

GCSE modern languages results 2017

The results were published by JCQ on 24 August 2017. Overall, languages are unaffected by what JCQ terms a ‘significant shift in entry patterns [that] marginally affects overall outcomes in [the] first year of GCSE reform’.¹

Overall, when looking at the general figures for languages, entry numbers continue to fall year on year by some percentage points. German continues to be the most affected by the reduction in GCSE takers with a loss of -13% on last year’s figures. Spanish is the least hit with a decrease of -2% since 2016. Interestingly, both Irish and Welsh have recorded a surge in entries by 5% and a whopping 71% respectively.

When looking at entry trends since records began in 2002, very positive news can be drawn for Spanish, Welsh and Other languages which, within the larger trend of declining figures for languages, have managed to attain considerable increases in the last 15 years: Spanish 57%, Welsh 60%, and Other languages 6%. Full figures can be seen [here](#).

French continues to feature in the Top GCSE full course subject decreases (entry greater than 100,000) at number 3 dropping from 2nd place last year.

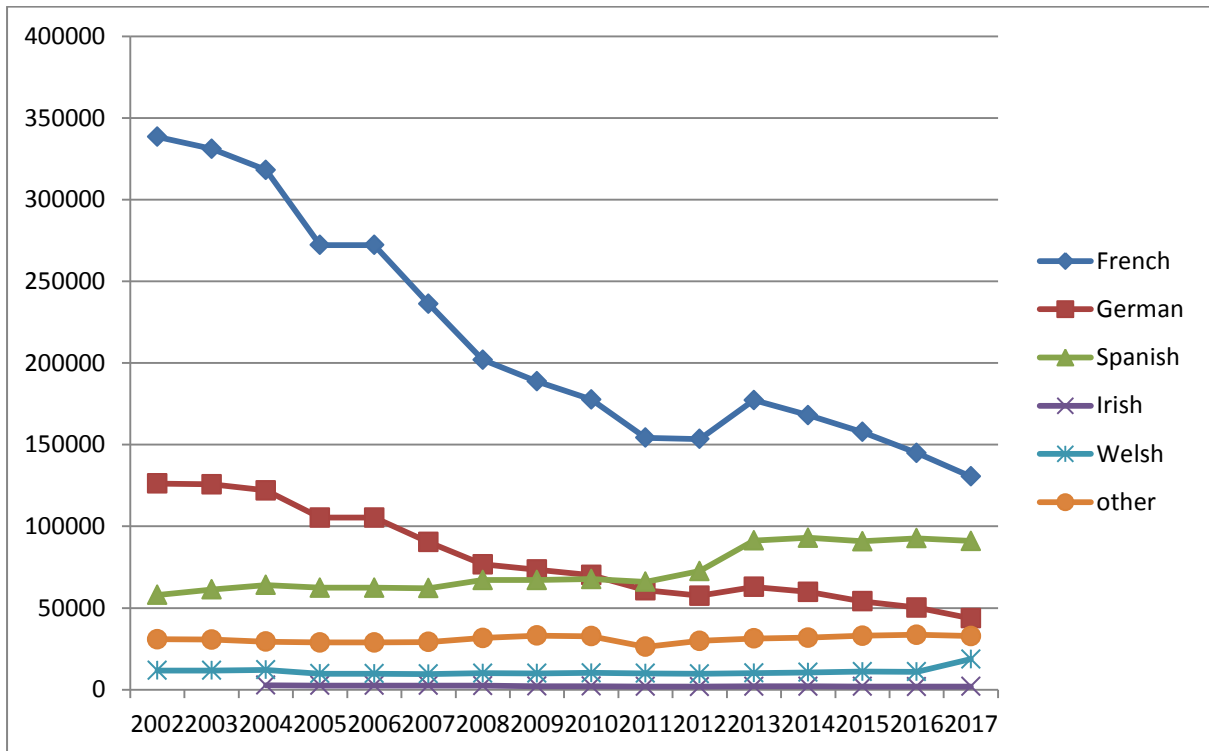
Additional results for Other languages have also been published by JCQ [here](#). Overall, entries have decreased by -2% since 2016 across the board. However, figures remain strong as Arabic, Chinese, Italian, and Polish feature as the most entered languages with more than 4,000 pupils each.

	French	German	Spanish	Irish	Welsh	Other	Total
2002	338468	126216	57983		11719	30899	565285
2003	331089	125663	61323		11793	30668	560536
2004	318095	122023	64078	2708	12193	29349	548446
2005	272140	105288	62456	2507	9800	28879	481070
2006	272140	105288	62456	2507	9800	28879	481070
2007	236189	90311	62143	2560	9571	29188	429962
2008	201940	76695	67092	2421	10050	31682	389880
2009	188688	73469	67070	2165	9995	33111	374498
2010	177618	70169	67707	2165	10311	32697	360667
2011	154221	60887	66021	1966	10007	26257	319359
2012	153436	57547	72606	1879	9743	29843	325054
2013	177288	62932	91315	2080	10196	31368	375179
2014	168042	59891	93028	2024	10566	31865	365416
2015	157699	54037	90782	1980	11052	33043	348593
2016	144892	50271	92681	1905	10967	33639	334355
2017	130509	43649	91040	1995	18733	32868	318794

¹ From 2017, in England new GCSEs in English Language, English Literature and Mathematics are graded 9-1 thus substituting the A*-G system (9 is the highest score and equivalent to an A*); the new specifications have also been made more challenging to better differentiate the higher-achieving pupils.
<https://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results/gcse/2017/gcse-press-notice-uk-summer-2017>

% change 12-13	15.55%	9.36%	25.77%	10.70%	4.65%	5.11%	15.42%
% change 13-14	-5.22%	-4.83%	1.88%	-2.69%	3.63%	1.58%	-2.60%
% change 14-15	-6.16%	-9.77%	-2.41%	-2.17%	4.60%	3.70%	-4.60%
% change 15-16	-8.12%	-6.97%	2.09%	-3.79%	-0.77%	1.80%	-4.08%
% change 16-17	-9.93%	-13.17%	-1.77%	4.72%	70.81%	-2.29%	-4.65%
	French	German	Spanish	Irish	Welsh	Other	Total
% change 02-17	-61.44%	-65.42%	57.01%	-26.33%	59.85%	6.37%	-43.60%

GCSE entries at a glance



Variations in centres offering GCSE Languages

In other news, the national downward trend for both German and French and the increased interest in Spanish is confirmed when looking at the numbers of centres offering GCSE qualifications, as published by OFQUAL (<http://analytics.ofqual.gov.uk:3838/2017/GCSE/CentreVariability/>).

Centres offering GCSE in both French and German have decreased since 2016. French lost 134 centres (-8%) and German 63 (-10%) on last year's figures. Spanish, on the other hand, has witnessed an increase in centres of 3% (from 1051 to 1084). These variations in numbers seem to be a direct consequence of the demand related to the study of single languages nationally.

However, although the logistics in the offering of qualifications is quickly adapting to the requirements of the market, the closure of centres for declining subjects is bound to have a deleterious and direct effect on the choice offered to students to study that specific subject at GCSE level. For us, consequences are potentially severe: if the number of centres offering GCSE languages continues to fall, then the opportunity for future students to take up languages will, in turn, be reduced.

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