

Attainment data for Growing Up in Scotland Sweep 11 participants

This dataset is associated with Sweep 11 of Growing Up in Scotland. Please see the data documentation associated with that sweep for details about how the data was collected and processed.

This is an administrative dataset, provided by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). Approval for access to the dataset will need to be granted by both Scottish Government and SQA.

Methodology

Using GUS participants date of birth, postcode and school SEED code, a data matching exercise was undertaken using the Scottish Government pupil census. Using these identifiers, participants were linked with their Scottish Candidate Number (SCN). SCNs are allocated to pupils at school and in further-education colleges who undertake SQA courses.

Once the matching exercise was complete, over 90% of Sweep 11 GUS participants were matched with their SCN. The pupil census only includes pupils at Local Authority funded schools in Scotland. Therefore, of those that could not be matched, the majority are most likely pupils at independent or private schools.

The SCNs were then supplied to the SQA, who were able to provide the attainment record for participants. SCNs have since been removed from the dataset, and replaced with GUSID. Researchers can use this GUSID to link attainment data with GUS survey responses.

More information about SQA qualifications can be found here

[Guide to Scottish Qualifications](#)

Rationale

The GUS dataset is used for a wide range of analysis and research topics. As well as providing valuable contextual information about our participants and Scottish young people in this age group, attainment data would be useful as an outcome variable. The longitudinal nature of the study means that we can examine how early life experiences impact on later achievements.

To ask sufficiently detailed questions about attainment would have required a great deal of space on the GUS questionnaires. Survey questions can also be answered inaccurately, due to bias, error or recall failure. Furthermore, asking detailed questions about attainment may be cumbersome for participants, so linking their attainment data reduced the survey burden. Given the pandemic and its impact on examinations, participants may have found this topic sensitive and preferred it not to be included in the interview or choose not to answer. Finally, participants may expect that Scottish Government already hold this information and feel that they should not need to provide it.

GUS participants were made aware of the intention to link their survey data to attainment data held by the SQA.

Notes on specific variables

The academic year the data originates from; 01 August 20XY and the 31 July 20X(Y+1)

1. Product_type_code

Product type	Description
AWD	Award
BAC	The Scottish Baccalaureate
C	Customised
HN-P	Higher National
NCs	National Certificate
N-HS	National Course (National 2 to 5, Higher, Advanced Higher)
NPA	National Progression Award
N-W	National (Workplace)
PDA-N	Professional Development Award
SfW	Skills for Work
SPEC	Specialist Award
SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualification

2. Grade

'E' means 'Evaluated but no overall award' which indicates that at the time of evaluation the required constituent parts of the qualification had not yet been achieved and the entry is still open. Any open entries for National Courses at the end of the year are removed from SQA systems (this normally happens towards the end of November, after we get our statistical data). As it stands, SQA statistical publications record them as 'No Award'.

In The Scottish Baccalaureate, a Distinction requires a grade A in one of the Advanced Highers, one other grade A in one of the other components and at least a grade B in all other components. A Pass is awarded to those who achieve at least a grade C in all mandatory components.