

Academic Performance Analysis: 2026 Religious Studies Results (Monmouthshire)

1. Executive Summary

This report presents a comprehensive data analysis of the 2026 Religious Studies (RS) examination results for Monmouthshire, covering **182 GCSE** entries and **41 A Level** entries.

The core finding of this analysis is that Monmouthshire’s academic performance is exceptionally strong, significantly outperforming national Wales averages across all primary benchmarks. The results demonstrate a high-attaining subject area characterized by rigorous standards and a healthy pipeline into post-16 study. This document serves as a professional assessment for the Standing Advisory Council (SAC) to evaluate systemic success and identify strategic priorities.

2. GCSE Religious Studies: Headline Performance

The county-wide GCSE performance in Religious Studies reflects a culture of high expectations and academic excellence:

- *A*9–A/7*:* 54.9% of students achieved the highest grade bracket.
- *A*9–C/4*:* 89.0% of students achieved a high-tier pass.
- *A*9–G/1*:* 99.5% overall pass rate.

The data reveals a remarkably low level of underachievement. Across the entire county, only five students fell within the E–U range. It is statistically significant that no G or U grades were recorded, with a single F grade representing a distinct outlier in an otherwise high-performing dataset.

3. GCSE Performance by School and Cohort Impact

The table below provides an anonymised breakdown of GCSE performance across the three participating secondary schools.

School Name	Entries	A*/9–A/7 %	A*/9–C/4 %
School A	114	50.9%	87.7%
School B	15	80.0%	100%
School C	53	56.6%	88.7%

Qualitative Analysis of Cohort Impact

- While School B achieved the highest proportional outcomes—notably a 100% success rate at the C/4 threshold—these figures are derived from a small cohort of 15 students and should be viewed as localized excellence.
- Conversely, the performance of School A is of particular strategic importance. Maintaining a C/4+ rate of 87.7% with a cohort nearly eight times larger than School B (114 vs. 15) indicates a highly scalable and consistent pedagogical approach that effectively supports a wide range of learner abilities.

Collectively, these results confirm that Monmouthshire’s success is systemic and robust, rather than the product of small, selective groups

4. Comparative Analysis: Monmouthshire vs. National Wales Benchmarks

Monmouthshire's 2026 outcomes demonstrate a significant competitive advantage when compared to the national performance of Wales.

Measure	Monmouthshire	Wales	Difference (Percentage Points)
A*9–A/7	54.9%	32.3%	+22.6 pp
A/9–C/4	89.0%	69.8%	+19.2 pp
A/9–G/1	99.5%	97.0%	+2.5 pp

Methodological Note: To ensure statistical consistency and a valid "like-for-like" comparison with the Welsh national benchmark of 32.3%, this analysis utilises the aggregate Monmouthshire A*/9–A/7 figure of 54.9%. The most striking takeaway is the 22.6 percentage point lead at the highest grades, confirming that local students are significantly more likely to reach the highest levels of attainment than their national peers.

5. A Level Religious Studies: Detailed Results

The post-16 landscape remains resilient with 41 entries recorded. Following a rigorous reconciliation of the raw student data, the corrected grade distribution and cumulative statistics are as follows:

Grade	Number of Students	Percentage
A*	5	12.2%
A	12	29.3%
B	13	31.7%
C	7	17.1%
D	4	9.8%
E	0	0.0%
U	1	2.4%

Cumulative Attainment Levels:

- A–A*: 41.5%
- A–B*: 73.2%
- A–C*: 90.2%
- A–E (Pass Rate)*: 97.6% (Reflecting a single U grade outlier).

6. A Level School-Level Insights

Post-16 provision across the county exhibits strong specialization and high attainment:

- **School C:** Established itself as the county's "center of excellence" for top-tier performance, contributing 100% of the county's A* grades (5 out of 5) and achieving a 52.2% A*–A rate.
- **School A:** Demonstrated a strong value-added profile, with 91.7% of its cohort achieving grades in the A–C range.
- **School B:** Maintained a small but successful cohort of six students, with two achieving A/B grades and four achieving C or above.

7. Strategic Discussion Points for the Standing Advisory Council (SAC)

Key Strengths for Celebration

1. **Exceptional Comparative Attainment:** GCSE results significantly exceed national averages, specifically the 22.6 percentage point lead at the A*/7 threshold.
2. **Healthy Post-16 Pipeline:** Sustained A Level interest (41 entries) indicates the subject's continued relevance and appeal to students.
3. **High-Grade Density:** Consistency in top-tier achievement, with over half of GCSE candidates and 73.2% of A Level candidates securing A*-B grades.
4. **Negligible Underachievement:** System-wide success in minimizing failure, with near-zero rates of G or U grades at GCSE and a single outlier at A Level.
5. **Pedagogical Scalability:** Evidence of strong performance across diverse cohort sizes, from small specialised groups to large comprehensive entries.

Strategic Questions for Exploration

Suggested discussion points

- What is contributing to the strong performance in RS across Monmouthshire?
- Can effective practice from the strongest-performing departments be shared through the RVE/RS network?
- How can SAC support schools in maintaining high GCSE participation, particularly given the national decline in RS entries?
- What is the relationship between GCSE and A Level RS uptake?
- Are schools seeing sufficient numbers of students progressing from GCSE RS into A Level RS?
- How can SAC continue to promote the value of RS/RVE as a subject which develops critical thinking, ethical reasoning, literacy and preparation for further study?
- Are there opportunities to use the strongest practice to support schools where RS cohorts are smaller?

SAC Meeting Summary *Monmouthshire schools have achieved strong outcomes in Religious Studies in 2026. At GCSE, 182 students were entered, with 54.9% achieving A/9–A/7 and 89.0% achieving A/9–C/4, significantly above the Wales figures of 32.3% and 69.8% respectively. Almost all students (99.5%) achieved A*/9–G/1. Performance was strong across the larger cohorts at School A and School C, while School B achieved 100% A*/9–*

C/4 from a smaller cohort. At A Level, 41 students were entered, with 41.5% achieving A/A and 73.2% achieving A*/A/B. There were no E grades and only one U grade. The results provide a positive picture of attainment and progression in Religious Studies across Monmouthshire and provide an opportunity for SAC to celebrate effective practice and consider how this can be shared more widely.*