



2022 National Qualifications Awarding: Equalities Monitoring Report

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Purpose and structure of this report

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 2022, SQA undertook a number of Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) to identify and mitigate potential equality impacts.

The purpose of this Equalities Monitoring Report is not to repeat assessments undertaken in those EqIAs, but to report on the outcomes of the 2022 awarding process from an equality perspective.

Accordingly, this report should be read alongside the other publications released by SQA on Results Day 2022, including the official statistics publications that set out national 2022 attainment outcomes. This report is intended to be an important supplement to those publications in that it provides additional reporting on how the 2022 results are distributed across groups of candidates who share particular characteristics.

Structure of the report

The main body of the report provides the background and other contextual information for the descriptive analyses presented in Appendix 1 of this report. Among other things, the main body provides a brief re-cap¹ of the approach to awarding in 2022, and the steps that SQA took during the development of that approach to consider and mitigate possible equality impacts.

The descriptive analyses of the distribution of 2022 results across specific groups of candidates, and the methodology underpinning those analyses, are set out in Appendix 1.

It should be noted that the report does not set out to explain or attribute causes for the distribution of results presented in Appendix 1.

¹ The *National Qualifications 2022 Awarding — Methodology Report* provides a detailed summary of the awarding approach for 2022.

Background and context

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 the Scottish 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 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).

Among 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 candidates, 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.

Background to 2022 National Qualifications (NQ) awarding

SQA worked in close partnership with the National Qualifications 2022 Group to develop a significant package of support for candidates undertaking National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher course assessments in the 2021–22 session. This package was multifaceted and designed to help teachers, lecturers and candidates address a loss of teaching and learning, and to support them during periods of ongoing disruption during the COVID-19 pandemic. The package included a three-scenario alternative model that was designed to deliver assessment and qualifications for candidates in a way that was flexible to the changing circumstances:

- ◆ Scenario 1: Exams with modified course assessments
- ◆ Scenario 2: Exams with modified course assessments and additional support for candidates
- ◆ Scenario 3: Exams cancelled with awards based on teacher-determined provisional results.

Wider arrangements were put in place to underpin this model:

- ◆ Revision support for candidates should Scenario 2 be invoked.
- ◆ Alternative Certification Model, should Scenario 3 be invoked.
- ◆ A more generous approach to grading than in a normal year to factor in the impact of the pandemic on candidates when determining grade boundaries, while maintaining standards and credibility of grades.
- ◆ An Examination Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service for 2022 that included a new detailed reason to cover COVID-19-related disruption — for candidates who were required to self-isolate or stay at home on the day of the exam in line with public health guidance at the time.
- ◆ A free-of-charge appeals service for candidates (who are eligible to appeal) or their representatives to appeal directly to SQA, or through their school, college, or training provider (centre).

Conditions were extremely challenging and uncertain throughout the year — the situation remained unpredictable, and a great deal of flexibility was required to support the delivery of the diet. These measures put in place represent the culmination of much internal work at SQA, and reflect, where possible, some of the early feedback received from stakeholders on the experience of the impact of the approach used in 2020–21.

The full range of measures was outlined on [18 August 2021](#), following the Scottish Government's announcement of a return to external assessment. The package of support included modifications to course assessment, building on the approach taken in 2021. Generally, the modifications were designed to help reduce the volume of assessment and ease teacher, lecturer and candidate workload, while maintaining the credibility of the qualifications.

This was achieved through a range of measures to best fit with the established assessment approach for each subject, such as increased optionality, the removal of course components in some subjects, reducing the volume of evidence to be submitted in coursework and providing advanced notice of topics in some areas. Overall, this aimed to increase opportunities and time for learning and teaching with a view to supporting educational recovery.

Examples of some of the modifications (and revision support) adopted at subject level include:

- ◆ modifying approaches to optionality in some of the question papers to allow centres to focus their available learning and teaching time on a narrower range of topics or content. For example, in a History question paper, instead of mandatory questions, learners could choose just one question from two of three sections of the paper. This supported teachers and lecturers by allowing them to focus on narrower range of course topics and offered increased opportunities for learning and teaching
- ◆ The removal of coursework to ensure class time required for planning, organising, and developing an assignment could be used as learning and teaching time for the course. For some subjects (such as sciences), practical or experimental work was removed due to public health restrictions in place at the time
- ◆ adjustments to the volume of assessable content. For example, in Higher Art and Design, learners could choose to respond to either the Expressive Art Studies or the Design Studies section. This provided learners with choice and teachers and lecturers with more opportunity to focus learning and teaching on one aspect of study, rather than the usual two areas of study
- ◆ providing advanced notice of topics in the exam. For example, in Higher Economics, centres knew the topic and/or subtopic areas of content that would not be directly assessed in session 2021–22. This allowed learners and teachers and lecturers to focus revision on key areas of study

Revision support was formally announced on [1 February 2022](#) — when SQA moved to Scenario 2 — following substantial COVID-19 disruption to learner, teacher and lecturer attendance at a national level. Details of this revision support were published on [7 March](#). This was produced in tandem with a range of other resources made available to learners ahead of Results Day on 9 August, which included the SQA website, a [Your Exams Guide](#) and [SQA's MyStudyPlan app](#), to help learners make the most of their revision time.

In addition to this wide range of measures, SQA also recognised that the ongoing disruption to learning and teaching would require further support and reassurance for learners. The announcement on 1 February also provided details of SQA's wider package of support, including details of the Exam Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (EECCS), grading, and appeals.

SQA adopted an approach to standard setting that retains the key elements of the well-established awarding procedures, but also aimed to provide an extra layer of support to ensure learners are not unfairly disadvantaged by the unique circumstances of 2021–22.

This overall approach to awarding and grading sought, where possible, to provide a more generous position in relation to outcomes in 2019, while retaining the credibility and integrity of qualifications through maintaining performance standards where possible. This approach was informed by engagement with SQA's own stakeholders and by an awareness of the planned approach elsewhere in the UK.

National Qualifications 2022 Group

The National Qualifications 2021 Group was established to co-create and implement the Alternative Certification Model (ACM) for 2021, and was re-convened as the National Qualifications 2022 Group to co-ordinate the support provided to senior phase learners undertaking SQA courses in 2021–22.

The National Qualifications 2022 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 Government, National Parent Forum of Scotland, Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland (sparqs), the Scottish Youth Parliament and Universities Scotland. It was supported by the National Qualifications 2022 Working Group.

SQA's equalities obligations

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 Equality of Access to SQA Qualifications policy outlines SQA'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 candidates 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) section 96(7)

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.

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 candidates, and enable progression to further learning or employment.

SQA's Code of Practice

SQA's Code of Practice guides the organisation's approach to 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 its 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.

Equality Impact Assessment of 2022 awarding

As part of developing the approach to awarding in 2022, SQA completed [equality impact assessments \(EqIAs\)](#) and [Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments \(CRWIAs\)](#) for the full end-to-end process. The aim was to ensure that we identified and mitigated any potential impacts of the awarding approach on one or more groups of candidates with protected characteristics. The EqIAs and CRWIAs considered and acted upon key equalities evidence throughout the development and finalisation of the 2022 awarding approach.

The following is a summary of each equality impact assessment for each part of the overall process. This is useful context information for consideration of the 2022 results and why it is included within this report – the published equality impact assessments are available on [our website](#).

EqIA of the modifications to NQ course assessments for session 2021–22

Modifications to course assessments at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher were introduced in session 2020–21. The assessment changes were implemented in subject-specific ways to ensure the continued integrity of courses and to maintain public confidence in the qualifications. Due to ongoing disruption as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the decision was taken to retain the majority of these modifications for session 2021–22.

The modifications were intended to give all candidates (including those with protected characteristics) more opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills, to reduce the volume of assessments and to ease teacher, lecturer and candidates' workloads, while maintaining the original rationale, purpose and aims of courses. In response to feedback from teachers and lecturers, SQA adjusted modifications to around 70 courses in 2021–22 where, for example, updated public health advice indicated that this was appropriate and possible.

The [EqIA](#) summarised details of how the modifications would help teachers and lecturers prepare candidates for coursework and/or exams, the potential equality impacts that might result, and the mitigations that could be put in place for any identified disadvantage.

SQA qualifications teams and senior appointees considered existing EqIA findings as well as feedback from candidates, teachers and lecturers when developing and finalising proposed modifications in session 2020–21 and again in session 2021–22.

Equality review of qualifications process

SQA carries out equality reviews of qualification processes to comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

The review strives to ensure that there is robust and transparent consideration of equalities during development as well as ongoing maintenance of qualifications. Considerations are recorded on an Equality Review Form for each qualification.

This review process ensures that National Qualifications are not unlawfully discriminatory for any candidate on the grounds of the protected characteristics of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation; and that due

consideration is given to the reasonable adjustments that SQA (under Section 96 (6) of the Equality Act 2010) can make to provide access to its qualifications for disabled candidates.

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

EqIA of the additional support for all candidates

Following discussion with partners across the education system, and agreement by the SQA Board of Management, SQA invoked Scenario 2. The aim was to strike a balance between providing more support to candidates, including those with a range of protected characteristics, to recognise the time lost due to disruption, while not undermining the integrity of assessment. In addition to the modifications announced in August 2021, additional guidance and support was published for candidates to help them with their revision in the final run up to their exams. By providing this information in March 2022, SQA attempted to avoid invalidating the assessment if information was shared too early.

SQA's approach was to avoid the narrowing of learning and teaching, which would negatively impact candidates' breadth of course knowledge and understanding. This was especially important for all candidates, including those with protected characteristics; the aim was to best support them to progress further (into higher level qualifications, vocational training, further or higher education, or employment) without gaps in their subject skills, knowledge and understanding.

The impact of disrupted teaching and learning has affected all candidates — potentially more so for candidates in areas of socio-economic deprivation and those who have not been able to attend classes in person. By introducing additional support for candidates, including revision materials such as study guides or permitted resources in the exam, the aim was to further reduce any disadvantage to candidates most impacted by the COVID-19 restrictions that had been in place since the start of the 2021–22 academic year.

As far as possible, the aim of Scenario 2 was to mitigate the effects of disruption from the pandemic on teaching and learning, in order to minimise disadvantage and enable all candidates, including those with protected characteristics, equal opportunities to demonstrate their attainment in the external exams.

EqIA of the Exam Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (EECCS)

The EqIA considered the potential impact of the 2022 awarding model 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.

Stakeholder feedback to SQA indicated that they would prefer to have greater clarity and a more tightly focused service in 2022 covering 'exceptional circumstances' — any service needed to effectively operate alongside the 2022 Appeals Service. The 2022 Exam Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (EECCS) was developed to provide greater support to

individual candidates who experienced disruption at the time of the exam. This is a longstanding SQA service that benefits candidates who find themselves in exceptional circumstances. The service meets the needs of a number of candidates with the protected characteristic of disability — for example, candidates with additional support needs or who have a long-term health condition are more likely to use the service. The main change for 2022 is that EECCS applied to issues that prevented a candidate from attending, or completing, an exam. It did not apply to candidates who completed an exam, even if they felt they had underperformed due to a disruption or personal circumstance that occurred in the run up to, or during, an exam.

SQA appointees reviewed alternative evidence submitted by centres alongside any coursework, if it was part of the assessment, and any exam scripts that were attempted. Alternative evidence was judged holistically against existing grade descriptors and exemplifications in an objective manner without any unconscious bias.

Grades awarded through EECCS based on alternative evidence only are the lowest band of each grade. Centre-generated evidence is non-standardised and therefore challenging for SQA appointees to ‘fine tune’ into bands, especially those that have very small margins. Therefore, SQA appointees were asked to consider the totality of the evidence suggestive of the skills, knowledge and understanding associated with a specific grade descriptor/characteristic. Where a candidate attempted some of the exam paper, it was *possible* for the higher band to be awarded. By exception, in cases where a candidate holds a conditional offer from a university, college or employment that is dependent on an A1 band, should the candidate's alternative evidence justify an A grade, the appointee will also determine the appropriate band.

EqlA of the 2022 awarding and grade boundaries

Awarding is a key component of SQA's statutory duties and responsibilities, as outlined in [SQA Awarding Code of Practice](#). SQA holds meetings to discuss awarding after each exam diet. The purpose of the meetings is to set grade boundaries. The process of setting grade boundaries uses a mixture of specific subject expertise combined with available qualitative and quantitative evidence to evaluate exam performances. For further details, please consult SQA's [Guide to Setting Grade Boundaries](#).

This year, SQA designed a package of support measures in partnership with stakeholder groups. A full statement covering the [support for learners](#) was published on 1 February 2022. For further details, please consult the [2022 Methodology Report](#).

SQA believes this approach has delivered fair grades for all candidates. Reintroducing an exam diet ensures all candidates are undertaking the same assessment, at the same time, under the same conditions. This removes the potential for any unfairness that may result from a teacher-led approach to assessment — a fact that was highlighted by some candidates during SQA's engagement activity. The measures SQA have taken seek to mitigate, where possible, the impact of the disruption to teaching, learning and assessment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. They have been introduced as a safeguard for learners alongside the modifications already made to courses.

EqlA of the 2022 Appeals Service

In establishing the 2022 Appeals Service, SQA is striving to mitigate the disruption some candidates may have faced, to enable those in such circumstances to receive a qualification and grade which is a fair reflection of their knowledge, understanding and skills. A key point in the development of the service was that the mechanism must be fair to all candidates — not just

those who access the service. The service should not advantage some candidates at the expense of others.

SQA considered the challenges and difficulties of individual may have experienced during the assessment process. SQA acknowledges that the degree and impact of disruption is unique to each individual. SQA considered lost teaching time and learning, the nature of the subject and the exact topic or parts of topics that were missed (for example, a peripheral part of a topic or a foundational topic on which much other course material rests). It is not possible to quantify the level of disruption in a simple or single metric (for example, the number of learning days missed); any other possible measure would, in itself, present insurmountable problems to quantify fairly across different candidates, with different experiences and in different schools or colleges. This challenge was not unique to SQA and, thus far, no other country in the UK has been able to identify a fair measure. Furthermore, it is important that the grades awarded are based upon demonstrated attainment, to maintain the integrity of SQA qualifications.

The 2022 Appeals Service is free and enables candidates who meet the eligibility criteria and are unhappy with the grades they received through external SQA exams and/or coursework to submit an appeal directly to SQA or through their centre. SQA's standard arrangements for candidates to authorise representatives to progress an appeal on their behalf will also apply. There will be a priority service for candidates whose place at university, education, training or employment is contingent upon the grades they achieve.

The 2022 Appeals Service aims to provide a 'safety net' for all candidates, including those with protected characteristics, who did not achieve the grade they were predicted by their class teacher or lecturer. SQA appointees will review the alternative academic evidence supplied by the centre, and any coursework, to determine a grade. SQA appointees are not aware of candidates' estimates or current certificated grades. SQA will also review exam scripts and/or coursework for clerical/administrative errors only (not for marking errors). Candidates will be awarded the higher grade based on either SQA's clerical check or a review of the centre's assessment evidence by an SQA appointee.

Appendix 1

1. Equalities monitoring and analyses of the 2022 AM outcomes

This section sets out the descriptive analyses that SQA has conducted on the 2022 results for groups of candidates who share specific equalities characteristics.

Additionally, analyses have been undertaken to assess the 2022 results based on candidates' Urban/Rural status, and levels of deprivation as ranked by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), the Scottish Government's standard approach to identify areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland.

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

1.1 Methodology

1.1.1 Data sources and contributions

Some of the data used in this report is held by SQA and some by Scottish Government and both bodies contributed analyses to this report.

SQA holds data on attainment and candidate age (calculated from date of birth), sex and postcode.

Scottish Government holds personal, sensitive candidate-level information, including protected characteristics data.

The analysis relating to candidates' protected characteristics was undertaken by Scottish Government, and results provided to SQA. All commentary has been produced by SQA.

Limitations:

Scottish Government only collects and holds protected characteristics data for candidates from Education Authority (EA) schools. Statistics are therefore based on only a subset of the total cohort (Table 1). Education authority schools provide the majority of candidates at National 5, Higher, and Advanced Higher, but this does mean that only one of the many types of education is represented. Further details about other groups of candidates that make up the complete cohort are given in section 2.2.

SQA provides results data annually to Scottish Government following post-results processes including appeals. Analysis by Scottish Government for 2018 to 2021 used December post-results data whilst analysis for 2022 used August results (prior to appeals and other post-results processes).

For urban/rural classification, the pupil's postcode was used. If this was not available, the school (centre) postcode was used. A different approach was used when generating SIMD data, where candidates with postcodes that matched their centre were excluded due to risk that this match was created due to an administration error (see section 1.6).

Table 1: Cohort and contributor by characteristic analysed. EA = education authority.

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

Approach to missing Age, Sex and SIMD data: candidates with missing values for any of these characteristics were removed for each analysis individually. This maximised the number of candidates included in analyses but means that the statistics report on slightly different cohorts for each of these characteristics.

1.1.2 Protected characteristics

Protected characteristics data was taken from the September 'Scottish Pupil Census', for the relevant year, for Education Authority school candidates. This does not include: candidates attending publicly funded Special Schools; candidates attending private Independent Schools; candidates educated outwith 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.

The information for the different protected characteristics was available for all Education Authority candidates in the dataset and the same dataset was used for each category. The analysis excludes grant aided specials schools and schools that are not listed in school census.

Candidate characteristics are taken from the Scottish Government pupil census prior to the release of the exam results and merged with attainment data. For example, the 2022 analysis uses the characteristics from the 2021 pupil census.

The census collects a range of information for each individual. This includes:

- ◆ **Additional Support Needs status:** Candidates with an Additional Support Need (ASN) include candidates 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:** Candidates may be *assessed* as having a disability by a qualified professional or be *declared* as having a disability by themselves

or their parent/carer.

A pupil who was not recorded as having ASN or being disabled in the pupil census would be considered as non ASN and non-disabled respectively.

- ♦ **Ethnic background:** Ten ethnic backgrounds covering the full list of categories are used in this report:

- White - Scottish,
- White - non-Scottish,
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups,
- Asian - Indian,
- Asian - Pakistani,
- Asian - Chinese,
- Asian - Other,
- African/ Black/ Caribbean (includes 'African', 'African - Other', and 'Caribbean or Black')
- All other categories (includes 'Other - other' and 'Other - Arab')
- Not Disclosed/Not known (refers to the pupils whose ethnicity was not available)

1.1.3 Urban/rural classification

[Urban/rural categories](#) were applied to Scottish Government data based on candidate postcodes.

A candidate'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.

For urban/rural classification, the pupil's postcode was used. If this was not available, the school (centre) postcode was used. The urban/rural classification is updated periodically to reflect changes in land-use and the appropriate version of this classification varies over the five years of data included in this report: for 2018 and 2019 attainment data SG Urban Rural Classification 2016 was used, [for 2020 to 2022 attainment data SG Urban Rural Classification 2020 was used.](#)

1.1.4 Age

Date of birth was used to calculate that candidate's age in years on 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 approximately 99% of candidates falling in the age bracket of 15–18.

1.1.5 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 standards allow the use of the following values: *Male*, *Female*, *Not Known*, and *Not Applicable*.

Consistent with [Provisional Attainment Statistics — August 2022](#) publications, candidates with a legal sex status *Not Known* and *Not Applicable* were removed from the analysis due to low volumes.

1.1.6 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data

The [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation \(SIMD\)](#) is a relative measure of deprivation across 6,976 small areas (called data zones), which can be grouped into 5 bands (quintiles), each containing 20% of the data zones. Quintile 1 contains the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland. The population size of data zones can vary and have [‘roughly equal populations’](#).

Attainment data for the whole cohort for 2018 to 2022 was joined with a SIMD postcode lookup using candidate postcodes to generate SIMD quintiles for each candidate.

Candidates with a missing postcode or the same postcode as the centre (suggestive of an administration error) were excluded from the analysis (<1% of dataset). The most recent version of the SIMD postcode look up file ([SIMD 2020 version 2](#)) was used for all SIMD analyses in this report.

1.1.7 Further notes around the methodology

National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher are treated separately.

Individual candidates entered for qualifications at different levels may be included in at each relevant level.

Percentages are rounded and may not always sum to 100%.

Percentage point differences are calculated prior to rounding.

‘N’ refers to No Awards in the grade breakdown tables.

1.1.8 Variation in assessment and awarding arrangements

In 2022, SQA worked with partners across the education sector, including teachers, lecturers, candidates, parents and carers, throughout the year to agree the wide-ranging package of support that was put in place to enable candidates to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do, despite the disruption to learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. SQA implemented various modifications and revision support to reduce the assessment requirements for courses and increase learning and teaching time. [Further details about the approach to awarding in 2022 can be found in the methodology report.](#)

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, candidate, 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 based on teacher estimates. 9,198 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 2018-2019 entry and attainment figures are derived from different awarding approaches to 2020 and, separately, 2021 and 2022. 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.

Consistent with [Provisional Attainment Statistics - August 2022](#), figures for 2022 are generally presented with reference to attainment in the previous year (2021) and to 2019 (the most recent year prior to the pandemic). However, the alternative awarding arrangements in place between 2020 and 2022 mean that it is not possible to compare attainment between years without full consideration of this essential contextual information as outlined above.

1.2 National 5 entries by characteristics

1.2.1 National 5 entries by Age, Sex and SIMD

The majority of National 5 entries are from 15 to 18 year olds in all years from 2018 to 2022 (Table 2).

In the period 2018 to 2022, the proportion of males entered for National 5 has been getting closer to that of females year on year (Table 2). In 2022, the proportion of male entries (49.9%) is almost equal to the proportion of entries from females (50.1%).

Historically, SIMD data has shown a higher proportion of entries from candidates from the least deprived SIMD quintiles (Table 2). In the period 2018 to 2022, quintiles 3 to 5 accounted for around three quarters of National 5 entries.

Table 2: the proportion of entries by Age, Sex and SIMD for all candidates entered for National 5 from 2018 to 2022.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Age category					
Below 15	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
15 to 18	98.8%	98.8%	98.9%	99.1%	99.3%
Over 18	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.7%	0.6%
Sex					
Female	51.7%	51.5%	51.1%	50.4%	50.1%
Male	48.3%	48.5%	48.9%	49.6%	49.9%
SIMD quintile					
1 (most deprived): 0 - 20%	16.6%	16.1%	16.4%	16.7%	16.5%
2: 20-40%	17.3%	17.1%	17.3%	16.7%	17.1%
3: 40-60%	18.6%	18.8%	18.7%	18.7%	18.4%
4: 60-80%	22.5%	22.5%	22.4%	22.5%	22.5%
5 (least deprived): 80 -100%	25.1%	25.4%	25.2%	25.4%	25.5%

1.2.2 National 5 entries by protected characteristics and urban/rural distribution (Education authority Schools only)

From 2018 to 2022, the percentage of National 5 entries from Education authority school candidates with Additional Support Needs (ASN) has increased year on year, with corresponding decreases in candidates with no ASN identified via the Pupil Census (Table 3).

In 2019 the percentage of National 5 entries with ASN was 23.8%. In 2022 the percentage of entries with ASN was 30.1%. The pupil census attributes this increase 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 is 2.1% in 2022 (Table 3).

Table 3: proportion of entries by protected characteristics and urban/rural distribution for EA candidates entered for National 5 from 2018 to 2022

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Additional Support Needs					
ASN	21.4%	23.8%	26.4%	28.5%	30.1%
No ASN	78.6%	76.2%	73.6%	71.6%	69.9%
Declared/Assessed disabled					
Not declared or assessed disabled	98.4%	98.3%	98.3%	98.1%	97.9%
Declared or assessed disabled	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%	1.9%	2.1%
Urban/Rural					
Large Urban Areas	30.0%	29.6%	29.3%	30.1%	33.1%
Other Urban Areas	38.3%	38.3%	39.3%	38.2%	36.0%
Accessible Small Towns	9.5%	9.7%	9.8%	9.5%	9.4%
Remote Small Towns	3.6%	3.7%	3.4%	3.5%	2.6%
Accessible Rural	12.0%	12.6%	12.1%	12.4%	13.1%
Remote Rural	6.5%	6.2%	6.1%	6.2%	5.7%
Ethnicity					
White - Scottish	83.5%	83.1%	82.0%	81.3%	78.8%
White - non-Scottish	8.3%	8.9%	9.3%	9.4%	11.2%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	1.1%	1.2%	1.3%	1.4%	1.4%
Asian - Indian	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.9%
Asian - Pakistani	2.4%	2.2%	2.3%	2.2%	2.3%
Asian - Chinese	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	0.7%
Asian - Other	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%
African/ Black/ Caribbean	1.1%	1.1%	1.3%	1.5%	1.7%
All other categories	0.6%	0.6%	0.8%	0.8%	1.0%
Not Disclosed/Not known	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.2%	1.2%

1.3 Higher entries by characteristics

1.3.1 Higher entries by age, sex and SIMD

The vast majority of entries for Higher are from candidates in the 15 to 18 age bracket, with small, gradual increases over time between 2018 and 2022.

From 2018 to 2021, a larger proportion of Higher entries were from females than males. The proportion of male entries has been increasing very gradually year on year since 2019. This continued in 2022, with 53.7% of entries coming from female candidates and 46.3% coming from male candidates.

The proportion of Higher entries from candidates from SIMD quintiles 1 to 5 is quite stable over the five-year period to 2022.

Table 4: Higher proportion of entries by Age, Sex and SIMD for all candidates entered for Higher from 2018 to 2022.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Age category					
Below 15	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
15 to 18	97.2%	97.7%	98.1%	98.5%	98.8%
Over 18	2.8%	2.3%	1.8%	1.5%	1.2%
Sex					
Female	55.6%	56.0%	55.8%	54.8%	53.7%
Male	44.4%	44.0%	44.2%	45.2%	46.3%
SIMD quintile					
1 (most deprived): 0-20%	13.4%	13.6%	13.3%	13.5%	13.8%
2: 20-40%	15.3%	15.3%	15.3%	15.4%	15.2%
3: 40-60%	18.4%	18.1%	18.4%	18.3%	18.0%
4: 60-80%	24.1%	23.9%	23.8%	23.7%	23.8%
5 (least deprived): 80-100%	28.8%	29.0%	29.2%	29.2%	29.3%

1.3.2 Higher entries by protected characteristics and urban/rural distribution (EA Schools only)

From 2018 to 2022, the percentage of entries from Education Authority candidates with Additional Support Needs (ASN) has increased year on year with corresponding decreases in candidates with no ASN identified via the Pupil Census.

For Higher, in 2019 the percentage of entries with ASN was 19.0%. In 2022 the percentage of entries with ASN was 25.2%. The pupil census attributes this increase 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 varies between 1.2% and 1.6% between 2018 and 2022 for Higher.

The proportion of entries from Other Urban Areas has decreased in 2022 compared to previous levels (2018 to 2021) while Large Urban Areas has increased

Table 5: Higher proportion of entries by protected characteristics and urban/rural classification for Education Authority school candidates from 2018 to 2022

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Additional Support Needs					
ASN	16.8%	19.0%	21.5%	23.7%	25.2%
No ASN	83.2%	81.0%	78.5%	76.3%	74.8%
Declared/Assessed disabled					
Not declared or assessed disabled	98.8%	98.7%	98.5%	98.6%	98.4%
Declared or assessed disabled	1.2%	1.3%	1.5%	1.4%	1.6%
Urban/Rural					
Large Urban Areas	30.1%	30.7%	30.4%	30.5%	34.7%
Other Urban Areas	38.1%	37.9%	37.6%	38.4%	35.6%
Accessible Small Towns	9.8%	9.6%	9.9%	9.8%	9.4%
Remote Small Towns	3.5%	3.3%	3.3%	3.1%	2.2%
Accessible Rural	12.5%	12.2%	12.7%	12.3%	12.8%
Remote Rural	6.0%	6.3%	6.1%	5.9%	5.4%
Ethnicity					
White - Scottish	83.5%	81.9%	81.3%	80.5%	79.1%
White - non-Scottish	8.2%	8.8%	9.2%	9.4%	9.7%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.4%	1.6%
Asian - Indian	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%
Asian - Pakistani	2.4%	2.6%	2.7%	2.6%	2.8%
Asian - Chinese	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%
Asian - Other	0.8%	0.9%	0.8%	0.9%	1.1%
African/ Black/ Caribbean	1.0%	1.2%	1.3%	1.5%	1.8%
All other categories	0.5%	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.9%
Not Disclosed/Not known	1.0%	1.1%	1.2%	1.1%	1.2%

1.4 Advanced Higher entries breakdown by characteristics

1.4.1 Advanced Higher entries by age, sex and SIMD

Nearly all Advanced Higher entries are from candidates in the 15 to 18 age bracket (Table 6).

A higher proportion of Advanced Higher entries tend to be from females than males. The percentage of male entries has fluctuated slightly around 44% in the last five years.

The proportion of entries for Advanced Highers from SIMD quintile 1 is consistently lower than the least deprived quintile but has increased slightly since 2018.

Table 6: Advanced Higher proportion of entries by Age, Sex and SIMD for all candidates entered from 2018 to 2022

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Age category					
Below 15	0.0%	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%
15 to 18	99.4%	99.6%	99.6%	99.6%	99.6%
Over 18	0.6%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Sex					
Female	55.3%	56.2%	56.0%	56.6%	55.2%
Male	44.7%	43.8%	44.0%	43.4%	44.8%
SIMD quintile					
1 (most deprived): 0-20%	7.9%	8.2%	8.7%	8.5%	8.9%
2: 20-40%	11.4%	10.9%	11.2%	11.1%	11.4%
3: 40-60%	16.4%	16.6%	15.7%	17.0%	16.5%
4: 60-80%	25.5%	25.6%	25.0%	24.6%	25.1%
5 (least deprived): 80-100%	38.8%	38.7%	39.3%	38.8%	38.1%

1.4.2 Advanced Higher entries by protected characteristics and urban/rural distribution (EA Schools only)

From 2018 to 2022, the percentage of entries from Education Authority candidates with Additional Support Needs (ASN) has increased year on year with corresponding decreases in candidates with no ASN identified via the Pupil Census.

For Advanced Higher, in 2019 the percentage of entries with ASN was 16.9%. In 2022 the percentage of entries with ASN was 22.4%. The pupil census attributes this increase 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 remained relatively stable from 2018 to 2022 for Advanced Higher (1.1% to 1.4%).

Table 7: Advanced Higher proportion of entries by protected characteristics and urban/rural distribution for Education Authority school candidates from 2018 to 2022

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Additional Support Needs					
ASN	15.1%	16.9%	18.9%	21.0%	22.4%
No ASN	84.9%	83.1%	81.1%	79.0%	77.6%
Declared/Assessed disabled					
Not declared or assessed disabled	98.9%	98.9%	98.7%	98.8%	98.6%
Declared or assessed disabled	1.1%	1.1%	1.3%	1.2%	1.4%
Urban/Rural					
Large Urban Areas	30.5%	31.5%	33.0%	32.3%	34.4%
Other Urban Areas	34.4%	33.9%	33.9%	33.3%	33.9%
Accessible Small Towns	10.8%	10.8%	10.3%	10.9%	10.0%
Remote Small Towns	3.2%	3.3%	2.6%	3.2%	2.0%
Accessible Rural	14.2%	14.1%	13.2%	13.8%	13.9%
Remote Rural	6.9%	6.3%	6.9%	6.6%	5.8%
Ethnicity					
White - Scottish	80.2%	79.4%	77.3%	77.5%	75.7%
White - non-Scottish	10.1%	10.3%	11.1%	11.5%	11.6%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	1.5%	1.7%	1.4%	1.7%	1.8%
Asian - Indian	1.1%	1.3%	1.7%	1.4%	1.7%
Asian - Pakistani	2.1%	2.5%	2.8%	2.7%	2.8%
Asian - Chinese	1.5%	1.3%	1.3%	1.0%	1.5%
Asian - Other	0.9%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	1.2%
African/ Black/ Caribbean	1.0%	0.9%	1.3%	1.2%	1.5%
All other categories	0.7%	0.5%	1.0%	0.9%	1.2%
Not Disclosed/Not known	0.8%	1.0%	1.1%	1.2%	1.0%

1.5 Distribution of 2022 Attainment across different groups

Attainment by equalities characteristics is assessed in the subsections below. As with other analyses undertaken in this report, historic attainment from 2018 to 2021 is provided for contextualisation of 2022 outcomes.

The discussion in this section focuses on grade A and grade A to 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.

1.6 Attainment by Age characteristics

As previously shown, 99.3% of entries at National 5, 98.8% of entries at Higher and 99.6% at Advanced Higher are from candidates 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 candidates.

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, further analyses of attainment by the Age category are not undertaken in the rest of this report.

1.7 Attainment by sex type

This section outlines 2022 attainment outcomes by legal sex type. For context, 2018 to 2021 attainment outcomes are also provided.

1.7.1 National 5 grade distribution by sex type

Females had higher A to C and A attainment rates than males at National 5 for each year in the period 2018 to 2021. This remains the case in 2022 (Figure 1; Table 8).

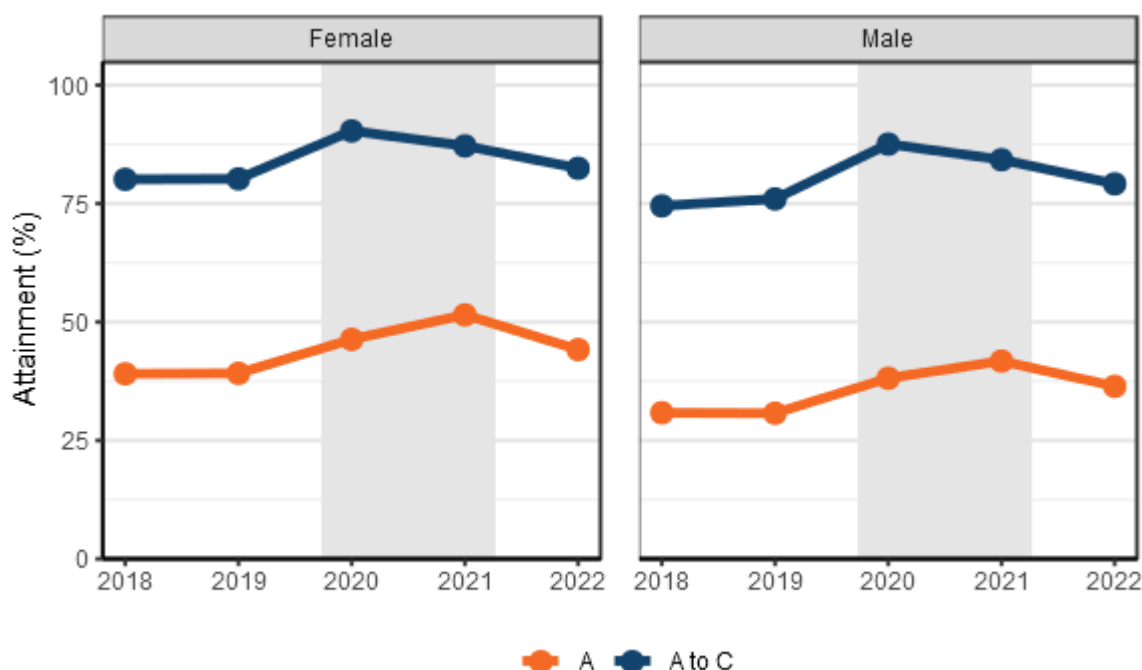


Figure 1: A and A to C attainment for males and females at National 5. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 8: National 5 grade distribution by sex type for 2018 to 2022

Sex	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
Female	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%
	2022	44.2%	22.1%	16.2%	10.4%	7.1%	82.5%
Male	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%
	2022	36.4%	23.8%	18.9%	12.1%	8.7%	79.2%

The year-on-year percentage point change in the A attainment rate was broadly similar between males and females in each year between 2018 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 saw 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 2022, females saw a larger year-on-year decrease in the A attainment rate at National 5 of 7.3 percentage points, with males seeing a year-on-year decrease of 5.3 percentage points.

In the period 2018 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 increased to 9.8 percentage points. In 2022, the difference in A attainment rate between females and males has decreased to 7.8 percentage points.

The year-on-year percentage point change in the A to C attainment rate between males and females was more variable between 2018 and 2020. In 2021, however, there was a similar year-on-year reduction in the A to C rate for females and males, a decrease of 3.2 percentage points and 3.3 percentage points respectively. In 2022, there was a further year-on-year decrease of 4.7 percentage points for females and a decrease of 5.1 percentage points for males.

The overall difference in the A to C attainment rate between males and females reduced from 5.6 percentage points in 2018 to 2.8 and 2.9 percentage points in 2020 and 2021 respectively. In 2022, the difference in the A to C attainment rate between males and females is 3.3 percentage points. This is a larger difference than 2020 and 2021 but smaller than that seen in 2018 and 2019.

Higher grade distribution by sex type

From 2018 to 2021, females had higher A to C and A attainment rates than males. This remains the case in 2022.

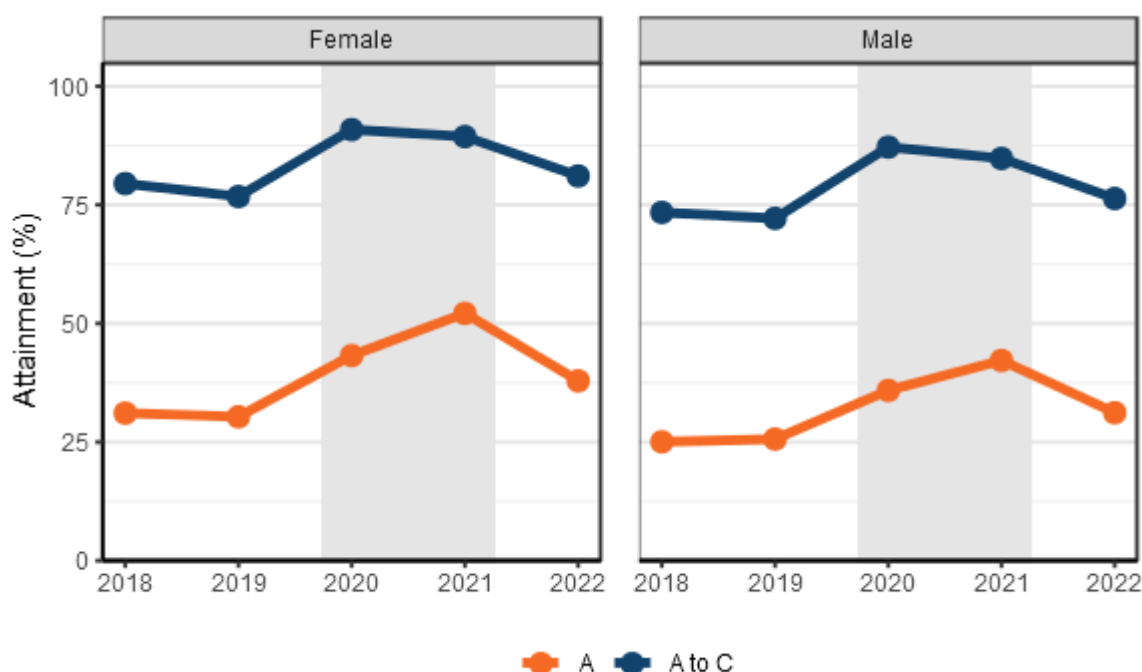


Figure 2: A and A to C Attainment by Sex at Higher. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 9: Higher grade distribution by sex type for 2018 to 2022

Sex	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
Female	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%
	2022	37.9%	24.3%	18.9%	11.6%	7.3%	81.1%
Male	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%
	2022	31.2%	24.3%	20.9%	13.7%	10.0%	76.4%

In 2021, females saw a greater year-on-year increase in the A attainment rate at Higher (8.9 percentage points) compared to males (6.3 percentage points). In 2022, there has been a larger year-on-year decrease for females (-14.2 percentage points) compared to males (-11.0 percentage points). Overall, the 2022 A attainment rate for females is an increase of 7.6 percentage points on 2019 and an increase of 5.6 percentage points for males.

The difference in A attainment rate between males and females in 2019 had fallen to 4.7 percentage points. In 2020 and 2021, the difference in the A attainment rate between males and females increased to 7.4 percentage points and 9.9 percentage points. In 2022, this difference is 6.7 percentage points.

With regards to changes to A to C rates, males and females saw similar year-on-year reductions in A to C attainment rates of -8.4 and -8.3 percentage points respectively.

Overall, the 2022 A to C rate is an increase of 4.2 percentage points on 2019 for males and an increase of 4.3 percentage points for females.

The difference in the Higher A to C attainment rate between males and females was 4.6 percentage points in 2019. In 2020 and 2021, the difference was 3.7 and 4.6 percentage points; and in 2022, the difference is 4.7 percentage points.

Advanced Higher grade distribution by sex type

From 2018 to 2021, females typically had higher A to C and A attainment rates for Advanced Higher than males. The A attainment rate for males and females was most similar in 2019 (male 31.5%, female 32%). In 2022, both A to C and A rates for females were higher than for males.

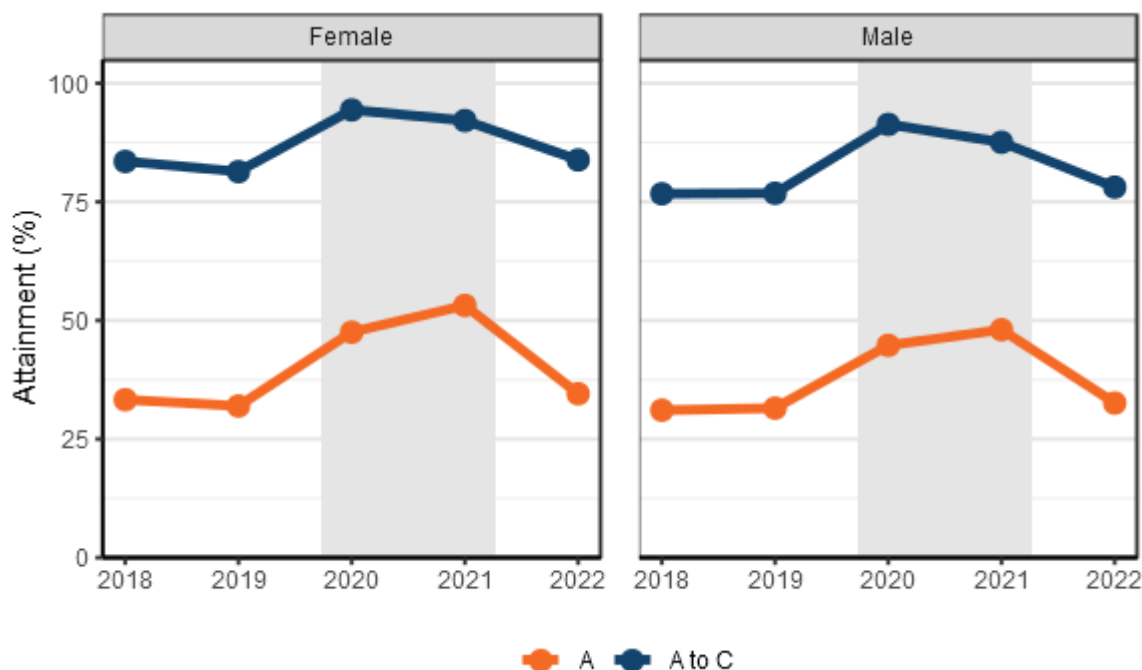


Figure 3: A and A to C Attainment by Sex at Advanced Higher. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 10: Advanced Higher grade distribution by sex type for 2018 to 2022

Sex	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
Female	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%
	2022	34.6%	27.1%	22.2%	11.3%	4.9%	83.9%
Male	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%
	2022	32.6%	24.7%	20.8%	13.1%	8.7%	78.1%

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). This has been followed in 2022 by a larger fall in the A attainment rate for females (-18.6 percentage points) than males (-15.5 percentage points). The 2022 A attainment rate for females is an increase of 2.6 percentage points on 2019, and an increase of 1.1 percentage points for males on 2018.

The difference in the A attainment rate between males and females was 0.5 percentage points in 2019. In 2020, the difference was 2.8 percentage points, and in 2021, the difference was 5.1 percentage points. In 2022, this difference is 2.0 percentage points.

In 2022, males saw a greater year-on-year reduction in A to C attainment rates at -9.5 percentage points, relative to females who saw a year-on-year reduction of -8.3 percentage points. Looking further back, 2022 A to C rates increased by 2.5 percentage points on 2019 for females and by 1.3 percentage points for males.

The difference in Advanced Higher A to C attainment rates between males and females was 4.6 percentage points in 2019. In 2020, the difference was 3.1 percentage points; and in 2021, 4.6 percentage points. In 2022, the difference is 5.7 percentage points.

1.8 Attainment by SIMD quintile

This section outlines attainment outcomes by SIMD quintile from 2018 to 2022.

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.

National 5 grade distribution by SIMD quintile

For each year in the period 2018 to 2022, the A attainment rate increases progressively from SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) to SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived). In each of those years, candidates in quintile 5 achieved an A attainment rate of more than 25 percentage points above those in quintile 1.

For each year in the period 2018 to 2022, the A to C rate increases progressively from quintile 1 to quintile 5. In 2019, the difference between the A to C rate for quintiles 1 and 5 was 17.1 percentage points. In 2020 and 2021, the difference between the two groups decreased to 7.9 percentage points; and 9.1 percentage points respectively. In 2022, the difference between the most deprived and least deprived quintiles has increased to 14.6 percentage points. This is lower than the difference seen in 2019 (Table 12).

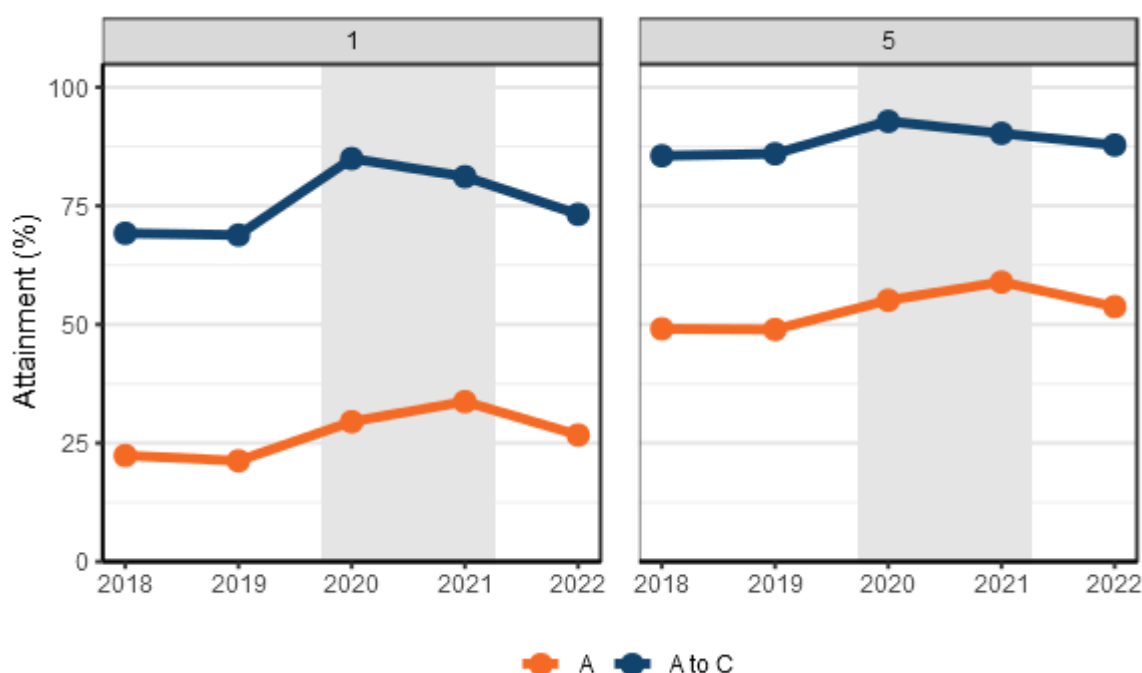


Figure 4: A and A to C Attainment by SIMD at National 5, The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 11: National 5 grade distribution by SIMD from 2018 to 2022

SIMD quintile	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
1	2018	22.4%	23.2%	23.6%	16.4%	14.4%	69.2%
1	2019	21.3%	23.9%	23.7%	17.4%	13.8%	68.9%
1	2020	29.5%	27.1%	28.4%	9.6%	5.4%	85.0%
1	2021	33.7%	23.5%	23.9%	11.0%	7.8%	81.2%
1	2022	26.7%	24.5%	22.0%	15.2%	11.6%	73.2%
2	2018	26.3%	23.3%	22.0%	15.3%	13.0%	71.7%
2	2019	26.3%	24.4%	22.2%	15.2%	11.9%	72.9%
2	2020	34.2%	26.5%	25.6%	8.8%	4.9%	86.3%
2	2021	38.8%	22.4%	21.5%	10.0%	7.4%	82.6%
2	2022	31.8%	23.7%	20.4%	13.7%	10.4%	75.9%
3	2018	32.3%	23.8%	20.1%	13.0%	10.8%	76.2%
3	2019	32.6%	24.8%	20.0%	13.0%	9.6%	77.4%
3	2020	40.1%	25.6%	22.9%	7.5%	4.0%	88.5%
3	2021	44.2%	21.4%	19.1%	8.9%	6.4%	84.7%
3	2022	37.2%	23.7%	18.4%	12.2%	8.6%	79.3%
4	2018	38.4%	23.6%	18.2%	11.1%	8.8%	80.1%
4	2019	38.5%	24.1%	18.3%	11.3%	7.9%	80.8%
4	2020	45.7%	24.1%	20.5%	6.4%	3.4%	90.2%

4	2021	50.6%	19.8%	16.8%	7.5%	5.3%	87.2%
4	2022	44.3%	22.9%	16.5%	9.9%	6.5%	83.6%
5	2018	49.1%	21.7%	14.8%	8.3%	6.1%	85.6%
5	2019	49.0%	22.5%	14.6%	8.4%	5.6%	86.0%
5	2020	55.1%	21.6%	16.1%	4.6%	2.5%	92.8%
5	2021	58.9%	17.9%	13.4%	5.6%	4.1%	90.3%
5	2022	53.8%	21.0%	13.1%	7.5%	4.7%	87.8%

Table 12: National 5 percentage point difference in A and AC attainment between SIMD quintile 1 and SIMD quintile 5. All percentage point differences are in favour of candidates in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived).

Attainment	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
A	26.7 pp	27.7 pp	25.6 pp	25.2 pp	27.1 pp
A to C	16.3 pp	17.1 pp	7.9 pp	9.1 pp	14.6 pp

Higher grade distribution by SIMD quintile

For each year in the period 2018 to 2022, the A and A to C attainment rate increases progressively from SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) to SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived) (Figure 5; Table 13).

In 2019, the difference between the A rate for quintile 1 and 5 was 22.0 percentage points. In 2020, the difference in the A attainment rates between the two groups was 20.4 percentage points; and in 2021, the difference is 22.0 percentage points. In 2022, the difference between the most deprived and least deprived quintiles has increased to 23.2 percentage points. This is higher than the difference seen in 2019 (Table 14).

In 2019, the difference between the A to C rate for quintiles 1 and 5 was 16.9 percentage points. In 2020, the difference in A to C attainment rates between the two groups was 6.6 percentage points; and in 2021, the difference was 7.8 percentage points. In 2022, the difference in A to C attainment rates between the two groups is 15.0 percentage points. This is a larger difference than 2020 and 2021 but smaller than that seen in 2019.

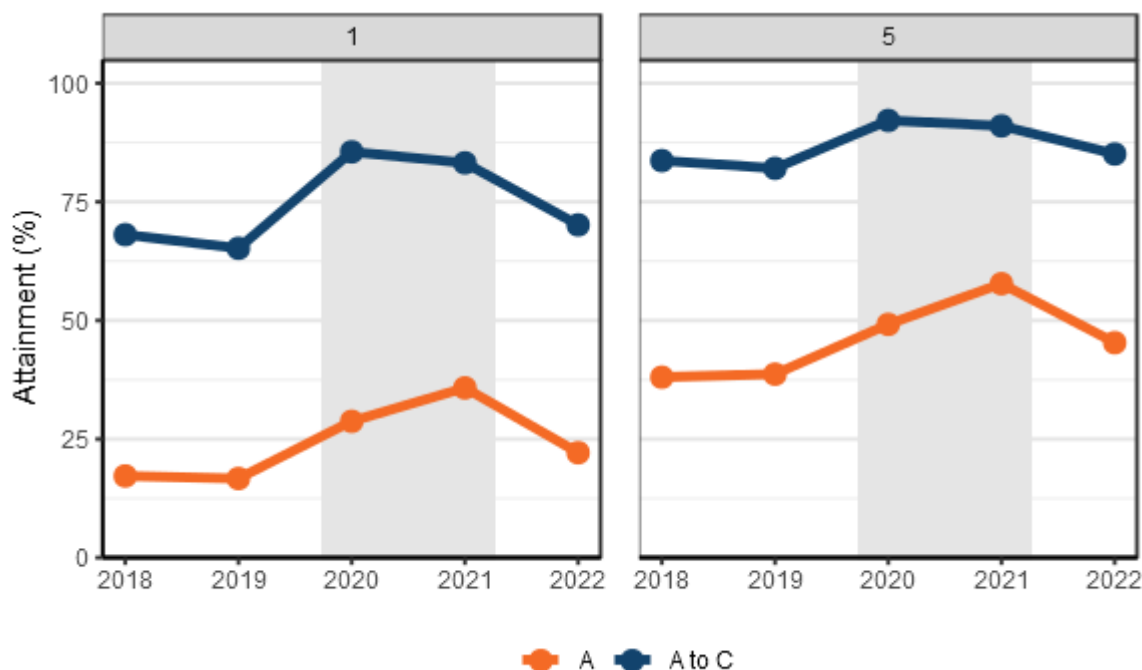


Figure 5: A and A to C Attainment by SIMD at Higher. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 13: Higher grade distribution by SIMD from 2018 to 2022

SIMD quintile	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
1	2018	17.2%	23.9%	27.0%	11.6%	20.3%	68.1%
1	2019	16.7%	22.5%	26.0%	20.1%	14.6%	65.2%
1	2020	28.8%	28.4%	28.4%	9.2%	5.2%	85.6%
1	2021	35.8%	24.6%	22.8%	9.3%	7.4%	83.2%
1	2022	22.1%	23.6%	24.5%	17.6%	12.2%	70.2%
2	2018	21.2%	23.9%	25.7%	10.7%	18.6%	70.7%
2	2019	20.0%	23.2%	25.4%	18.7%	12.8%	68.6%
2	2020	32.2%	28.0%	26.5%	8.7%	4.6%	86.7%
2	2021	39.2%	23.9%	21.1%	8.8%	6.9%	84.3%
2	2022	26.4%	24.4%	22.5%	15.4%	11.4%	73.3%
3	2018	25.6%	25.4%	24.1%	9.4%	15.5%	75.1%
3	2019	25.4%	24.2%	23.5%	16.2%	10.7%	73.1%
3	2020	37.9%	27.6%	23.2%	7.4%	3.9%	88.7%
3	2021	44.7%	23.0%	18.4%	7.7%	6.3%	86.0%
3	2022	30.7%	24.8%	21.4%	13.8%	9.4%	76.8%
4	2018	30.0%	26.0%	22.7%	8.2%	13.1%	78.7%
4	2019	29.6%	24.8%	22.1%	14.3%	9.2%	76.6%
4	2020	41.7%	26.8%	21.3%	6.5%	3.6%	89.9%
4	2021	49.7%	22.0%	16.3%	6.8%	5.2%	88.0%

4	2022	37.6%	24.8%	19.1%	11.3%	7.1%	81.6%
5	2018	38.1%	26.2%	19.4%	6.5%	9.8%	83.7%
5	2019	38.7%	24.6%	18.8%	11.0%	6.9%	82.1%
5	2020	49.2%	25.4%	17.6%	5.1%	2.7%	92.2%
5	2021	57.8%	19.7%	13.6%	4.8%	4.1%	91.0%
5	2022	45.3%	23.8%	16.0%	9.0%	5.9%	85.1%

Table 14: Differences (percentage points) in A and A to C attainment at Higher between candidates in SIMD quintile 1 and those in SIMD quintile 5. All percentage point differences are in favour of candidates in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived).

Attainment	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
A	20.8 pp	22.0 pp	20.4 pp	22.0 pp	23.2 pp
A to C	15.6 pp	16.9 pp	6.6 pp	7.8 pp	15.0 pp

Advanced Higher grade distribution by SIMD quintile

For any year in the period 2018 to 2022, the A and A to C attainment rate generally increases progressively from quintile 1 (most deprived) to quintile 5 (least deprived).

However, in 2020, the overall A to C attainment rate for quintile 1 candidates increased to be higher (91.0%) than quintile 2 candidates (90.7%) and this continued in 2021. In 2022, this has returned to a pre-pandemic pattern with quintile 1 candidates attainment rate at A to C being lower than quintile 2.

In 2019, the difference between the A rate for quintile 1 and 5 was 15.6 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 was 20.8 percentage points. In 2022, this difference is 20.5 percentage points. This is higher than 2019.

For A to C, the difference between the overall attainment rate for quintiles 1 and 5 was 13.6 percentage points in 2019. In 2020, the difference between the two groups was 3.0 percentage points; and in 2021, the difference was 5.5 percentage points. In 2022, this is 13.2 percentage points. This is lower than 2019.

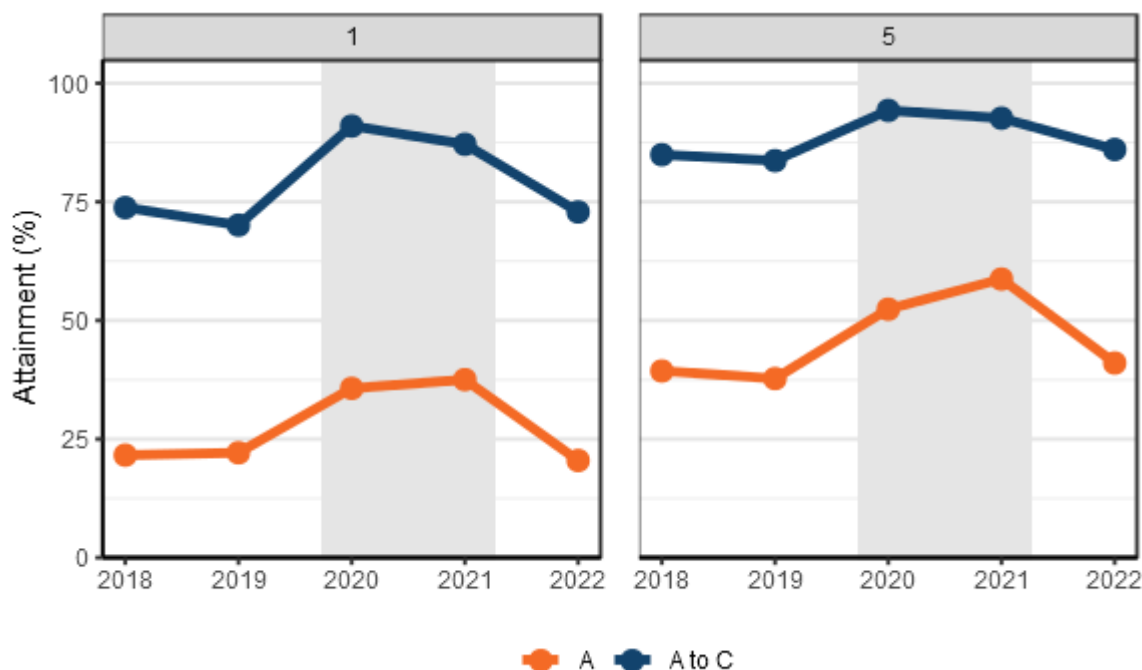


Figure 6: A and A to C Attainment by SIMD at Advanced Higher. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 15: Advanced Higher grade distribution by SIMD from 2018 to 2022

SIMD quintile	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
1	2018	21.6%	25.2%	27.0%	11.1%	15.1%	73.8%
1	2019	22.1%	22.3%	25.7%	10.1%	19.8%	70.1%
1	2020	35.7%	29.8%	25.5%	6.1%	2.8%	91.0%
1	2021	37.5%	27.8%	21.9%	7.4%	5.4%	87.2%
1	2022	20.5%	26.3%	26.1%	17.9%	9.2%	72.9%
2	2018	23.7%	25.1%	24.4%	10.9%	16.0%	73.1%
2	2019	25.2%	23.6%	25.0%	10.8%	15.5%	73.7%
2	2020	38.8%	30.2%	21.7%	6.3%	3.1%	90.7%
2	2021	42.2%	25.4%	18.5%	7.7%	6.3%	86.1%
2	2022	24.1%	24.0%	25.4%	16.3%	10.2%	73.5%
3	2018	27.9%	26.0%	24.2%	8.9%	13.0%	78.1%
3	2019	28.1%	24.6%	24.2%	9.6%	13.5%	76.9%
3	2020	43.2%	29.6%	19.7%	4.9%	2.6%	92.5%
3	2021	47.1%	25.2%	16.9%	6.6%	4.3%	89.1%
3	2022	30.2%	24.8%	23.9%	13.8%	7.4%	78.8%
4	2018	30.9%	26.9%	22.6%	8.2%	11.3%	80.4%
4	2019	30.7%	25.6%	23.4%	8.1%	12.3%	79.6%
4	2020	45.2%	28.8%	19.2%	4.5%	2.3%	93.2%
4	2021	49.6%	23.7%	16.5%	5.4%	4.8%	89.8%

4	2022	33.6%	26.9%	21.6%	11.7%	6.2%	82.1%
5	2018	39.4%	25.7%	19.9%	6.2%	8.8%	85.0%
5	2019	37.8%	25.5%	20.4%	7.1%	9.2%	83.7%
5	2020	52.4%	25.6%	16.3%	3.8%	1.9%	94.3%
5	2021	58.7%	20.8%	13.2%	4.2%	3.2%	92.7%
5	2022	41.0%	26.7%	18.3%	9.1%	4.8%	86.1%

Table 16: Differences (percentage points) in A and A to C attainment at Advanced Higher between candidates in SIMD quintile 1 and those in SIMD quintile 5. All percentage point differences are in favour of candidates in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived).

Attainment	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
A	17.7 pp	15.6 pp	16.7 pp	21.2 pp	20.5 pp
A to C	11.2 pp	13.6 pp	3.3 pp	5.5 pp	13.2 pp

1.9 Attainment by additional support needs

As in previous years, the A rate and A to C rate was greater for those with no Additional Support Needs (ASN) than those with an ASN for all levels (Figures 7 to 9; Tables 17 to 19).

The difference in A attainment rates between those with Additional Support Needs and those without ASN increased in 2021 compared to each year in the period 2018 to 2020 for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. In 2022, this difference has returned to within the historic range seen in 2018-2020. For example, the difference for National 5 in 2021 was 15.4 percentage points compared to a range of 12.3–13.6 percentage points (2017-2020). In 2022, this has returned to within the historic range at 12.9 percentage points.

The difference in A to C rates between those with and without ASN has increased on 2020 and 2021 but generally remains lower than 2018 and 2019 levels for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. For example, the difference for National 5 in 2022 is 8.4 percentage points compared to 5.7 and 7.0 percentage points in 2020 and 2021 respectively. The difference was 10 percentage points and 9.2 percentage points in 2018 and 2019 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.

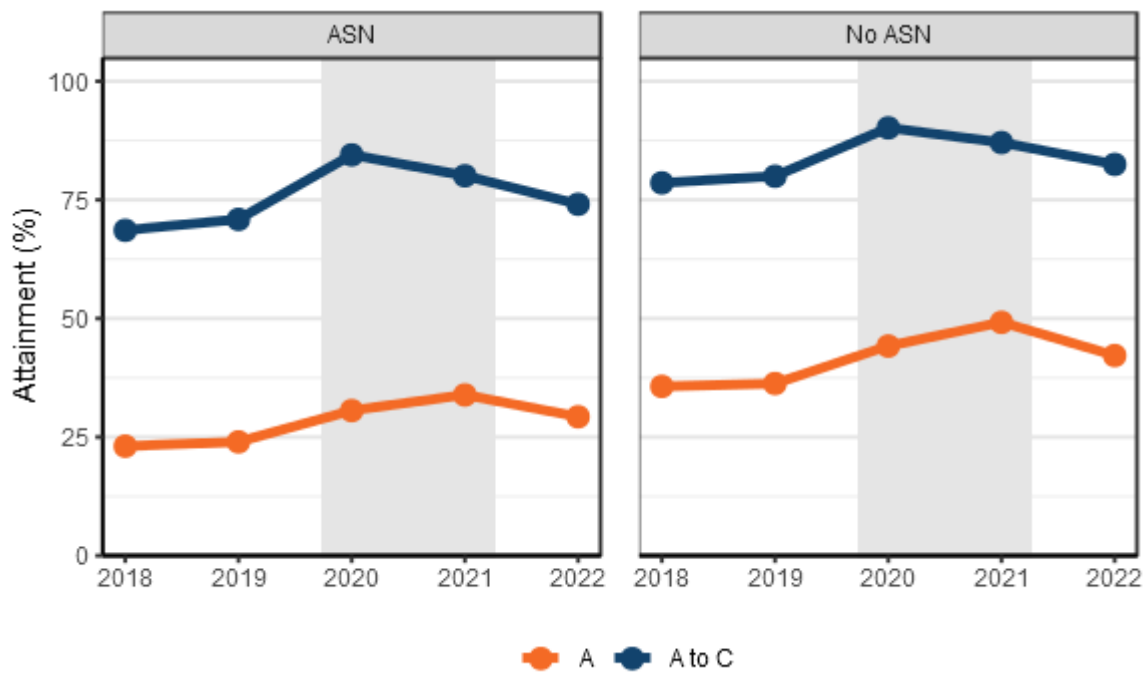


Figure 7: A and A to C Attainment by Additional Support Needs at National 5. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 17: National 5 grade distribution by Additional Support Needs from 2018 to 2021. Data used for 2018 to 2021 are from December when post-results processes including appeals are finished but 2022 uses results day data.

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
ASN	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	33.9%	22.8%	23.4%	11.1%	8.8%	80.1%
	2022	29.3%	23.6%	21.2%	14.6%	11.3%	74.1%
No ASN	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	49.2%	20.6%	17.3%	7.5%	5.4%	87.1%
	2022	42.2%	23.4%	16.9%	10.5%	7.0%	82.5%

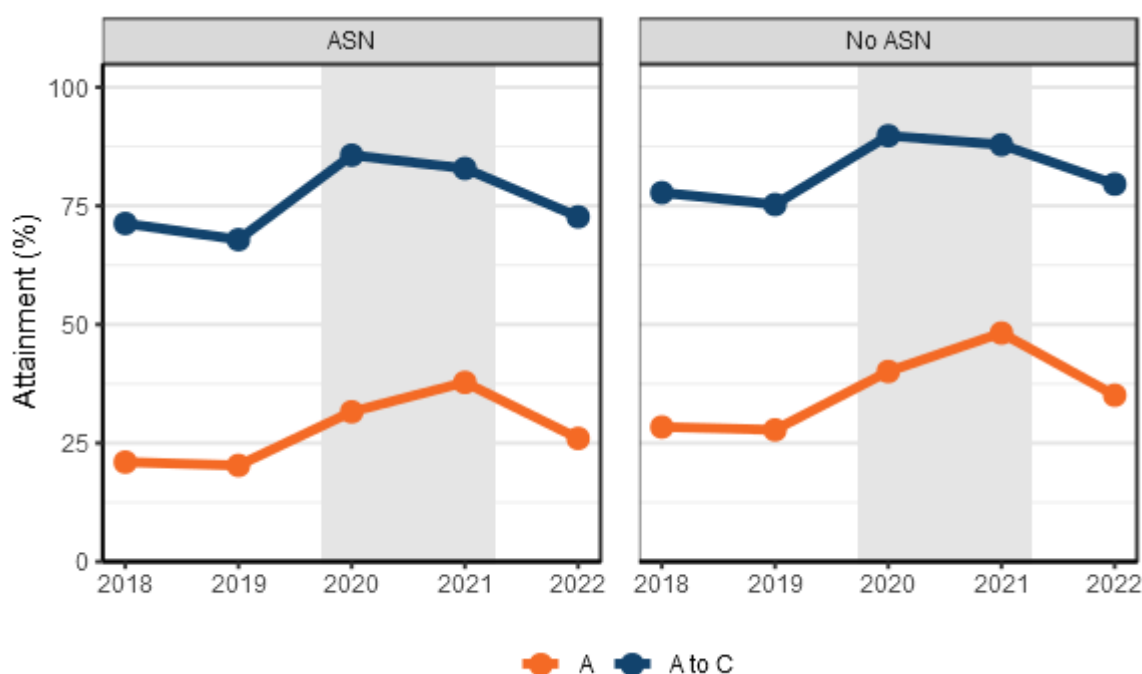


Figure 8: A and A to C Attainment by Additional Support Needs at Higher. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 18: Higher grade distribution by Additional Support Needs from 2018 to 2021. Data used for 2018 to 2021 are from December when post-results processes including appeals are finished but 2022 uses results day data.

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
ASN	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	37.8%	23.4%	21.8%	9.1%	8.0%	82.9%
	2022	26.0%	24.0%	22.7%	16.0%	11.2%	72.7%
No ASN	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	48.2%	22.6%	17.1%	6.8%	5.3%	87.9%
	2022	35.1%	24.7%	19.9%	12.2%	8.2%	79.6%

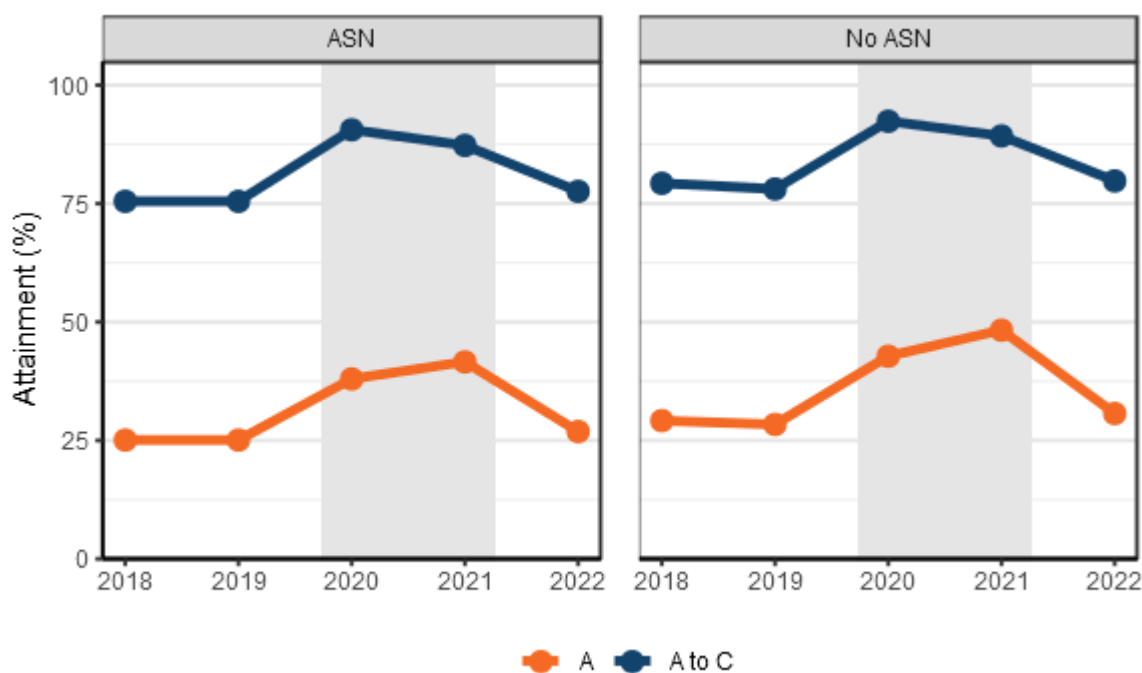


Figure 9: A and A to C Attainment by Additional Support Needs at Advanced Higher. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 19: Advanced Higher grade distribution by Additional Support Needs from 2018 to 2021. Data used for 2018 to 2021 are from December when post-results processes including appeals are finished but 2022 uses results day data.

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
ASN	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%	20.6%	7.1%	5.6%	87.3%
	2022	26.9%	25.8%	25.0%	14.2%	8.2%	77.6%
No ASN	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%
	2022	30.7%	26.6%	22.5%	13.0%	7.2%	79.8%

1.10 Attainment by declared/assessed disabled

As in previous years, the A to C rate is greater for those not declared/assessed disabled compared to those declared/assessed disabled for all levels (Figures 10 to 12; Tables 20 to 22). In 2022, this is also the case for the A rate at National 5 and Higher but at Advanced Higher the rate is about the same.

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.

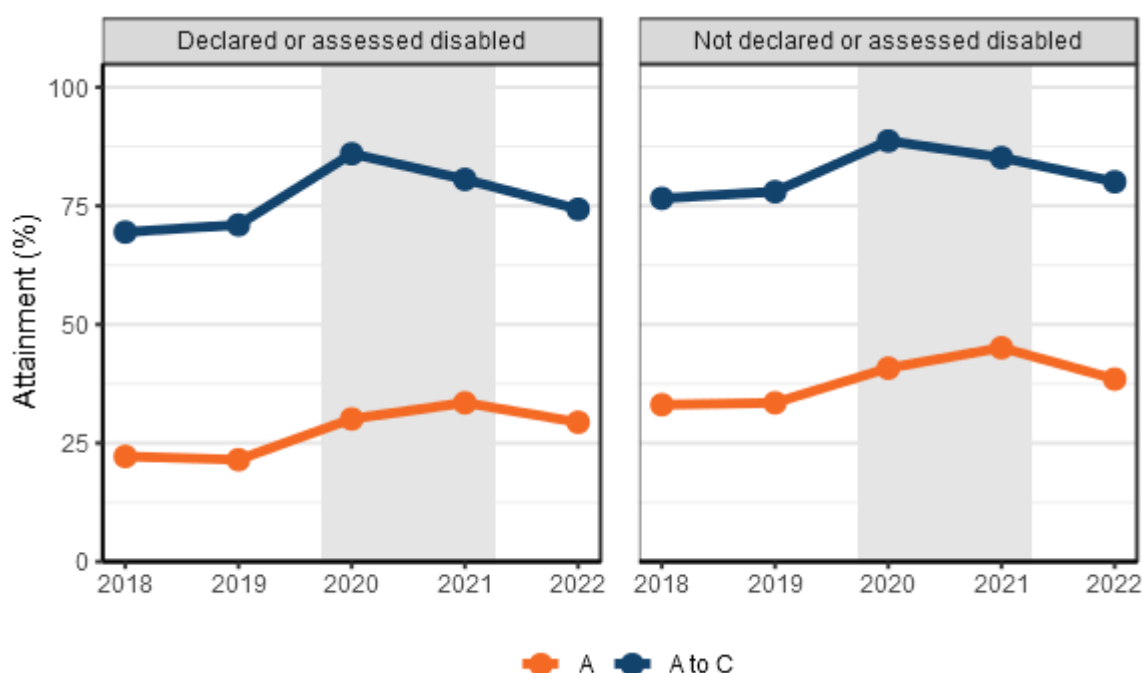


Figure 10: A and A to C Attainment by Declared/Assessed disabled at National 5. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 20: National 5 grade distribution by whether declared or assessed disabled from 2018 to 2021. Data used for 2018 to 2021 are from December when post-results processes including appeals are finished but 2022 uses results day data.

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
Not declared or assessed disabled	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	45.1%	21.1%	19.0%	8.5%	6.3%	85.2%
	2022	38.5%	23.5%	18.2%	11.6%	8.3%	80.1%
Declared or assessed disabled	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	33.5%	23.4%	23.8%	11.5%	8.0%	80.6%
	2022	29.4%	23.8%	21.0%	15.4%	10.3%	74.3%

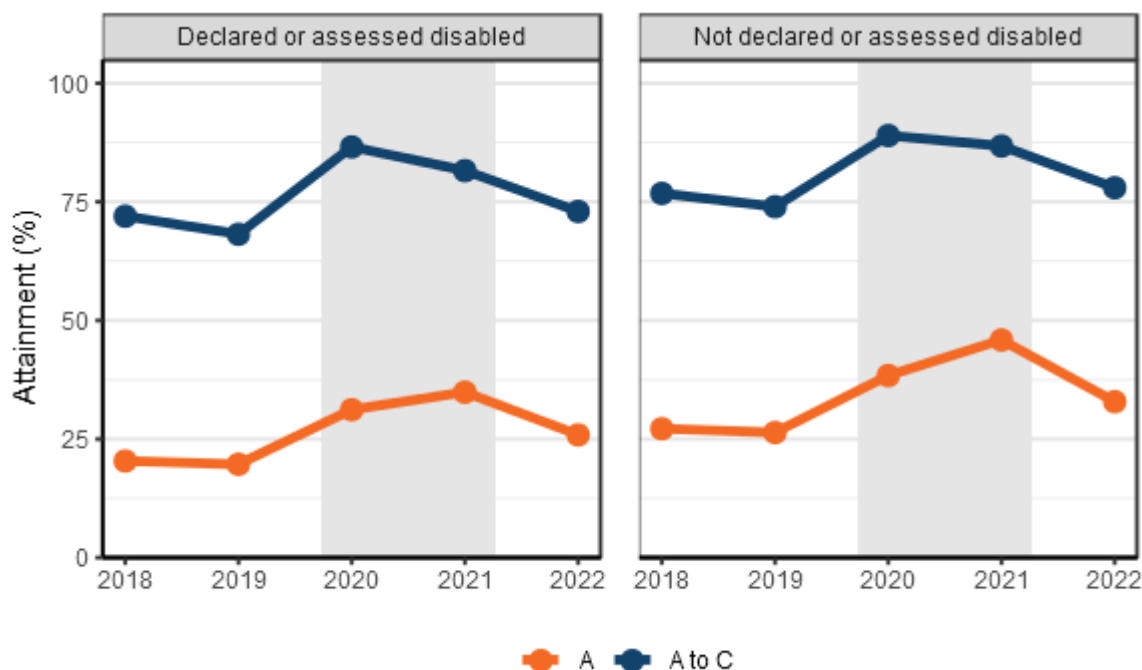


Figure 11: A and A to C Attainment by Declared/Assessed disabled at Higher. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 21: Higher grade distribution by whether declared or assessed disabled from 2018 to 2021. Data used for 2018 to 2021 are from December when post-results processes including appeals are finished but 2022 uses results day data.

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
Not declared or assessed disabled	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	45.9%	22.8%	18.1%	7.3%	5.9%	86.8%
	2022	32.9%	24.5%	20.5%	13.1%	8.9%	78.0%
Declared or assessed disabled	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	34.9%	24.7%	22.0%	10.6%	7.8%	81.6%
	2022	25.9%	24.1%	23.0%	16.6%	10.4%	73.0%

Due to the small numbers of disabled candidates taking Advanced Higher, the previous caveats should be borne in mind.

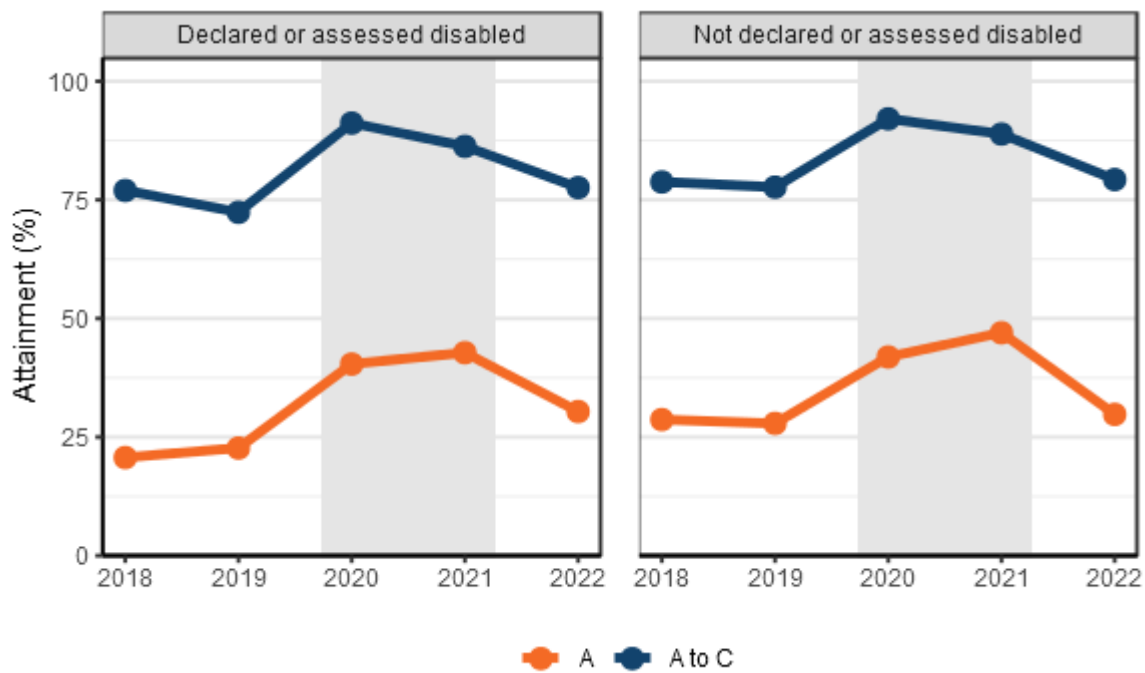


Figure 12: A and A to C Attainment by Declared/Assessed disabled at Advanced Higher.

The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 22: Advanced Higher grade distribution by whether declared or assessed disabled from 2018 to 2021. Data used for 2018 to 2021 are from December when post-results processes including appeals are finished but 2022 uses results day data.

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
Not declared or assessed disabled	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%
	2022	29.8%	26.4%	23.1%	13.3%	7.4%	79.3%
Declared or assessed disabled	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%
	2022	30.4%	24.8%	22.4%	16.1%	6.2%	77.6%

1.11 Attainment by urban/rural classification

Urban/rural grade breakdowns of attainment have historically been more variable over time and across levels than the other equalities categories in this appendix. In general, however, where one group had higher attainment than another historically, this remained the case in 2022 (Figures 13 to 15; Tables 23 to 25).

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.

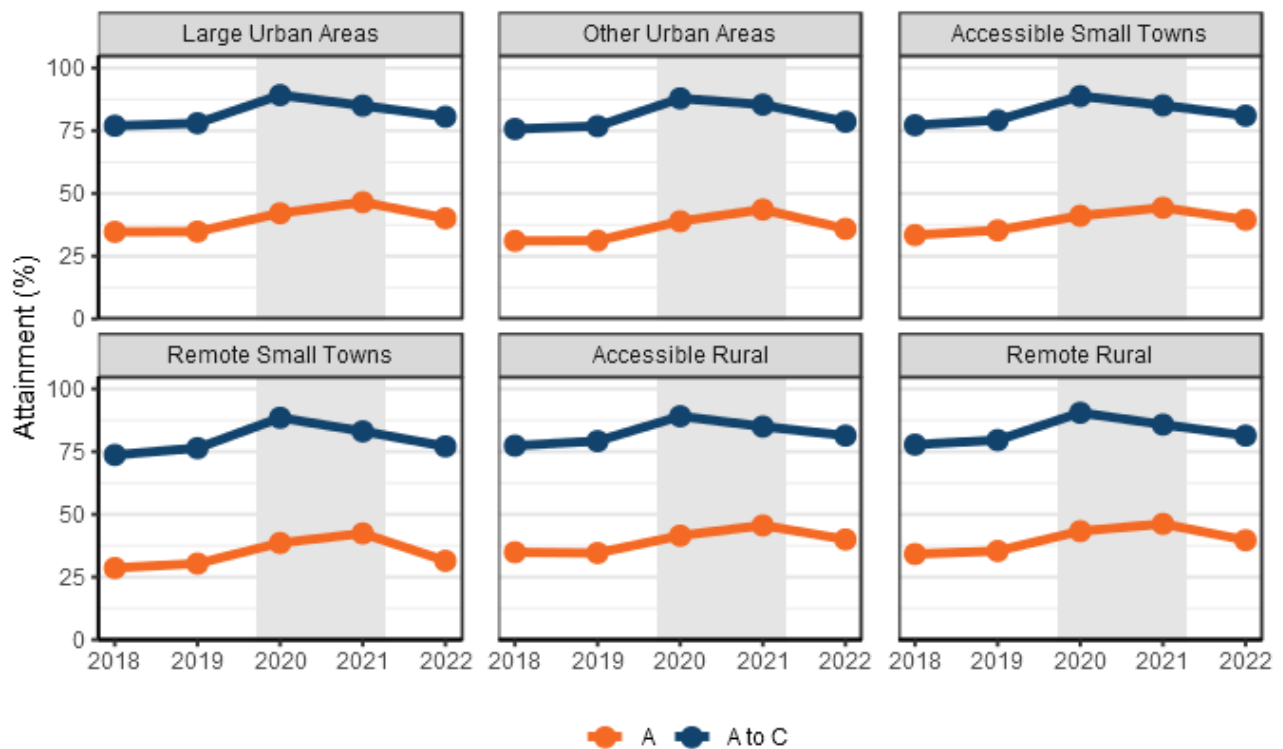


Figure 13: A and A to C Attainment by Urban/Rural at National 5. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 23: National 5 grade distribution by Urban/Rural candidates from 2018 to 2021. Data used for 2018 to 2021 are from December when post-results processes including appeals are finished but 2022 uses results day data.

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
Large Urban Areas	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	46.5%	20.4%	18.1%	8.1%	6.8%	85.0%
	2022	40.1%	23.0%	17.5%	11.1%	8.3%	80.6%
Other Urban Areas	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	43.6%	21.7%	20.2%	8.7%	5.9%	85.4%
	2022	35.9%	23.8%	18.9%	12.5%	8.8%	78.6%
Accessible Small Towns	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	44.3%	21.4%	19.5%	8.4%	6.5%	85.1%
	2022	39.5%	23.2%	18.2%	11.2%	7.8%	81.0%
Remote Small Towns	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	42.4%	21.7%	19.0%	10.4%	6.5%	83.1%
	2022	31.5%	24.8%	20.9%	14.3%	8.6%	77.1%
Accessible Rural	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	45.6%	21.0%	18.4%	8.4%	6.5%	85.0%
	2022	40.0%	23.5%	17.8%	11.1%	7.5%	81.4%
Remote Rural	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	46.2%	22.0%	17.6%	8.5%	5.8%	85.8%
	2022	39.7%	23.7%	18.0%	11.4%	7.2%	81.4%

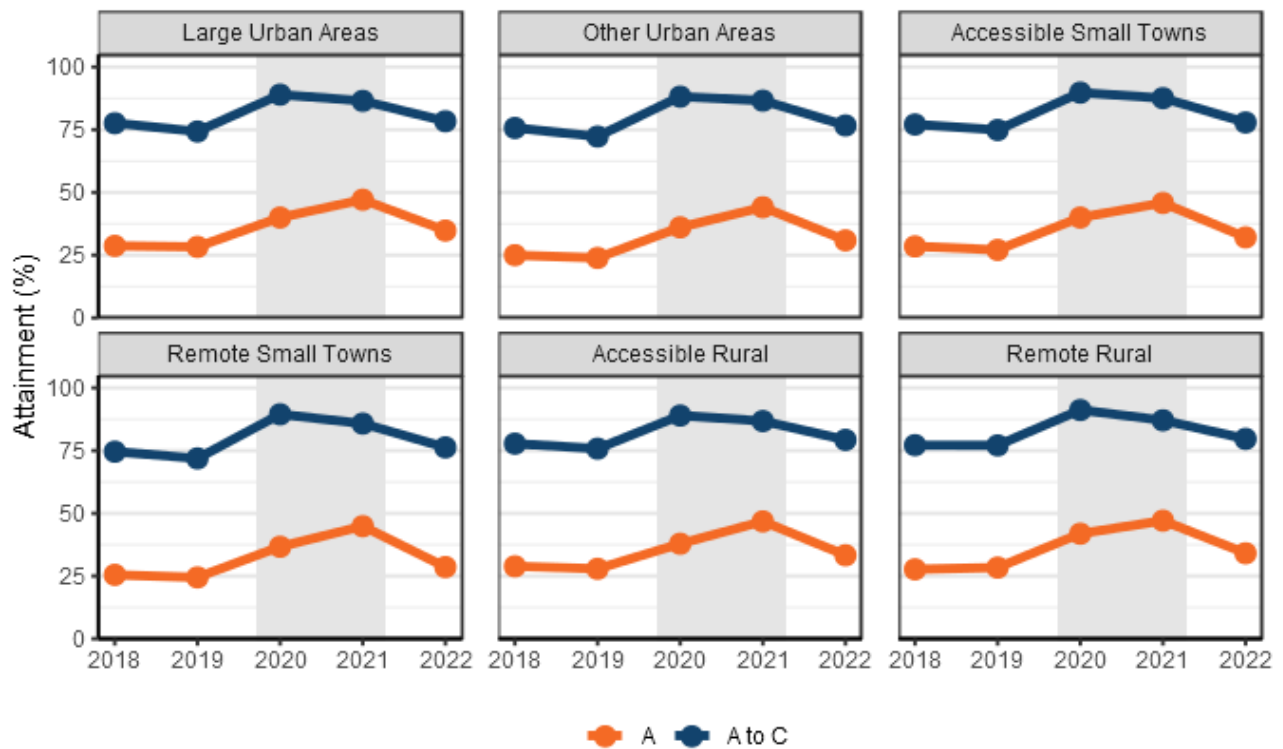


Figure 14: A and A to C Attainment by Urban/Rural at Higher. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 24: Higher grade distribution by Urban/Rural candidates from 2018 to 2021. Data used for 2018 to 2021 are from December when post-results processes including appeals are finished but 2022 uses results day data.

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
Large Urban Areas	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	47.1%	21.9%	17.5%	7.0%	6.5%	86.5%
	2022	34.8%	23.8%	19.8%	12.7%	8.9%	78.4%
Other Urban Areas	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	44.1%	23.4%	19.1%	7.6%	5.8%	86.6%
	2022	30.9%	24.6%	21.2%	13.7%	9.6%	76.7%
Accessible Small Towns	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	45.8%	23.5%	18.3%	7.0%	5.4%	87.6%
	2022	32.1%	25.6%	20.3%	13.6%	8.5%	77.9%
Remote Small Towns	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	44.9%	22.7%	18.3%	7.8%	6.3%	85.8%
	2022	28.6%	24.5%	23.2%	14.2%	9.5%	76.3%
Accessible Rural	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	46.8%	22.6%	17.4%	7.5%	5.7%	86.8%
	2022	33.3%	25.2%	20.8%	12.7%	7.9%	79.3%
Remote Rural	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	47.1%	22.5%	17.5%	7.4%	5.5%	87.1%
	2022	34.1%	25.3%	20.3%	12.6%	7.6%	79.7%

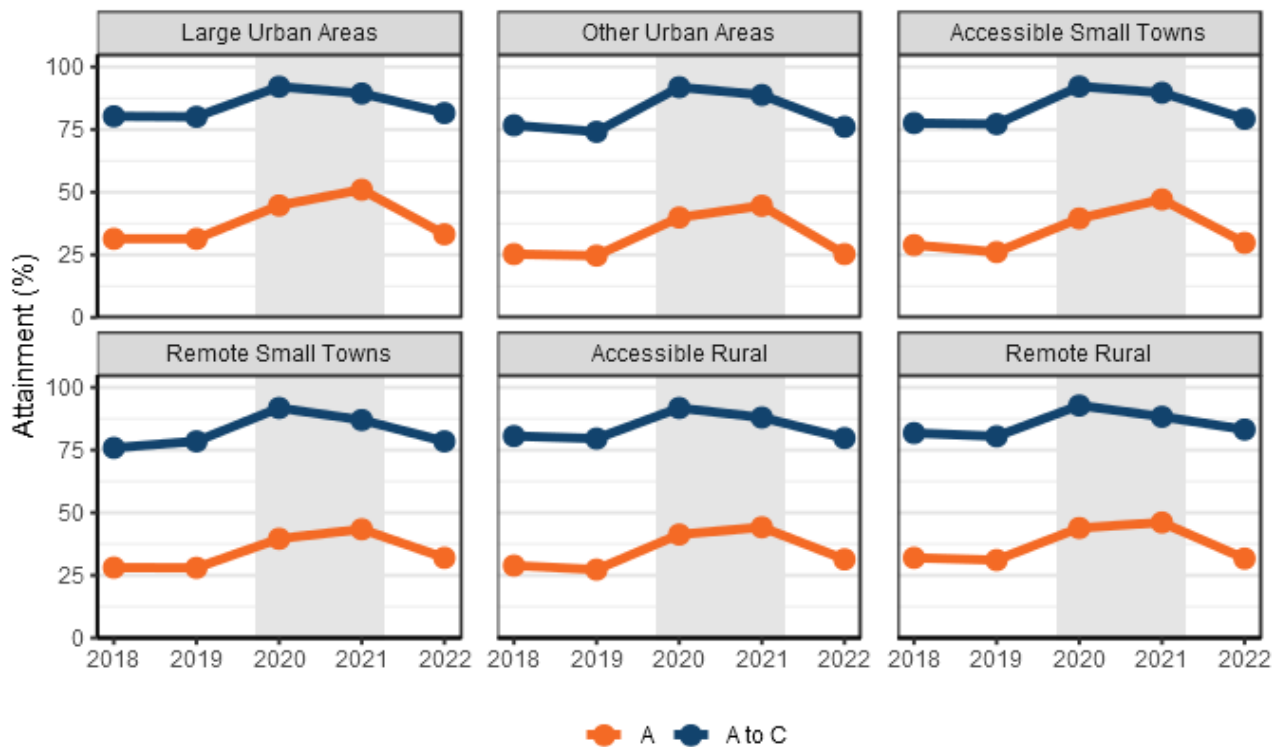


Figure 15: A and A to C Attainment by Urban/Rural at Advanced Higher. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 25: Advanced Higher grade distribution by Urban/Rural candidates from 2018 to 2021. Data used for 2018 to 2021 are from December when post-results processes including appeals are finished but 2022 uses results day data.

	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
Large Urban Areas	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%	5.5%	5.0%	89.4%
	2022	33.2%	26.8%	21.6%	12.3%	6.1%	81.6%
Other Urban Areas	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%
	2022	25.3%	26.4%	24.3%	15.2%	8.7%	76.1%
Accessible Small Towns	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%
	2022	29.8%	26.4%	23.1%	12.7%	8.0%	79.3%
Remote Small Towns	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%
	2022	32.0%	24.3%	22.2%	14.5%	7.0%	78.5%
Accessible Rural	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%
	2022	31.4%	25.1%	23.4%	12.6%	7.6%	79.8%
Remote Rural	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%	25.0%	17.2%	6.7%	5.0%	88.3%
	2022	31.7%	27.5%	24.0%	10.6%	6.2%	83.2%

1.12 Attainment by ethnicity

In general, where one group had higher attainment than another group historically, this remained the case in 2022. For example in 2022, as in several previous years, the A rate and A to C rate was greater for Asian-Chinese compared to other ethnicity groupings (Figures 16 to 18; Tables 26 to 28).

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.

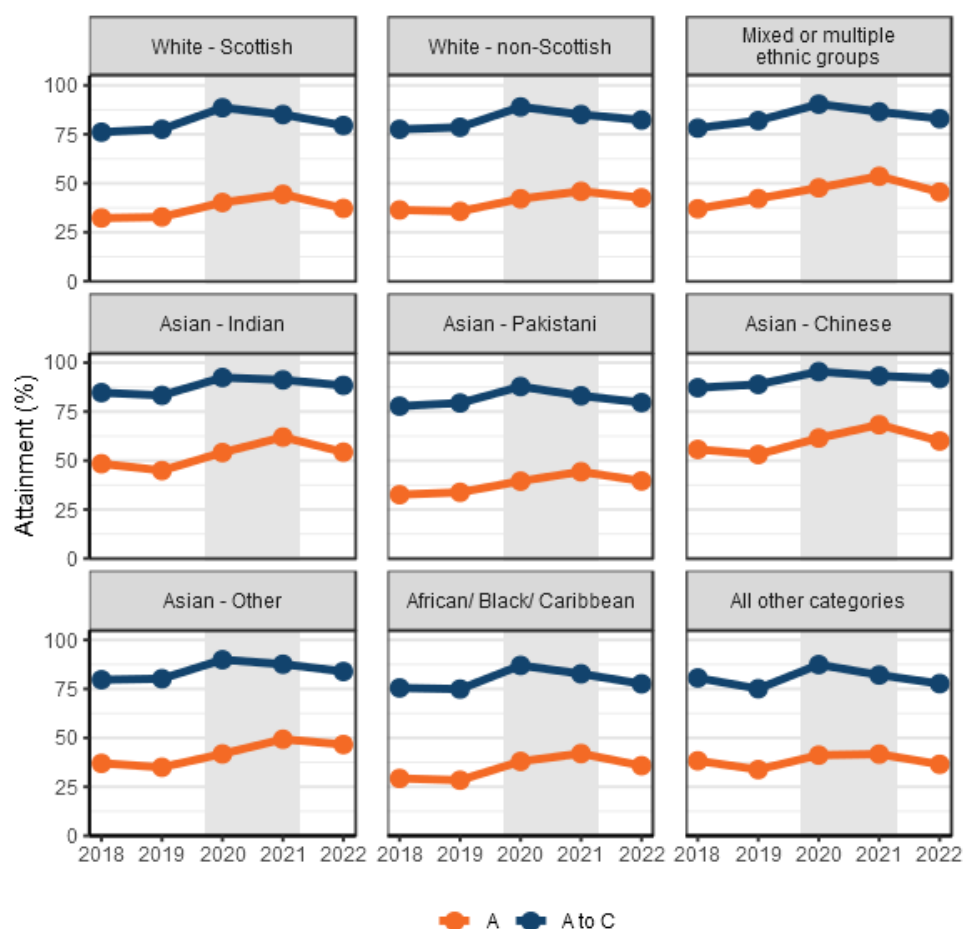


Figure 16: A and A to C Attainment by Ethnicity at National 5. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 26: National 5 grade distribution by ethnicity from 2018 to 2021. Data used for 2018 to 2021 are from December when post-results processes including appeals are finished but 2022 uses results day data.

Ethnicity	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
White - Scottish	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	44.4%	21.4%	19.3%	8.6%	6.3%	85.1%
	2022	37.2%	23.7%	18.6%	12.1%	8.4%	79.5%
White - non-Scottish	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	45.9%	20.9%	18.2%	8.5%	6.4%	85.1%
	2022	42.6%	22.9%	16.9%	10.2%	7.4%	82.3%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	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	53.6%	18.5%	14.4%	7.8%	5.7%	86.5%
	2022	45.5%	22.3%	15.2%	9.1%	8.0%	83.0%
Asian - Indian	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	62.0%	17.6%	11.6%	5.1%	3.7%	91.2%
	2022	54.3%	20.6%	13.5%	7.1%	4.5%	88.4%
Asian - Pakistani	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	44.3%	19.7%	19.1%	9.4%	7.6%	83.1%
	2022	39.6%	22.7%	17.2%	11.5%	8.9%	79.6%
Asian - Chinese	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	68.3%	14.8%	10.1%	4.2%	2.5%	93.2%
	2022	60.0%	20.5%	11.5%	5.0%	3.0%	91.9%
Asian - Other	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	49.3%	21.2%	17.0%	7.3%	5.1%	87.6%
	2022	46.6%	21.3%	16.0%	9.5%	6.5%	83.9%

Table 26: National 5 grade distribution by ethnicity from 2018 to 2021 - continued

African/ Black/ Caribbean	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%
	2021	42.0%	21.4%	19.2%	9.2%	8.2%	82.7%
	2022	35.8%	23.4%	18.4%	12.4%	9.9%	77.6%
All other categories	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%
	2021	41.7%	19.6%	20.7%	9.0%	8.9%	82.1%
	2022	36.5%	23.0%	18.2%	12.3%	10.0%	77.7%
Not Disclosed/Not known	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	40.8%	22.6%	20.9%	9.1%	6.7%	84.3%
	2022	35.3%	23.3%	20.7%	11.9%	8.9%	79.2%

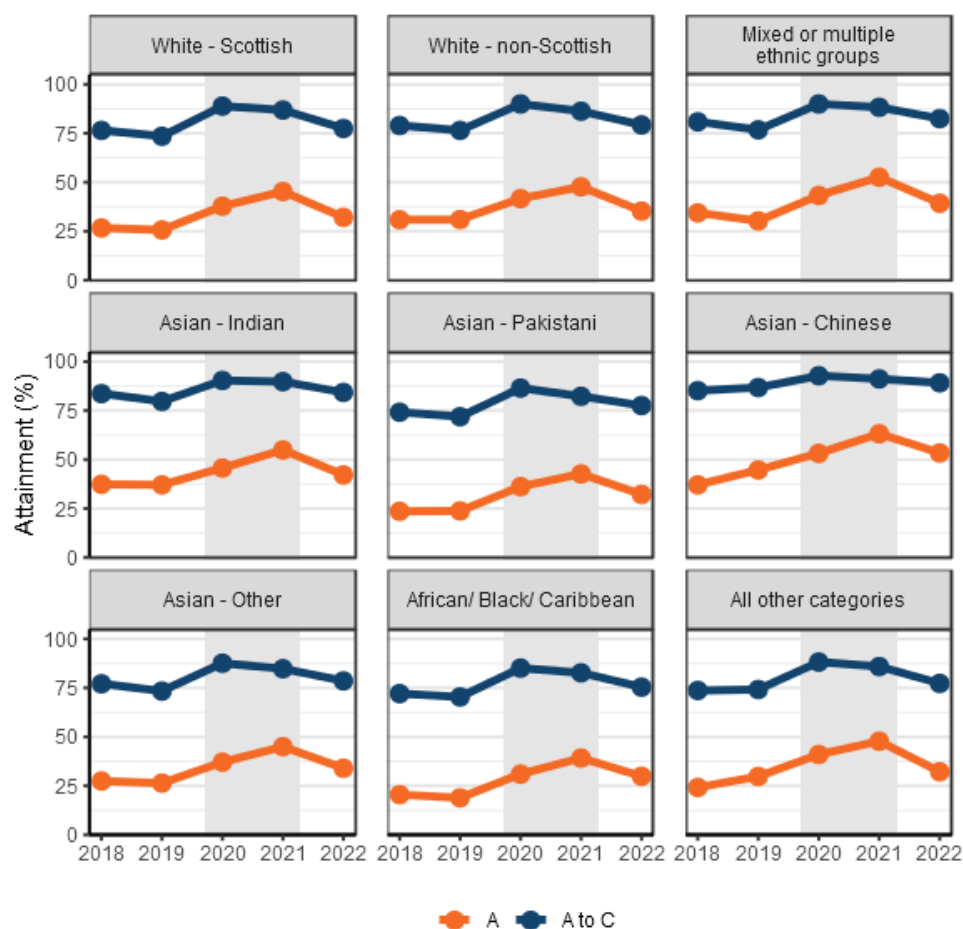


Figure 17: A and A to C Attainment by Ethnicity at Higher. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 27: Higher grade distribution by ethnicity from 2018 to 2021. Data used for 2018 to 2021 are from December when post-results processes including appeals are finished but 2022 uses results day data.

Ethnicity	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
White - Scottish	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	45.3%	23.1%	18.5%	7.3%	5.7%	86.9%
	2022	32.1%	24.6%	20.8%	13.4%	9.1%	77.5%
White - non-Scottish	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	47.7%	21.7%	16.8%	7.1%	6.6%	86.3%
	2022	35.3%	24.6%	19.4%	12.3%	8.4%	79.3%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	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	52.6%	19.7%	16.0%	6.2%	5.5%	88.3%
	2022	39.3%	25.3%	18.0%	10.5%	7.0%	82.5%
Asian - Indian	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	54.9%	20.4%	14.5%	5.0%	5.1%	89.8%
	2022	42.2%	24.1%	17.9%	9.7%	6.1%	84.3%
Asian - Pakistani	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	42.7%	22.0%	17.5%	8.2%	9.5%	82.3%
	2022	32.2%	24.1%	21.4%	13.2%	9.2%	77.6%
Asian - Chinese	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	63.2%	18.0%	10.0%	5.5%	3.3%	91.2%
	2022	53.4%	21.3%	14.6%	6.4%	4.4%	89.2%
Asian - Other	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	45.0%	20.8%	19.0%	7.8%	7.4%	84.8%
	2022	34.0%	23.5%	21.0%	12.6%	8.8%	78.6%

Table 27: Higher grade distribution by ethnicity from 2018 to 2021 - continued

African/ Black/ Caribbean	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%
	2021	39.2%	23.9%	19.6%	9.4%	7.9%	82.7%
	2022	29.9%	24.5%	21.0%	14.6%	10.0%	75.4%
All other categories	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	47.8%	22.8%	15.3%	7.1%	7.0%	85.9%
	2022	32.2%	24.3%	20.8%	11.7%	10.9%	77.3%
Not Disclosed/Not known	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	44.4%	21.6%	20.5%	7.3%	6.2%	86.5%
	2022	33.3%	23.8%	20.0%	13.8%	9.1%	77.0%

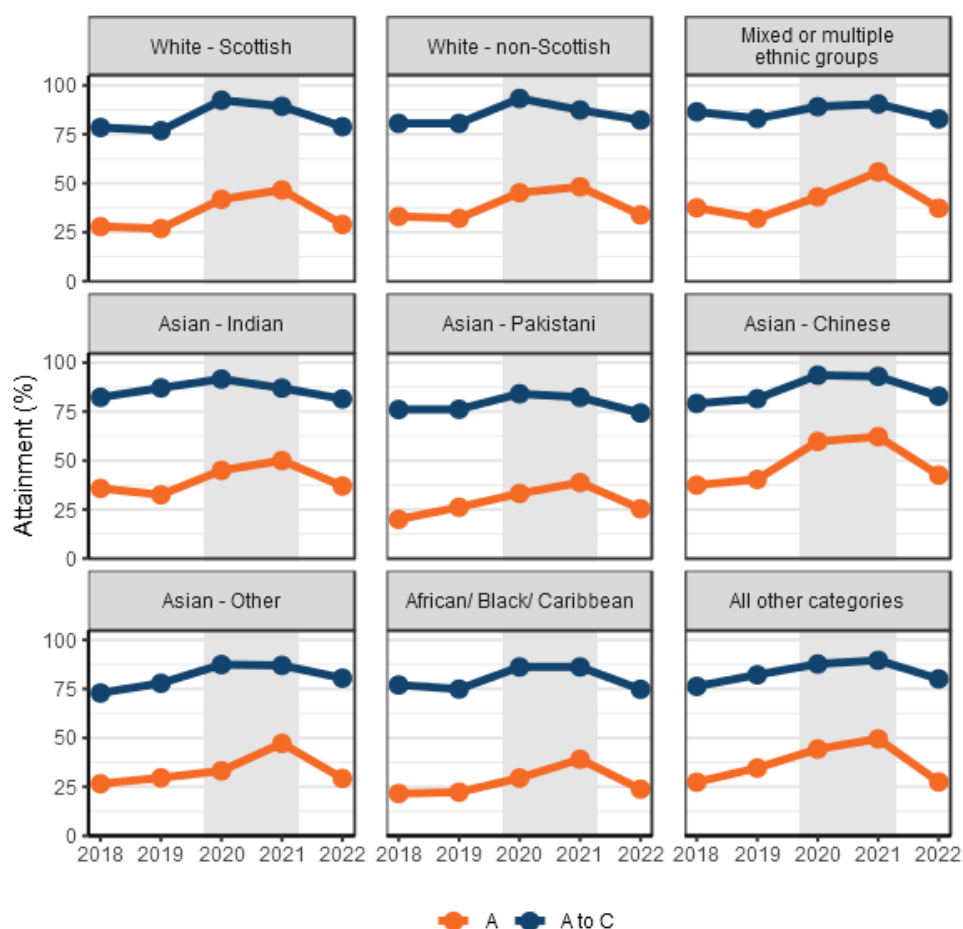


Figure 18: A and A to C Attainment by Ethnicity at Advanced Higher. The period represented by the grey background shading indicates that alternative approaches to assessment, relying on teacher judgement, were used to award grades and allow candidates to progress. A package of measures (including course modifications and revision support) supported a return to formal national exams in 2022.

Table 28: Advanced Higher grade distribution by ethnicity from 2018 to 2021. Data used for 2018 to 2021 are from December when post-results processes including appeals are finished but 2022 uses results day data.

Ethnicity	Year	A	B	C	D	N	A to C
White - Scottish	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%	24.8%	17.9%	6.0%	4.7%	89.3%
	2022	29.0%	26.3%	23.6%	13.6%	7.6%	78.9%
White - non-Scottish	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	48.1%	22.9%	16.4%	7.4%	5.2%	87.4%
	2022	33.9%	27.5%	20.8%	11.8%	5.9%	82.3%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	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	56.1%	20.0%	14.5%	5.5%	3.9%	90.5%
	2022	37.3%	23.5%	22.1%	11.0%	6.1%	82.9%
Asian - Indian	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%
	2022	37.0%	24.1%	20.5%	9.9%	8.6%	81.5%
Asian - Pakistani	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%
	2022	25.4%	25.5%	23.4%	16.3%	9.3%	74.3%
Asian - Chinese	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%
	2022	42.6%	25.8%	14.6%	10.1%	7.0%	82.9%
Asian - Other	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%	21.2%	18.6%	7.8%	5.2%	87.0%
	2022	29.3%	27.3%	23.9%	10.1%	9.4%	80.5%

Table 28: Advanced Higher grade distribution by ethnicity from 2018 to 2021 - continued

African/ Black/ Caribbean	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%
	2021	39.1%	31.0%	16.1%	7.7%	6.1%	86.2%
	2022	23.8%	26.6%	24.4%	19.0%	6.2%	74.8%
All other categories	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%
	2022	27.5%	26.8%	25.8%	11.5%	8.4%	80.1%
Not Disclosed/Not known	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	49.0%	26.1%	16.1%	5.4%	3.4%	91.2%
	2022	25.6%	28.9%	21.5%	16.1%	7.9%	76.0%