

2021 Provisional Headline A-Level results for Southampton Local Authority – Results Day

A-Level results were released to Colleges and students on 10th August 2021. Southampton Colleges and Sixth Forms have agreed to inform the LA of their results so that citywide performance can be calculated.

The Department for Education (DfE) [announced on 25th February 2021](#) that an alternative approach to Key Stage 5 exams would be followed for the second successive year in 2021 due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The DfE confirmed that school, college or multi-academy trust (MAT) level performance data based on summer 2021 exams would not be published. This includes the performance tables that were due to be released in December 2021, and March 2022. Schools and colleges should not be held to account on the basis of exams and assessment data from summer 2021 and that data will not be used by others, such as Ofsted and local authorities, to hold schools and colleges to account.

2021 is the second year that Key Stage 5 exams have not been completed in the normal way. It is important however to acknowledge that the 2020 and 2021 Key Stage 5 collections have used different methodologies. In 2020, colleges and sixth forms were asked to provide centre assessed grades for their students. Colleges and sixth forms were instructed that these should be fair, objective and carefully considered judgements of the grades colleges and sixth forms believed their students would have been most likely to achieve if they had sat their exams, and should take into account the full range of available evidence. In 2021, teachers were asked to assess the standard at which pupils were performing based only on what has been taught. Teachers' judgements were based on a range of evidence relating to the subject content that had been delivered, either in the classroom or via remote learning.

During the period between 2017 and 2020, a phased introduction of reformed A-Level qualifications warrants a cautious approach to year-on-year comparisons. These reforms include more rigorous and challenging qualification content, courses being assessed through final exams at the end of Year 13 and the decoupling of AS-Levels which means that they no longer contribute to A-Level grades.

Only A-Level outcomes are included in this provisional analysis of Southampton performance and therefore do not include results from Southampton City College or for those students at other city schools/colleges who did not study an A-Level curriculum.

Southampton A-Level Provisional Results

- Southampton pupils achieved an Average Points Score per A-Level Entry of 38.8 in 2021. This is 3.3 above the 2020 Southampton performance of 35.5. No National data is available for Average Points Score per A-Level Entry on results day.
- In 2021, 31.8% of Southampton entries achieved an A-Level A* or A grade which was an improvement of 5.4% from the 2020 percentage achieving A*-A provisional results day outcome (26.4%). A challenge still remains to meet National performance as A-Level A*-A grades are 44.3%, a gap of 12.5% between Southampton and National in 2021.

- Out of 1107 A-level entries within Southampton, 62.3% achieved an A*-B grade. Nationally a pass rate of 69.8% was achieved resulting in a gap of 7.5% with Southampton (62.3%). Southampton pupils had 690 A-Levels at grade B or above and required an additional 83 A-Levels to have surpassed the B grade threshold to have equalled the National average.
- In 2021, 87.2% of A-Level entries within Southampton's Colleges and Sixth Forms achieved a grade C or above. The National performance for A*-C was 88.2%, a gap of 1.0% when compared with the Southampton average (87.2%).
- In 2021, 99.5% of Southampton A-Level entries achieved an A*-E grade at College or Sixth Form. This is in line with the National performance that saw 99.5% of A-level results achieve an A*-E grade.
- Southampton's 2021 A-Level provisional results day outcomes have improved in all areas from Southampton's 2020 A-Level provisional results day outcomes.
 - The average points score per A level within Southampton increased by 3.3 from 35.5 in 2020 to 38.8 in 2021.
 - The percentage of A*-A grades within Southampton increased by 5.4% from 26.4% to 31.8%.
 - The percentage of A*-B grades within Southampton increased by 6.8% from 55.5% to 62.3%.
 - The percentage of A*-C grades within Southampton increased by 2.6% from 84.6% to 87.2%.
 - The percentage of A*-E grades within Southampton increased by 0.1% from 99.4% to 99.5%.
- This progression has also seen Southampton's 2021 A-Level provisional results day performance improve the Local Authority's position relative to the National average by 2.4% for %A*-B (4.8% over 2 years) and by 1.8% for %A*-C (9.4% over 2 years), although a challenge still remains to close the gap to National levels of performance.