



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

School performance measurement in Wales: contribution values of qualifications

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
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Glossary of terms

Size/Volume - the size or volume of a qualification is based on the average length of time taken to teach the qualification, which is specified as a guided learning hours (GLH) value, and the level at which it is positioned on the Credit and Qualifications framework in Wales (CQFW).

Performance points - attributed to a qualification on the basis of its size, the level at which it is positioned on the CQFW and the grade that was achieved. Guided Learning Hours - the expected number of hours it would take for learners to undertake the learning required for certificate in the qualification.

Qualification Level - this shows the level of attainment that a qualification represents. Level 1 = grades D-G at GCSE or equivalent, Level 2 = grades A*-C at GCSE or equivalent, Level 3 = A level or equivalent.

Base points - used in order to calculate the performance points. Performance points = GCSE size equivalence x base points for Key Stage 4 measures and A Level size equivalence x base points for Post-16 measures.

Level 1 threshold - a volume of qualifications at Level 1 equivalent to the volume of five GCSEs at grade A*-G.

Level 2 threshold - a volume of qualifications at Level 2 equivalent to the volume of five GCSEs at grade A*-C.

Level 2 inclusive threshold – achieving the Level 2 threshold, including a grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and Mathematics.

Capped 9 measure - a school average of the total points attached to the top nine GCSEs, or equivalent volume of qualifications, for each learner in the cohort, including subject specific requirements in English/Welsh language, Mathematics and Science.

Level 3 threshold - a volume of qualifications at Level 3 equivalent to the volume of two A levels at grade A*-E.

Version control

Version	Date	Purpose/Change
1		

Introduction

School performance at Key Stage 4 and Post-16 in Wales is measured on the basis of external qualifications that are awarded to their learners. Contribution values of these qualifications are expressed in terms of both GCSE/GCE A Level equivalence and performance points in order to allow attainment of qualifications of different sizes and grading structures to be compared at the different levels of the Credit and Qualifications framework in Wales (CQFW). The CQFW level of the qualification along with the grade achieved represents the *challenge* of a qualification. Note that the level at which a qualification sits in the CQFW will, in part, determine whether it will contribute towards the school performance measures in Wales. Further information on this can be found on the [Welsh Government website](#).

The contribution values of these qualifications subsequently feed into the calculation of performance measures.

Attaching contribution values to external qualifications is designed to support the school performance reporting system and is not intended or designed to represent an individual learner's achievements.

This document sets out the logic underpinning the calculation of contribution values for qualifications approved or designated for delivery to learners in Wales by the regulatory body, Qualifications Wales from 2017 onwards. These qualifications can be found on the [QiW](#) website. Further information on the school performance measures and definitions in Wales can be found later in this document.

Note that the tables in the document are only used to calculate performance points and GCSE/GCE A level equivalence for schools in Wales, and thus cannot be used in other parts in the UK.

Eligibility

Qualifications are eligible for attribution of contribution values when they are regulated by Qualifications Wales and approved or designated under Section 96 for funding for the relevant age range in Wales. If a qualification is regulated and approved/designated, it will be given a unique qualification number and will hold an entry in the Qualifications in Wales (QiW) database. A qualification will only be counted in performance measurement calculations in accordance with the contribution values specified for that awarding year if the certification end date for the award has not yet passed.

The Welsh Government reserves the right to amend contribution values of qualifications without prior notice in the interests of maintaining the accuracy and quality of the school performance measurement system.

Section 1: Calculating school performance measures

Calculating contribution values summary

Contribution values of a qualification are expressed in two ways:

- 1. its 'size' or 'volume', in terms of equivalence to a GCSE or GCE A Level:**

The size or volume of a qualification is based on the average length of time taken to teach the qualification, which is specified as a guided learning hours (GLH) value, and the level at which it is positioned in the CQFW (*Table 1*); and

- 2. its performance points:**

Performance points are attributed to a qualification on the basis of its size, the level at which it is positioned on the CQFW and the grade that was achieved.

For Key Stage 4 performance measures:

Performance points = GCSE size equivalence (*Table 1*) x base points (*Tables 2a-c*)

For Post-16 performance measures:

Performance points = GCE A level size equivalence (*Table 1*) x base points (*Tables 2a-c*)

GCSE/GCE A level equivalence table

Table 1 - GCSE/GCE A level equivalence

Size band	GLH		GCSE size equivalence for Key Stage 4 measures		GCE A level size equivalence for Post-16 measures
	Minimum	Maximum	Entry level, level 1 or level 2 qualifications	Level 3 qualifications	
A	1	44	0.25	0.4	0.1
B1	45	59	0.25	0.8	0.2
B2	60	89	0.5	0.8	0.2
C1	90	119	0.5	1.2	0.3
C2	120	144	1	1.2	0.3
D	145	234	2	2	0.5
E	235	324	2	3	0.75
F	325	414	2	4	1
G	415	504	2	5	1.25
H	505	594	2	6	1.5
I	595	684	2	7	1.75
J	685	774	2	8	2
K	775	864	2	9	2.25
L	865	954	2	10	2.5
M	955	1044	2	11	2.75
N	1045	1134	2	12	3
O	1135	1224	2	13	3.25
P	1225	-	N/A	14	3.5

For example, Table 1 shows that a qualification of 100 GLH at Level 3 would be equivalent to 0.3 of an A level, or 1.2 of a GCSE. A similarly sized qualification at Level 1 or Level 2 would be equivalent to 0.5 of a GCSE. As per the recommendations of the Review of Qualifications, no single Level 1 / 2 or Entry Level qualification at KS4 can be worth more than the equivalent of two GCSEs.

Notional GLH values

In some scenarios, the GLH stated on [QiW](#) (the Qualifications Wales database of qualifications) is not the GLH used as the basis for the size equivalence in calculating a contribution value. In these cases a *notional GLH value* is taken, irrespective of its stated GLH:

- A full GCSE is always 120 GLH (a short course is 60 and a double award is 240);
- A full GCE A Level is always 360 GLH (an AS is 180 and a double award is 720).

Base points tables

After determining the size of the qualification using Table 1, the base points should then be found in order to calculate the performance points. Tables 2a-d set out the base points for different grading structures and levels. Note that some qualifications do not follow this structure – more information about these qualifications can be found in the Exceptions section.

Table 2a - Entry level qualifications

Although Entry level qualifications can be split into different Entry levels, they have a very simple pass only grade structure as can be seen from the table below.

Entry level	Entry 1	Entry 2	Entry 3
Pass	10	12	14

Table 2b – Level 1 and 2 qualifications

Level 1 grade structure	Example grade	Base Points	Level 2 grade structure	Example grade	Base Points
Pass only general	Pass	25	Pass only general	Pass	46
Pass only NVQ	Pass	28	Pass only NVQ	Pass	49
2 grade scheme	Pass	22	2 grade scheme	Pass	43
	Credit	31		Credit	52
3 grade scheme	Pass	19	3 grade scheme	Pass	40
	Merit	28		Merit	49
	Distinction	34		Distinction	55
4 grade scheme	G	16	4 grade scheme	C	40
	F	22		B	46
	E	28		A	52
	D	34		A*	58
5 grade scheme	E	16	5 grade scheme	E	40
	D	20.5		D	43
	C	25		C	46
	B	29.5		B	49
	A	34		A	52

Note here that GCSE qualifications can be both Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications:

- Grades D/E/F/G are at Level 1, which makes for a four grade structure, and the left-hand side of Table 2b gives the base points of between 16 and 34;
- Grades A*/A/B/C are at Level 2, making another four grade structure, and the right-hand side of Table 2b gives the base points of between 40 and 58.

Table 2c – Level 3 qualifications

Level 3 grade structure	Example grade	Base Points
Pass only General	Pass	210
Pass only NVQ	Pass	240
2 grade scheme	Pass	195
	Credit	240
3 grade scheme	Pass	165
	Merit	225
	Distinction	270
4 grade scheme	Pass	165
	Merit	195
	Distinction	225
	Distinction*	270
5 grade scheme	E	150
	D	180
	C	210
	B	240
	A	270
6 grade scheme	E	150
	D	180
	C	210
	B	240
	A	270
	A*	300

GCE A levels, Level 3 Diplomas and Cambridge Pre U qualifications have an A* grade, which earns extra points that are not available for other qualifications. These are the only qualifications that follow the six grade scheme.

Exceptions

There are some circumstances where the logic set out in this document does not apply and GLH values are not used to determine equivalencies or points. These are namely for (9-1) GCSEs, graded qualifications such as dance or music, and the Skills Challenge Certificates.

(9-1) GCSEs

Exam boards offering GCSEs designed for England have introduced numeric grading for GCSEs that will be graded 9-1, with 9 being the highest attainment score. These qualifications will count in performance information in Wales when designated for delivery by Qualifications Wales. This is only expected to affect Wales in low cohort subjects where there is no separate Wales specification. The GCSE size equivalence and performance points can be seen below. These have been calculated by the Welsh Government to be consistent with the existing 8 grade structure for GCSE and are different to

the points allocated to these qualifications by the Department for Education in England.

Table 3a – (9-1) GCSEs

Qualification Level	Grade	Performance Points	GCSE size equivalence for Key Stage 4 measures
Level 1	1	16	1
	2	24	1
	3	32	1
Level 2	4	40	1
	5	44	1
	6	48	1
	7	52	1
	8	55	1
	9	58	1

Graded qualifications

Graded exams such as music or dance, whether at Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3, **only** count toward Key Stage 4 performance measures. The table below provides a look-up for the Level and Grade information to determine GCSE size equivalence and performance points.

Table 3b - Dance, music performance or vocational dance

Qualification Level	Grade		Performance points	GCSE size equivalence for Key Stage 4 measures
Level 3	Grade 8	Pass	66	1.6
		Merit	90	
		Distinction	108	
	Grade 7	Pass	53	1.28
		Merit	72	
		Distinction	86	
	Grade 6	Pass	43	1.04
		Merit	59	
		Distinction	70	
Level 2	Grade 5	Pass	32	0.8
		Merit	39	
		Distinction	44	
	Grade 4	Pass	28	0.7
		Merit	34	
		Distinction	39	

Level 1	Grade 3	Pass	11	0.6
		Merit	17	
		Distinction	20	
	Grade 2	Pass	10	0.5
		Merit	14	
		Distinction	17	
	Grade 1	Pass	8	0.4
		Merit	11	
		Distinction	14	

Table 3c - Drama, music literacy, speech, or speech and drama

Qualification Level	Grade		Performance points	GCSE size equivalence for Key Stage 4 measures
Level 3	Grade 8	Pass	53	1.28
		Merit	72	
		Distinction	86	
	Grade 7	Pass	43	1.04
		Merit	59	
		Distinction	70	
	Grade 6	Pass	33	0.8
		Merit	45	
		Distinction	54	
Level 2	Grade 5	Pass	26	0.65
		Merit	32	
		Distinction	36	
	Grade 4	Pass	22	0.55
		Merit	27	
		Distinction	30	
Level 1	Grade 3	Pass	10	0.5
		Merit	14	
		Distinction	17	
	Grade 2	Pass	8	0.4
		Merit	11	
		Distinction	14	
	Grade 1	Pass	6	0.3
		Merit	8	
		Distinction	10	

Skills Challenge Certificates

The Skills Challenge Certificate is one component of the Welsh Baccalaureate and can be attained at Foundation (Level 1), National (Level 2) and Advanced (Level 3). The performance points can be seen below.

Table 4a - Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Baccalaureate)

Level 1 grade structure	Grade	Performance points	GCSE size equivalence for Key Stage 4 measures
2 grade scheme	Pass	22	1
	Pass*	34	1

Table 4b - National Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Baccalaureate)

Level 2 grade structure	Grade	Performance points	GCSE size equivalence for Key Stage 4 measures
4 grade scheme	C	40	1
	B	46	1
	A	52	1
	A*	58	1

Table 4c - Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Baccalaureate)

Level 3 grade structure	Grade	Performance Points	GCE A level size equivalence for Post-16 measures
6 grade scheme	E	150	1
	D	180	1
	C	210	1
	B	240	1
	A	270	1
	A*	300	1

Section 2: Definitions of school performance measures

Key Stage 4 performance measures

In this section, the headline measures used for Key Stage 4 measures are displayed.

As a minimum, when producing any report on performance data at a school level, the Welsh Government will include results for these measures:

- Level 1 threshold (2017 only) - a volume of qualifications at Level 1 equivalent to the volume of 5 GCSEs at grade A*-G;
- Level 2 threshold (2017 only) - a volume of qualifications at Level 2 equivalent to the volume of 5 GCSEs at grade A*-C;
- Level 2 inclusive threshold (Welsh Baccalaureate Foundation & National measures from 2018) - achieving Level 2 including a grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and Mathematics;
- 'Capped 9' measure

A suite of measures ensures that a school's performance is considered from different angles. The Capped 9 and the Level 2 inclusive/Welsh Baccalaureate measures will therefore hold similar status.

Level 2 inclusive threshold

Numeracy requirement

In the Level 2 inclusive threshold, either of the new mathematics GCSEs can count as the numeracy requirement (the best result will be taken where both qualifications are awarded to a learner). This decision was made following a review by Qualifications Wales, where WJEC announced that it will accept both the new GCSE mathematics-numeracy and GCSE mathematics as satisfying the numeracy requirements of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification awards.

Literacy requirement

No further changes have been made to the literacy requirements for performance measures from 2017. Only the new specification WJEC English or Welsh Language GCSEs will contribute towards specific literacy elements of performance measures from 2017.

The recommendation to emphasise English or Welsh Language rather than accept English or Welsh Literature was made by the Review of Qualifications following its wide ranging consultative process. The case for this change was set out in the Review of Qualification section 6 of the report which can be found on the [Welsh Government website](#).

The reasoning behind the Review's finding relates directly to the recommendations to reform the English and Welsh Language GCSEs. These place increased emphasis on the literacy skills of learners, building on LNF expectations. Literature qualifications will not count towards the specific literacy requirements of measures from 2017 but can still count towards the non-subject specific components.

Welsh Bacallaureate

The Welsh Bacallaureate is awarded at three levels:

- Foundation Welsh Bacallaureate (Level 1)
- National Welsh Bacallaureate (Level 2)
- Advanced Welsh Bacallaureate (Level 3)

Literacy and numeracy are assessed through Essential Skills Wales or appropriate GCSEs at Foundation and National levels, with credit in these areas being carried forward from the National to Advanced level. All other skills are assessed through the Skills Challenge Certificate.

In order to acquire the Foundation or National level Bacallaureate qualifications, learners must achieve:

- GCSE English Language or GCSE Welsh Language (grades A*-G for Foundation, grades A*-C for National);
- GCSE Mathematics/Mathematics-Numeracy (grades A*-G for Foundation, grades A*-C for National);
- A minimum of three further GCSEs (grades A*-G, grades A*-C for National). At Key Stage 4, up to two of these may be equivalent qualifications; at Post-16, all may be equivalent.

In order to acquire the Advanced level Bacallaureate, learners must achieve:

- GCSE English Language or GCSE Welsh Language (grades A*-C);
- GCSE Mathematics – Numeracy (grades A*-C);
- Two A levels, or equivalent. This requirement must be met through the achievement of no more than three separate qualifications.

The new Bacallaureate also comprises a core, or 'Skills Challenge Certificate', alongside Supporting Qualifications. The requirements of both the Skills Challenge Certificate and supporting qualifications must be met to achieve the overarching qualification.

The Capped 9 measure

For the Capped 9 measure, a school average of the total points attached to the top nine GCSEs, or equivalent volume of qualifications, for each learner in the cohort, including subject specific requirements is calculated. The format of the Capped 9 can be seen below.

1	Welsh/English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New specification GCSE only
2	Mathematics - numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New specification GCSE only
3	Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New specification GCSE only
4	Science – 1 of 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top science result/s • GCSEs only from 2018
5	Science – 2 of 2	
6	Top other qualifications capped at 4 GCSEs or equivalent volume of qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legacy Welsh, English and mathematics GCSEs can count here where a learner hasn't been entered for the new specification GCSE in that subject
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh and English literature qualifications can count here
8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills Challenge Certificate can count here
9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry level up to Level 3 qualifications (where age appropriate) can count
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No cap on the total volume of non-GCSE qualifications that can count.

Which qualifications count in Key Stage 4 performance measures?

Entry level qualifications

These are below Level 1 qualifications on the 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), but they can contribute towards the Capped Points Score measure.

Level 3 qualifications

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

Qualifications with a partial GCSE equivalence

Qualifications that are equivalent to less than one GCSE in size can still contribute towards both the threshold measures (Level 2 inclusive, Level 2 and Level 1) and the Capped Points Score, and a combination can be totalled to achieve the desired overall volume.

However, 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 on the [Qualifications Wales website](#) and within the WJEC's WBQs specifications.

Performance measures for post-16 learners

The current headline measures for Post-16 performance is the percentage of learners aged 17 entering a volume equivalent to two A levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold, and the average wider points score.

Learners entering a volume equivalent to two A levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold

Learners entering a volume equivalent to two A levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold consists of a volume of qualifications at Level 3 equivalent to the volume of two A levels at grade A*-E.

Average wider points score

The average wider points score includes all approved qualifications in Wales. To find more information on which qualifications are approved for post-16 learners, please visit [QIW](#), the online database of approved qualifications in Wales.