Qualifications in Wales: a User guide on Welsh Government performance information
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Version control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Purpose/Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

Qualifications in Wales (QiW) is a database owned and managed by Qualifications Wales, the regulator of non-degree qualifications and the qualifications system in Wales. QiW contains details of all qualifications that are approved or designated for teaching in Wales for learners aged under 19, excluding higher education. Any qualifications that are approved or designated by Qualifications Wales will be eligible for funding by a Local Authority or by Welsh Government. Note that this funding is for the education provider, not the learner. The information held in QiW includes:

- qualification titles
- qualification numbers
- the Awarding Body that awards each qualification
- qualification start and end dates
- links to further qualification information
- Welsh Government information including whether it counts as a choice for 14-19 Learning Pathways, and performance measures information

This user guide will provide a brief overview on the functionality available on QiW, and how to search for a qualification based on desired criteria. It will show how Welsh Government updates performance information on their performance and curriculum information page. A FAQs section will provide answers to common queries relating to Welsh Government information. Please note that the Welsh Government sets policy on school performance measurement and decides on the allocation of contribution values of qualifications, performance points and the discount codes applied to individual qualifications. QiW hosts this information. If you have any queries on how qualifications contribute towards performance measures, including GCSE/A level equivalency values, performance points or discount codes, please contact ims@gov.wales.
Searching for a qualification

The QiW database enables the searching and viewing of qualifications, comparing qualification information and exporting qualification data using the export buttons on the home page. Below are a few examples of how you can search for a qualification based on certain criteria.

Searching by age approval

Searching QiW by the age range of a qualification allows you to see all of the qualifications that are approved for pre-16/post-16 delivery, and hence those that will count in Key Stage 4/Post-16 performance information. A qualification must have pre-16 (denoted “-16”) age range approval for Key Stage 4 measures, and pre-16 or 16-18 age approval for Post-16 measures. These can be selected in the search screen as can be seen below.

Without pre-16 approval / designation, a qualification will have no Key Stage 4 performance information, and hence will not be included in the Key Stage 4 summer results.
### Searching by qualification type

You can also search by the type of qualification on QiW in order to look at, for example, only GCSEs. To do this, select the qualification type on the drop down list as can be seen below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OW Approval/Designation no.</th>
<th>Enter the OW Approval/Designation no.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OQaulification type</td>
<td>Qualification title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification level</td>
<td>Qualification sub-level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awarding Body</td>
<td>Language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where caps are being applied to the GCSE equivalence volume of qualifications in threshold measures from 2017, the distinction is in the qualification type, i.e. whether it is a GCSE/A level or not. Therefore, to find qualifications that are not subject to the cap, you can filter by GCSEs, (9-1) GCSEs, AS levels and A levels only. All other qualification types will be subject to the cap. A 40% cap on non-GCSE field is also displayed on the performance information page of each qualification.

### Status of a qualification

There are four statuses that a qualification can have:

- **On Approval**
- **On Designation**
- **Not Ready**
- **Withdrawn**
**Coming soon** – Qualifications with this status are not yet ready for delivery in Wales, and no performance information has been applied to them. Once the start date of the qualification has been reached, performance information will be generated and its status will change to ‘Available to learners’.

**Available to learners** – if a qualification has this status, it means that performance information has been applied and it is within its certification end date and operational end date. New learners can enrol onto this course.

**No longer available to new learners** – this means that the qualification has exceeded its operational end date, and so new learners are no longer able to enrol onto the course. This is still within its certification end date, and so will have performance information attached to it.

**No longer available** – if a qualification is listed as no longer available, it means that the certification end date has now passed.

**Exporting a qualification**

In order to obtain a list of all qualifications on the QiW database, you can select the ‘Complete Export in English/Welsh’ button, which will download an Excel file containing all qualifications. These files are updated every time a qualification status changes in QiW to ensure that when a user downloads it, it is completely accurate. This export includes archived qualifications that are listed as ‘No longer available to learners’ and so they have passed their certification end date, as well as qualifications that are ‘Coming Soon’ and so currently have no performance information.
If you only want to export current qualifications, then you can select the ‘Export in English/Welsh’ or ‘Export with grades in English/Welsh’ buttons. These exports only include qualifications with ‘Coming Soon’, ‘Available to learners’ and ‘No longer available to new learners’ statuses. The ‘Export with grades in English/Welsh’ selection includes performance information for each grade within the qualification, such as level thresholds, performance points and whether it can be included in a subject specific part of the capped points score or not.

Note that you can also export your search results on QiW. This is achieved by selecting ‘Export to CSV’ button on the right hand side of the screen once you have filtered your results.
Changes to performance information on QiW

The performance information for a reporting year will remain unchanged from 31\textsuperscript{st} August of the previous year, starting from 2018. For example, this means that the performance information for 2018 will be ‘frozen’ on 31\textsuperscript{st} August 2017. The only exception to this will be a manual change applied by Welsh Government when performance information has generated in error. For more information on how Welsh Government calculates performance information based on the qualification details provided by Qualifications Wales, please see the logic document on the Welsh Government website.

Welsh Government also holds an audit log provided by Qualifications Wales that shows all the changes applied to a qualification since its availability on QiW. This can be used to track a qualification over time, and see if and when a change to the qualification has meant a change in its performance information.
FAQs

How do I check that a qualification will count in performance measures?

Step 1: In the first instance, please consult QiW. All qualifications approved/designated for delivery in Wales appear on QiW and will contribute towards performance measures subject to the same conditions. Consult the specified ‘Performance Measures Information’ for a listed qualification in QiW to see how it currently counts towards measures. If you are unable to find an entry for the qualification you are looking for then you may wish to enquire with Qualifications Wales (see Step 4) or with the awarding organisation directly.

Step 2: Check that the qualification meets the following criteria:
- **Appropriate age range**: the qualification should have pre-16 age range approval for Key Stage 4 measures, and pre-16 or 16-18 age approval for Post-16 measures.
- **Reporting year for the pupil cohort in question is before certification end date**: a qualification is included in Welsh Government performance information for a reporting year if the certification end date of the qualification is on or after 1st September of that academic year. For example, a qualification is included in performance information for 2018 if the certification end date of the qualification is on or after 1st September 2017.

Step 3: Consider:
- Discounting rules - please check discount codes on QiW and check if qualifications will discount against each other and will therefore not all count towards the measures if awarded to an individual pupil. You can also check qualifications that have multiple discount codes on our website.
- Changes being applied to performance measures in 2017 & 2018 - please check our communications with the sector about how changes are being introduced to the way in which performance measures are calculated and how qualifications can contribute towards them here.

Step 4: Please note that decisions on the approval/designation of qualifications for delivery in Wales are the responsibility of the regulatory body, Qualifications Wales. As such, any queries about the continued approval/designation of a qualification should be sent directly to them.
What qualifications are counted in the cap on non-GCSEs to Level 1 and Level 2 thresholds?

Where caps are being applied to the GCSE equivalence volume of qualifications in threshold measures from 2017, the distinction is in the qualification type, i.e. whether it is a GCSE or not. Therefore:

- Vocational GCSEs will be counted as GCSEs
- Non-GCSEs that are classed as general qualifications will be subject to the cap on non-GCSEs that can contribute
- As non-GCSEs, the Skills Challenge Certificate qualifications will be subject to the cap on non-GCSEs that can contribute.

This clarification can now be found on the Welsh Government Performance Information page on QiW, where a new field is available: ‘Is this subject to the 40% limit on non-GCSEs?’.

Which qualification types count in Key Stage 4 performance measures?

We are frequently asked about how the following types of qualifications contribute towards Key Stage 4 performance measures:

**Entry level qualifications:** These are below Level 1 qualifications on the Credit and Qualifications framework for Wales (CQfW). They will not count towards the Level 1 threshold (Welsh Baccalaureate (Foundation) from 2018) or the Level 2 threshold measures (Welsh Baccalaureate (National) from 2018). They can contribute towards the Capped Points Score measure.

**Level 3 qualifications:** Level 3 qualifications can count towards Key Stage 4 measures provided they are approved/designated for delivery to pre-16 learners.

**Qualifications with a partial GCSE equivalence:** Qualifications that are equivalent to less than 1 GCSE in size can still contribute towards both the Capped Points Score and threshold measures (Level 2 inclusive, Level 2 and Level 1), and a combination can be totalled to achieve the desired overall volume. The WJEC has confirmed such qualifications cannot contribute towards the award of the Welsh Baccalaureate qualifications (WBQs). More information on the award criteria for the WBQs can be found at Qualifications Wales and within the WJEC’s WBQs specifications.

**Key Skills/Essential Skills Wales qualifications:** The regulatory body, Qualifications Wales, has deemed the qualifications as suitable for pre-16
learners and as such they are approved qualifications. However as per the recommendations arising from the Review of Qualifications, note these qualifications will still not count in performance measures.

**What is the difference between the performance information tables for 2016 and 2017 reporting years?**

For 2016, a qualification’s contributions to each of the level thresholds are represented as percentages. For example, the qualification below has a 40% contribution towards the Level 1 and Level 2 threshold for each grade, but no Level 3 contribution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
<th>Performance points</th>
<th>L1 threshold</th>
<th>L2 threshold</th>
<th>L3 threshold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinction*</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For 2017 and beyond, the contributions are now represented as GCSE/A level equivalence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
<th>Key Stage 4 Measures</th>
<th>Post-16 Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level 1 Threshold</td>
<td>Level 2 Threshold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinction*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This means that in this case, the qualification is worth two GCSEs in the Level 1 and 2 thresholds, but has no A level equivalence for the Level 3 threshold.

**What is the difference between the pre-16/post-16 choice field and the age range fields?**

On the Welsh Government performance information page, in the curriculum section, there are pre-16 and post-16 choice fields. These are the curriculum fields, which show whether the qualification is classed as a choice or not for pre-16 learners in terms of meeting the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009. To look at the age approval of a qualification, you need to instead look at the age group that the qualification has been approved/designated for delivery. Thus, for inclusion in performance measures the ‘age range’ field in QiW must be checked. The pre-16 and post-16 choice fields cannot be used to determine if a qualification will be included in school performance measures.