

Official Statistics

Attainment Statistics (December) 2021

Centre Type

Tuesday 22 February 2022

Summary

The key headline messages for 2020 and 2021 have not materially changed from the previously published [Attainment Statistics \(August\) 2021 Centre Type](#) publication*:

- Entries, attainment volumes and rate patterns, have historically varied by centre type for all qualification levels, and this remains the case for 2021.
- National 5 entries for most centre types decreased relative to 2020 - with the exception of independent schools.
- Higher and Advanced Higher entries increased for most centre types relative to 2020 – with the exception of Colleges, which saw a decrease in entries at both levels.
- At National 5, A-C attainment rates for all centre types decreased on 2020.
- At National 5, A attainment rates increased on 2020 for Education Authority Schools and Independent Schools but decreased for Colleges and 'Other' centres.
- At Higher, A-C attainment rates for most centre types decreased on 2020. The exception are 'Other' centres, which saw an increased A-C rate relative to 2020.
- At Higher, A attainment rates for all centre types have increased on 2020.
- At Advanced Higher, A-C attainment rates for Education Authority Schools, Independent Schools and 'Other' centres decreased on 2020, whilst rates for Colleges increased.
- At Advanced Higher, A attainment rates for all centre types increased on 2020.
- Individual Education Authorities show different entry, attainment volume and rate patterns from Education Authority Schools as a whole. For example, in 2021, the A-C attainment rate for National 5 ranged from 81.5% to 93.8% across Education Authorities; the A rate ranged from 36.7% to 62.8%.

* During quality assurance checks, two errors were identified in the previously published Attainment Statistics (August) Centre Type statistical summary. The detail on entries was correct in the main report but the second summary bullet erroneously stated that National 5 entries had decreased relative to 2020 for every centre type. The summary bullet on Advanced Higher A-C attainment rates incorrectly stated that 'Other' centres had seen an increase in attainment rate on 2020. This was due to an error in Table 10 for 'Other' centres. These errors have been corrected in the original publication and a correction notice issued alongside. The figures in the original accompanying August Excel tables remain correct.

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1 Official Statistics

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) became an Official Statistics producer in [The Official Statistics \(Scotland\) Amendment Order 2019](#).

More information can be found on our website and in the accompanying statistical methodology documentation via the additional links section at the end of this publication.

2 Background

Attainment Statistics (December) details the main qualifications taken at school and college level by learners in Scotland: a mix of current National Courses (National 2 to National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher) as well as Skills for Work, Awards, National Progression Awards, and National Certificates.

The purpose of National Courses, as well as Skills for Work, Awards, National Progression Awards and National Certifications, is to enable certification and recognition for the programmes of work that learners undertake in the senior phase of secondary education and in colleges.

The broad objectives of National Courses are to provide high standards, and breadth and depth of learning for individual learners. They are assessed by a combination of national exams, coursework and / or internally assessed components.

Attainment Statistics (December) publications present final counts of attainment in a given year following appeals, late amendments procedures, etc. They are an update to the Attainment Statistics (August) publications which have always been considered “provisional”.

From this year, December equivalent versions of every August Official Statistics publication are being made available. Attainment Statistics (December) 2021 Centre Type Tables provides an update to [Attainment Statistics \(August\) 2021 Centre Type Tables](#), published in September 2021.

Attainment Statistics (December) 2021 Centre Type Tables marks the first Education Authority *Centre Type* table to be published based on December data, which is published alongside the detailed Education Authority (December) breakdowns (previously published in 2019 and 2020). Attainment Statistics (December) Centre Type summary tables for Independents, Colleges and Other centre types were previously available via additional tabs in the detailed Education Authority (December) tables published in 2019 and 2020.

2.1 Important notes for these statistics

In 2021, the Scottish Government commissioned the 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. The National Qualifications 2021 Group is represented by 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), Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the Scottish Government, National Parent Forum of Scotland, and the Scottish Youth Parliament. The model is based on teacher judgment, supported by

assessment resources and quality assurance. More information on the [ACM 2021 methodology](#) can be found on our information page.

SQA implemented various modifications to reduce the assessment requirements for courses in 2021. This was in recognition of the disruption to learning arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2020, results were also derived differently. The Deputy First Minister directed SQA to issue grades, primarily on the basis of teacher estimates. 9,198 grades that had been adjusted upwards in an [earlier moderation process](#) were 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).

Users of these statistics should be mindful of the above information and the different approach to deriving results in 2021, particularly when commenting on 2021 results in the context of previous years. This includes commenting on 2021 figures in the context of 2020 results.

The key messages from Attainment Statistics (August) 2021 Centre Type tables have not materially changed with regard to 2020 and 2021.

As such, this document is intentionally brief and seeks to present an overview updated with December data.

A fuller statistical summary published alongside Attainment Statistics (August) 2021 Centre Type can be found on our Statistics 2021 webpage.

Note that percentage figures are calculated before rounding and published figures may not sum to 100%. For instance, 0.0% reflects a rounded figure and does not mean zero.

Due to the small numbers entering for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher through Other centres, the attainment rate has been more variable historically. This is also the case for Advanced Higher for Colleges.

3 Centre type (December) summary

3.1 Overview

The Attainment Statistics (December) 2021 Centre Type Tables present attainment volumes and rates by centre type, level and subject. This summary document presents an updated overview of entries and attainment by centre type for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher using December publication data.

National 5 entries

Table 1. National 5 entries by centre type (2020-2021)

	2020	2021
Total Entries	300,683	298,137
EA Schools	278,567	276,481
College	3,691	2,780
Independent Schools	18,370	18,831
Other	55	45

National 5 A-C and A attainment by centre type

Table 2. National 5 A-C attainment rates by centre type (2020-2021)

	2020	2021
National 5	89.0%	85.8%
EA Schools	88.5%	85.1%
College	85.7%	74.9%
Independent Schools	97.7%	96.8%
Other	96.4%	84.4%

Table 3. National 5 A attainment rates by centre type (2020-2021)

	2020	2021
National 5	42.4%	46.7%
EA Schools	40.4%	44.8%
College	34.9%	33.2%
Independent Schools	73.0%	76.9%
Other	65.5%	62.2%

Proportion of entries and proportion of attainment volumes by centre type

Table 4. National 5 entry and attainment proportions by centre type (2020-2021)

	2020	2021
Total Entries	300,683	298,137
EA Schools	92.6%	92.7%
College	1.2%	0.9%
Independent Schools	6.1%	6.3%
Other	0.0%	0.0%
Total A-C attainment	267,644	255,663
EA Schools	92.1%	92.0%
College	1.2%	0.8%
Independent Schools	6.7%	7.1%
Other	0.0%	0.0%
Total A attainment	127,375	139,217
EA Schools	88.4%	88.9%
College	1.0%	0.7%
Independent Schools	10.5%	10.4%
Other	0.0%	0.0%

3.2 Higher

Higher Entries

Table 5. Higher entries by centre type (2020-2021)

	2020	2021
Total Entries	186,227	194,794
EA Schools	166,669	175,857
College	5,280	4,315
Independent Schools	14,165	14,478
Other	113	144

Higher A-C and A attainment by centre type

Table 6. Higher A-C attainment rates by centre type (2020-2021)

	2020	2021
Higher A-C	89.3%	87.3%
EA Schools	88.8%	86.7%
College	81.7%	79.1%
Independent Schools	97.7%	97.2%
Other	97.3%	97.9%

Table 7. Higher A attainment rates by centre type (2020-2021)

	2020	2021
Higher A	40.1%	47.7%
EA Schools	38.1%	45.6%
College	28.7%	37.7%
Independent Schools	67.2%	75.5%
Other	59.3%	68.1%

Proportion of Higher entries and attainment volumes by centre type**Table 8. Higher entry and attainment proportions by centre type (2020-2021)**

	2020	2021
Total Entries	186,227	194,794
EA Schools	89.5%	90.3%
College	2.8%	2.2%
Independent Schools	7.6%	7.4%
Other	0.1%	0.1%
Total A-C attainment	166,284	170,110
EA Schools	89.0%	89.6%
College	2.6%	2.0%
Independent Schools	8.3%	8.3%
Other	0.1%	0.1%
Total A attainment	74,593	92,839
EA Schools	85.1%	86.4%
College	2.0%	1.8%
Independent Schools	12.8%	11.8%
Other	0.1%	0.1%

3.3 Advanced Higher

Advanced Higher Entries

Table 9. Advanced Higher entries by centre type (2020-2021)

	2020	2021
Total Entries	23,571	26,807
EA Schools	19,088	22,258
College	78	50
Independent Schools	4,231	4,316
Other	174	183

Advanced Higher A-C and A attainment by centre type

Table 10. Advanced Higher A-C attainment rates by centre type (2020-2021)

	2020	2021
Adv Higher A-C	92.8%	90.0%
EA Schools	92.0%	88.8%
College	88.5%	96.0%
Independent Schools	97.9%	96.9%
Other	99.4%	96.7%

Table 11. Advanced Higher A attainment rates by centre type (2020-2021)

	2020	2021
Adv Higher A	46.3%	51.0%
EA Schools	41.7%	46.8%
College	51.3%	74.0%
Independent Schools	66.8%	72.3%
Other	50.0%	53.6%

Proportion of Advanced Higher entries and attainment volumes by centre type

Table 12. Advanced Higher entry and attainment proportions by centre type (2020-2021)

	2020	2021
Total Entries	23,571	26,807
EA Schools	81.0%	83.0%
College	0.3%	0.2%
Independent Schools	18.0%	16.1%
Other	0.7%	0.7%
Total A-C attainment	21,938	24,175
EA Schools	80.0%	81.8%

College	0.3%	0.2%
Independent Schools	18.9%	17.3%
Other	0.8%	0.7%
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Total A attainment	10,924	13,661
EA Schools	72.9%	76.2%
College	0.4%	0.3%
Independent Schools	25.9%	22.8%
Other	0.8%	0.7%
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4 Additional links

[SQA Official Statistics documentation](#)

[SQA Methodology for Attainment Statistics \(December\) Centre Type](#)

[SQA Methodology for Attainment Statistics \(December\) EA NQ](#)

[SQA Methodology for Attainment Statistics \(December\) EA Skills for Work and Other](#)

[SQA Statistics Publication Schedule](#)

[SQA Statistics](#) – current year

[SQA Statistics - archive](#)

[SQA Information](#) – current year

[SQA Information - archive](#)

[SQA Statistics Revisions and Correction Policy](#)