex. Scotland, 2022

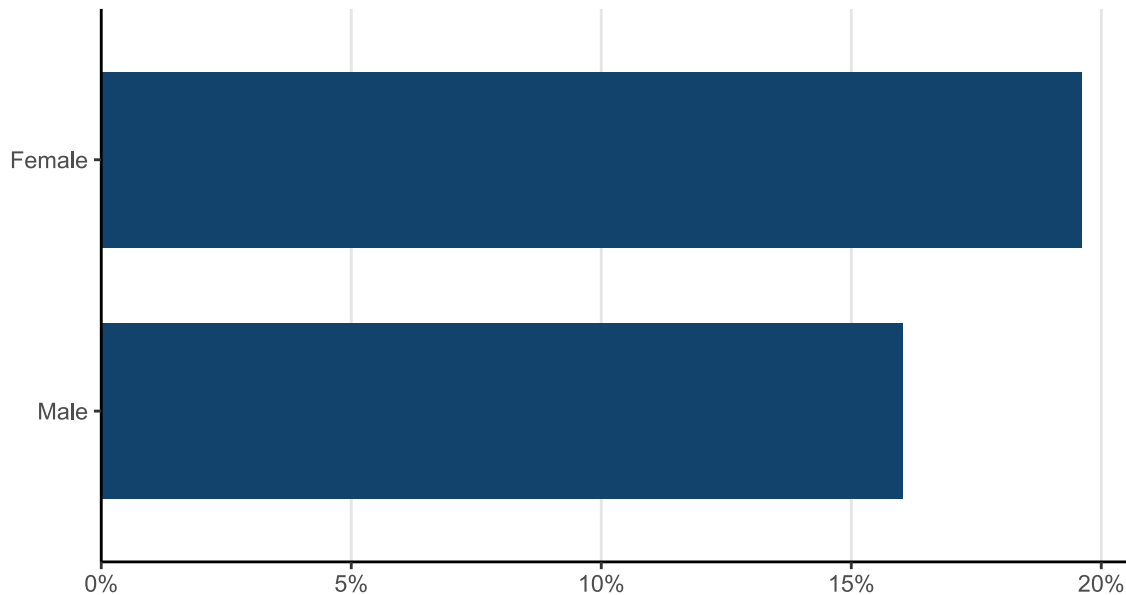


Table 4: Appeal requests by sex, 2022

Sex	Applicable entries	Appeals	Appeal rate
Female	159,675	31,315	19.6%
Male	166,695	26,720	16.0%

4.5 SIMD

- ◆ There was a significant difference in the appeal rates between the most deprived (SIMD 1; 15.7%) and least deprived (SIMD 5; 20.1%) areas (Pearson’s Chi-squared test: $X^2 = 417$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$).
- ◆ A breakdown by SIMD decile and qualification level is included in the [data tables accompanying this release](#).

The appeal rate was highest from least deprived areas (SIMD 5)

Appeal requests as a proportion of applicable entries by SIMD quintile. Scotland, 2022

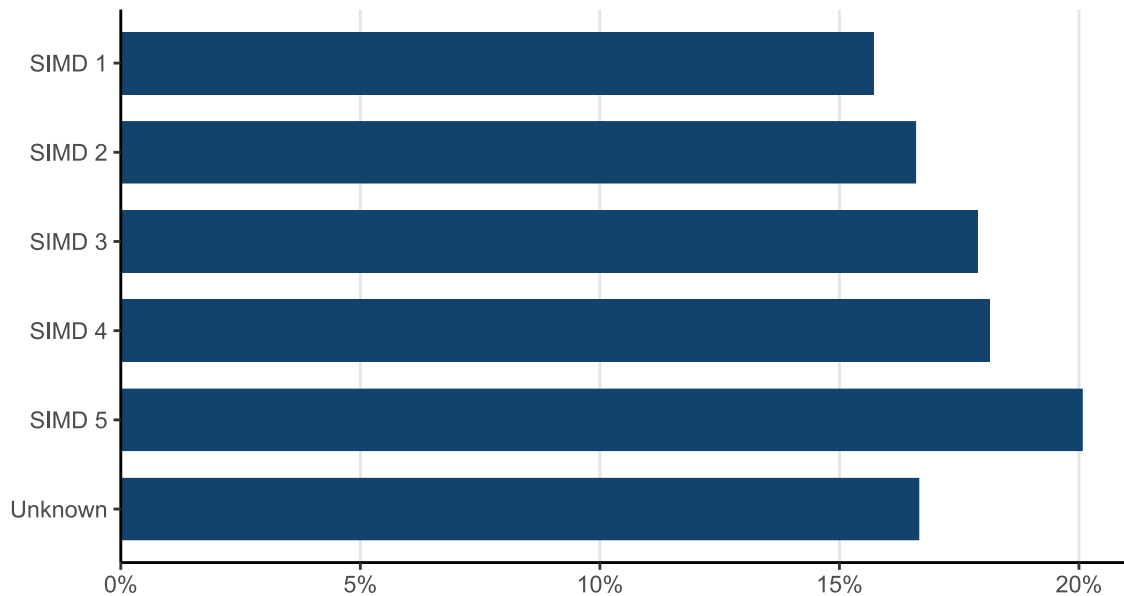


Table 5: Appeal requests by SIMD quintile, 2022

SIMD quintile	Applicable entries	Appeals	Appeal rate
SIMD 1	58,985	9,265	15.7%
SIMD 2	59,295	9,845	16.6%
SIMD 3	62,085	11,100	17.9%
SIMD 4	70,725	12,825	18.1%
SIMD 5	71,630	14,385	20.1%
Unknown	3,740	625	16.7%

5 Summary of appeal outcomes

5.1 Original certificated grade

Upgrade rates tended to be higher for lower grades

Appeal outcomes as a proportion of appeal requests by original certificated grade. Scotland, 2022

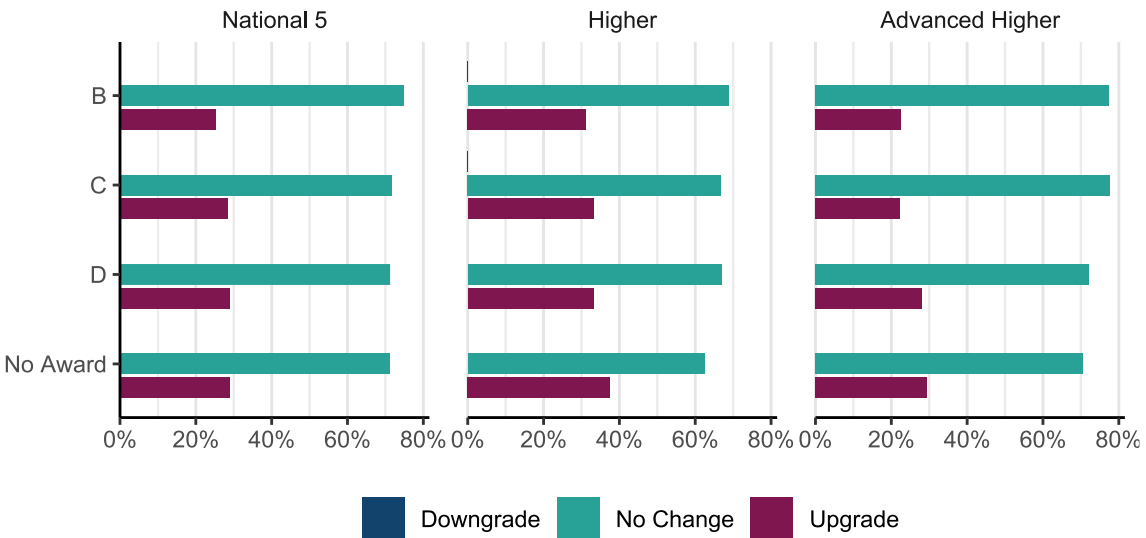


Table 6: Appeal outcomes by qualification level for each certificated grade, 2022

Level	Original grade	Appeals	Upgrade number	Upgrade rate	Downgrade number	Downgrade rate	No Change number	No Change rate
National 5	B	8,775	2,220	25.3%	0	0.0%	6,560	74.7%
National 5	C	7,840	2,225	28.4%	0	0.0%	5,615	71.6%
National 5	D	7,240	2,080	28.8%	0	0.0%	5,155	71.2%
National 5	No Award	3,530	1,020	28.9%	0	0.0%	2,510	71.1%
Higher	B	8,250	2,570	31.2%	[c]	<0.05%	5,680	68.8%
Higher	C	8,110	2,695	33.2%	[c]	<0.05%	5,415	66.8%
Higher	D	6,835	2,265	33.1%	0	0.0%	4,570	66.9%
Higher	No Award	3,065	1,150	37.5%	0	0.0%	1,915	62.5%
Advanced Higher	B	1,300	295	22.5%	0	0.0%	1,010	77.5%
Advanced Higher	C	1,550	345	22.3%	0	0.0%	1,205	77.7%
Advanced Higher	D	1,145	320	28.0%	0	0.0%	825	72.0%
Advanced Higher	No Award	400	120	29.5%	0	0.0%	280	70.5%

5.2 Subject grouping

There were significant differences in upgrade rates between subject groupings: rates were lowest in Science (10.7%) and Mathematics (15.5%) and highest in languages (52.9%) and business (44.2%). A number of factors are likely to play a part in these differences. These include:

- ◆ the validity of internal assessments used as alternative evidence. For example, not assessing an appropriate sample of the required skills, knowledge and understanding, or not achieving a required balance of grade A and grade C marks in order to differentiate among

grades. These issues were more prevalent in Science and Mathematics compared to other subject groupings

- ◆ the weighting of question papers (external examinations) versus other assessments (eg coursework completed throughout the academic year) towards the overall grade. Where alternative evidence was only submitted and considered for a question paper which made up a small proportion of the overall marks, an upgrade was less likely. Question papers make a relatively smaller contribution in creative and care subjects than many other subject groupings

Requests and outcomes for individual courses are summarised in the [data tables accompanying this release](#).

Upgrade rates varied substantially between subject groupings

Appeal outcomes as a proportion of appeal requests by subject grouping. Scotland, 2022

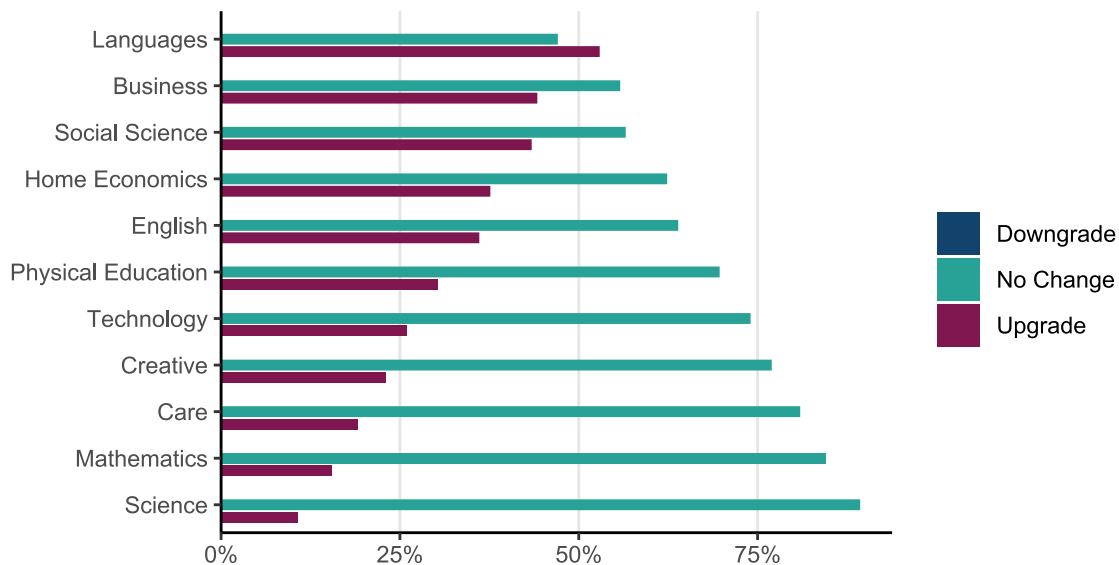


Table 7: Appeal outcomes by subject grouping, 2022

Subject grouping	Appeals	Upgrade number	Upgrade rate	Downgrade number	Downgrade rate	No Change number	No Change rate
Business	3,195	1,410	44.2%	0	0.0%	1,780	55.8%
Care	85	15	19.0%	0	0.0%	70	81.0%
Creative	5,330	1,225	23.0%	0	0.0%	4,100	77.0%
English	8,440	3,045	36.1%	0	0.0%	5,390	63.9%
Home Economics	1,525	575	37.6%	0	0.0%	950	62.4%
Languages	1,845	975	52.9%	0	0.0%	870	47.1%
Mathematics	6,905	1,070	15.5%	0	0.0%	5,835	84.5%
Physical Education	2,190	665	30.3%	0	0.0%	1,525	69.7%
Science	10,345	1,105	10.7%	0	0.0%	9,240	89.3%
Social Science	14,255	6,190	43.4%	[c]	<0.05%	8,065	56.6%
Technology	3,925	1,020	26.0%	0	0.0%	2,905	74.0%

5.3 Centre type

- ◆ Appeal outcomes varied among centre types (Pearson's Chi-squared test: $X^2 = 18$, $df = 6$, $p = 0.00516$).
- ◆ The upgrade rate was highest in FE Colleges (34.0%), followed by Independent centres (32.8%), and Education Authority centres (29.6%). 'Other' centres had the lowest upgrade rate (26.1%) but the number of appeals from this group of centres was small (70).

Appeal outcomes varied between centre types

Appeal outcomes as a proportion of appeal requests by centre type. Scotland, 2022

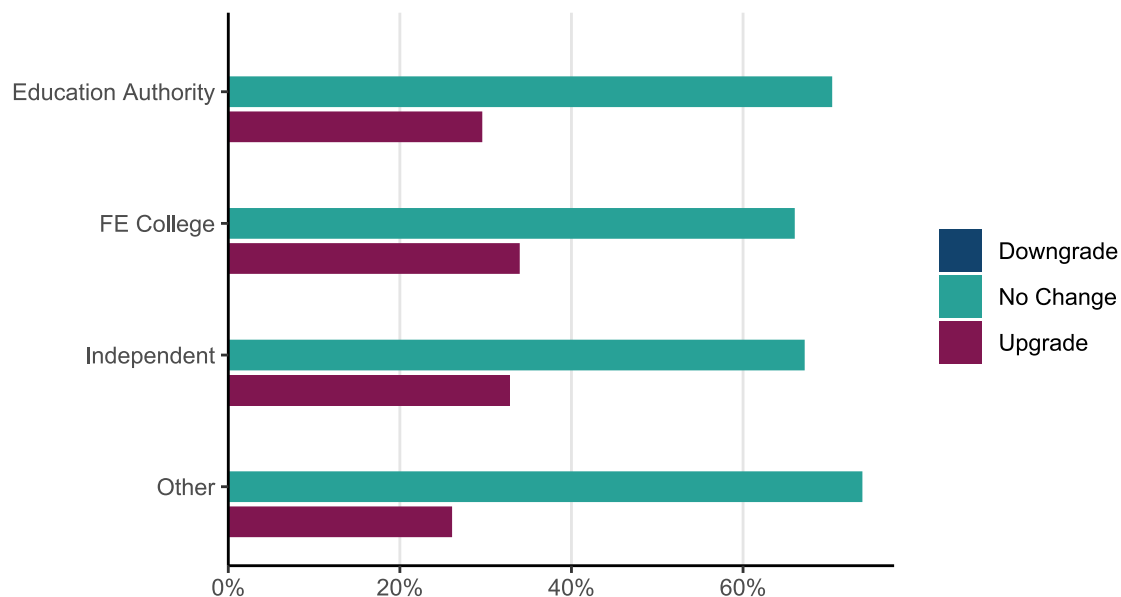


Table 8: Appeal outcomes by centre type, 2022

Centre type	Appeals	Upgrade number	Upgrade rate	Downgrade number	Downgrade rate	No Change number	No Change rate
Education Authority	54,455	16,125	29.6%	[c]	<0.05%	38,330	70.4%
FE College	420	140	34.0%	0	0.0%	275	66.0%
Independent	3,095	1,015	32.8%	0	0.0%	2,080	67.2%
Other	70	20	26.1%	0	0.0%	50	73.9%

5.4 Sex

- ◆ Fewer than five appeals were made for entries in the 'Not applicable' or 'Unknown' categories so they are not analysed further due to the small numbers.
- ◆ Appeal outcomes varied between males and females (Pearson's Chi-squared test: $X^2 = 34$, $df = 2$, $p < 0.001$).
- ◆ The upgrade rate for females (30.8%) was higher than for males (28.6%).

Females had a higher upgrade rate than males

Appeal outcomes as a proportion of appeal requests by sex. Scotland, 2022

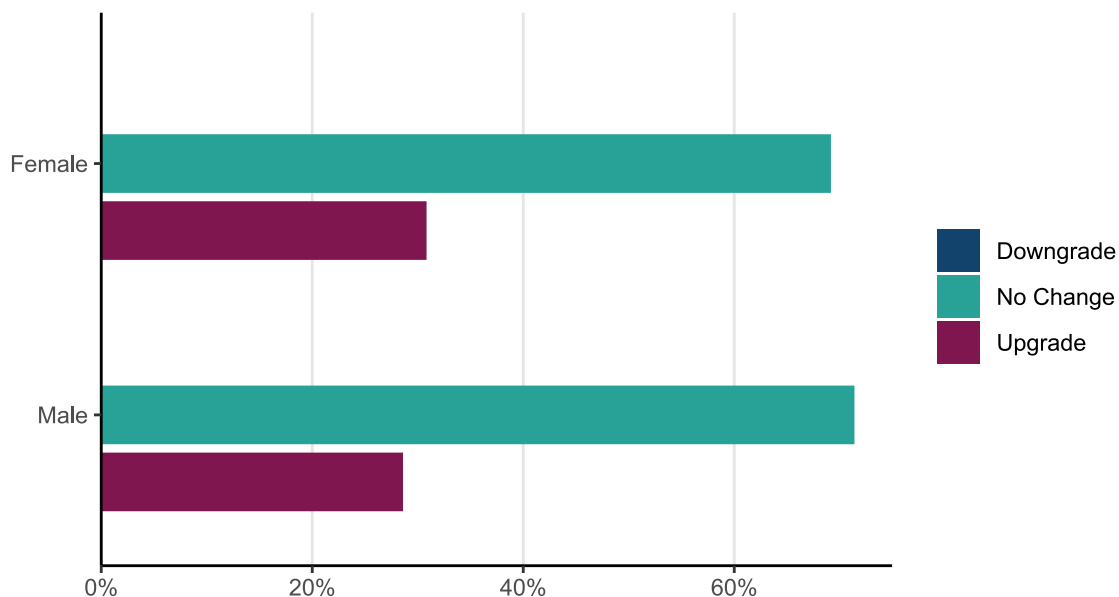


Table 9: Appeal outcomes by sex, 2022

Sex	Appeals	Upgrade number	Upgrade rate	Downgrade number	Downgrade rate	No Change number	No Change rate
Female	31,315	9,655	30.8%	[c]	<0.05%	21,660	69.2%
Male	26,720	7,640	28.6%	[c]	<0.05%	19,075	71.4%

5.5 SIMD

- ◆ Appeal outcomes were even across SIMD quintile (Pearson's Chi-squared test: $X^2 = 8$, $df = 10$, $p = 0.64$), ranging from 29.3% to 30.5% for all quintiles.

Appeal outcomes were even across SIMD quintiles

Appeal outcomes as a proportion of appeal requests by SIMD quintile. Scotland, 2022

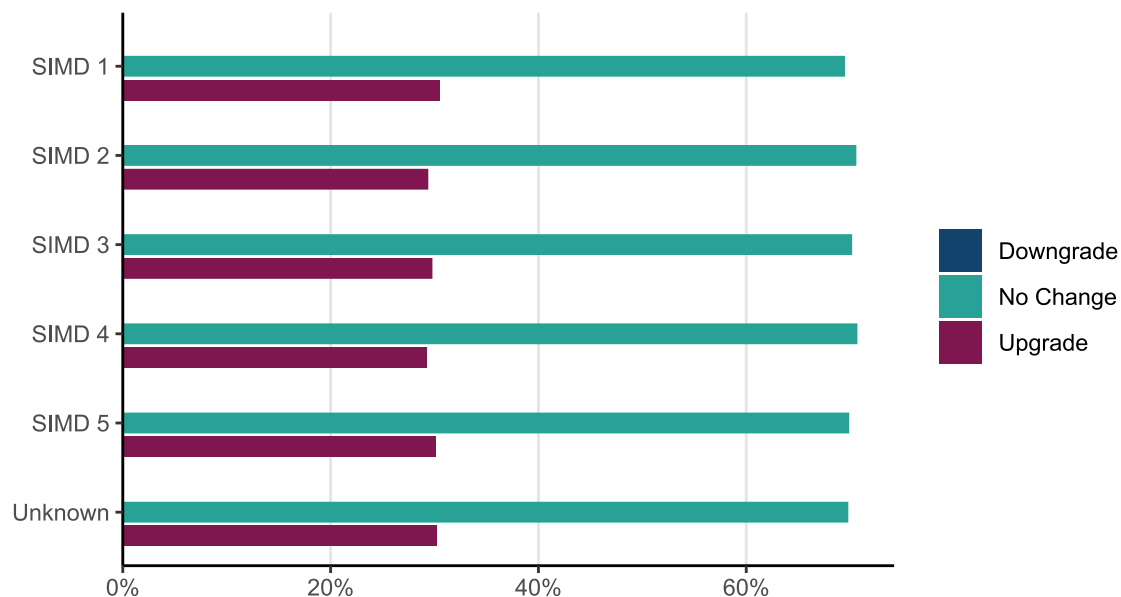


Table 10: Appeal outcomes by SIMD quintile, 2022

SIMD quintile	Appeals	Upgrade number	Upgrade rate	Downgrade number	Downgrade rate	No Change number	No Change rate
SIMD 1	9,265	2,825	30.5%	0	0.0%	6,440	69.5%
SIMD 2	9,845	2,895	29.4%	0	0.0%	6,950	70.6%
SIMD 3	11,100	3,305	29.8%	[c]	<0.05%	7,790	70.2%
SIMD 4	12,825	3,755	29.3%	[c]	<0.05%	9,065	70.7%
SIMD 5	14,385	4,325	30.1%	0	0.0%	10,055	69.9%
Unknown	625	190	30.2%	0	0.0%	435	69.8%

5.6 Magnitude of grade changes

- ◆ 40,735 appeals (70.2%) resulted in no change of grade.
- ◆ 17,300 appeals (29.8%) resulted in a grade change of between 1 and 4 grades. 14,655 grades (84.7% of all grade changes) were changed by one grade, 2,335 grades (13.5% of all grade changes) were changed by two grades, 280 grades (1.6% of all grade changes)

were changed by three grades, and 30 grades (0.2% of all grade changes) were changed by four grades.

Appeals resulting in a grade change were most frequently changed by one grade

Magnitude of grade changes resulting from appeals. Scotland, 2022

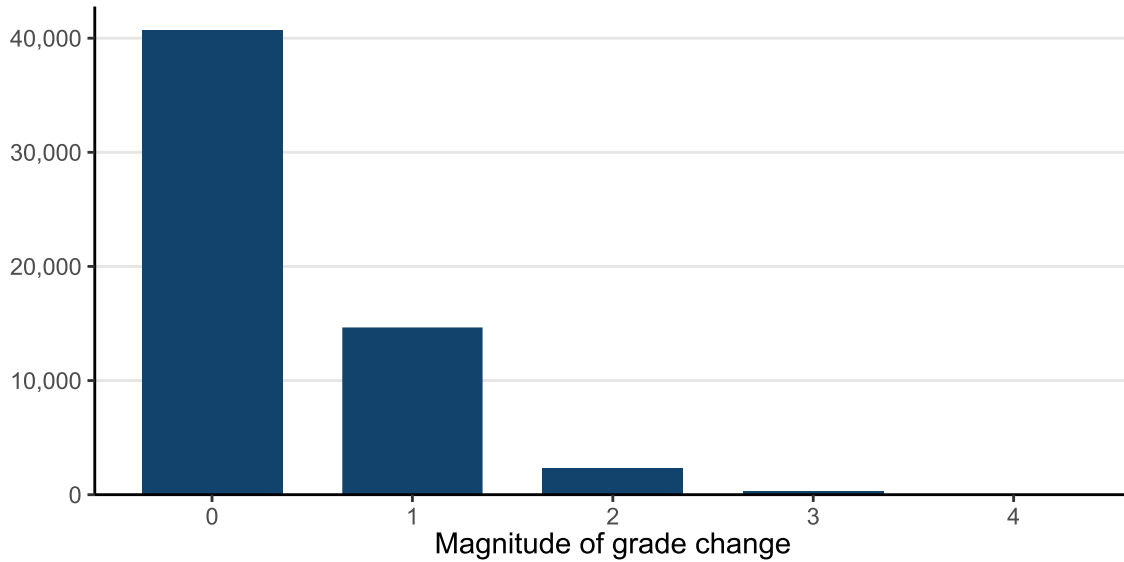


Table 11: Magnitude of grade changes for appeal requests, 2022

Magnitude of change in grade	Number of appeals	Percentage of appeals
0	40,735	70.2%
1	14,655	25.2%
2	2,335	4.0%
3	280	0.5%
4	30	0.1%

6 Data tables accompanying this release

[Data tables accompanying this release giving the following summaries are available from the SQA website:](#)

- ◆ appeal requests and outcomes by subject and qualification level
- ◆ appeal requests and outcomes by SIMD decile and qualification level
- ◆ appeal requests and outcomes by centre type and qualification level

7 Feedback

We welcome your feedback on our publications. Please [contact the team](#) with any comments about ways we can improve our publications to meet your needs.

Reference: 22ADSS

Release date: 6 December 2022

Head of Profession: Stephen J. Price