



Department  
for Education

## Education and Training Statistics for the United Kingdom 2015



SR 43/2015, 5 November 2015

### England

<b>Schools</b> (including nursery)	<b>HE and FE Institutions</b>	<p>In 2014/15, 8.4 million 2-19 year-olds are enrolled in 24,317 schools (including nursery), which employ 431,100 full-time qualified teachers. In 2013/14 there were also 127 higher education (HE) institutions, and 339 further education (FE) colleges in England.</p>
24,317	466	
<b>School Pupils</b>	<b>School Teachers</b> (full-time qualified)	
8,438,100	431,100	

### Scotland

<b>Schools</b> (including nursery)	<b>HE and FE Institutions</b>	<p>In 2014/15, 0.78 million 2-19 year-olds are enrolled in 5,004 schools (including nursery), which employ 44,000 full-time qualified teachers. In 2013/14 there were also 18 higher education institutions, and 27 further education colleges in Scotland.</p>
5,004	45	
<b>School Pupils</b>	<b>School Teachers</b> (full-time qualified)	
778,400	44,000	

### Wales

<b>Schools</b> (including nursery)	<b>HE and FE Institutions</b>	<p>In 2014/15, 0.47 million 2-19 year-olds are enrolled in 1,661 schools (including nursery), which employ 21,800 full-time qualified teachers. In 2013/14 there were also 8 higher education institutions, and 13 further education colleges in Wales.</p>
1,661	21	
<b>School Pupils</b>	<b>School Teachers</b> (full-time qualified)	
474,700	21,800	

### Northern Ireland

<b>Schools</b> (including nursery)	<b>HE and FE Institutions</b>	<p>In 2014/15, 0.33 million 2-19 year-olds are enrolled in 1,193 schools (including nursery), which employ 15,900 full-time qualified teachers. In 2013/14 there were also 4 higher education institutions, and 6 further education colleges in Northern Ireland.</p>
1,193	10	
<b>School Pupils</b>	<b>School Teachers</b> (full-time qualified)	
329,200	15,900	

### United Kingdom

- The number of primary school pupils across the UK increased between 2010/11 and 2014/15 by 422,000 (8.6%). In contrast, the number of secondary school pupils fell by 94,200 (2.4%) over the same period.
- The UK pupil: teacher ratio across all schools remains fairly constant at 16.4.
- The proportion of 16-24 year-olds across the UK not in education, employment or training (NEET) continues to fall, from 15.9% in 2010 to 13.2% in 2014.
- The number of full-time students studying for a first degree across the UK has increased between 2009/10 and 2013/14 by 135,900 (11%). Over the same time period, the number of full-time students studying for a postgraduate degree has increased by 6,500 (2%).

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## About this release

This statistical release (SR) contains data on education and training in the UK. It covers data collected from England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. The SR has data on schools, pupils and teachers, information on further education and higher education institutions and students, education expenditure and qualifications gained.

## In this publication

The following tables are included in the statistical release:

- Education and Training Statistics for the United Kingdom 2015 (SR43\_2015\_Tables.xlsx)

The accompanying technical information covers the education systems in the UK and their data sources.

## Feedback

We are changing how our releases look and welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at

[christopher.morriss@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:christopher.morriss@education.gsi.gov.uk).

# 1. Schools (Tables 1.1 – 1.4)

## Schools (Tables 1.1, 1.2, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.3 and 1.4)

This section looks at the numbers of schools, pupils and teachers across the UK.

In academic year 2014/15, there were 32,175 schools across the UK (Figure 1.1). Primary schools accounted for 65% (20,980) of all schools; secondary schools 13% (4,158); and nursery schools 9% (2,969).

**Figure 1.1** Number of schools in the UK by school type (2014/15)

School Type	Number of Schools	Percentage of Schools
Nursery	2,969	9%
Primary	20,980	65%
Middle	6	0%
Secondary	4,158	13%
Non-maintained mainstream	2,437	8%
Special schools	1,263	4%
Pupil referral units	362	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,175</b>	<b>100%</b>

Compared to 2010/11, there were slightly fewer primary schools in the UK in 2014/15 despite an increase in primary school pupil numbers, and slightly more secondary schools despite a decrease in secondary school pupil numbers.

Figure 1.2 shows the change in school numbers across the UK between 2010/11 and 2014/15. Primary school numbers decreased by 301 (1.4%) whilst secondary schools numbers increased by 37 (0.9%).

**Figure 1.2** Trend in the number of primary and secondary schools across the UK (2010/11 to 2014/15)

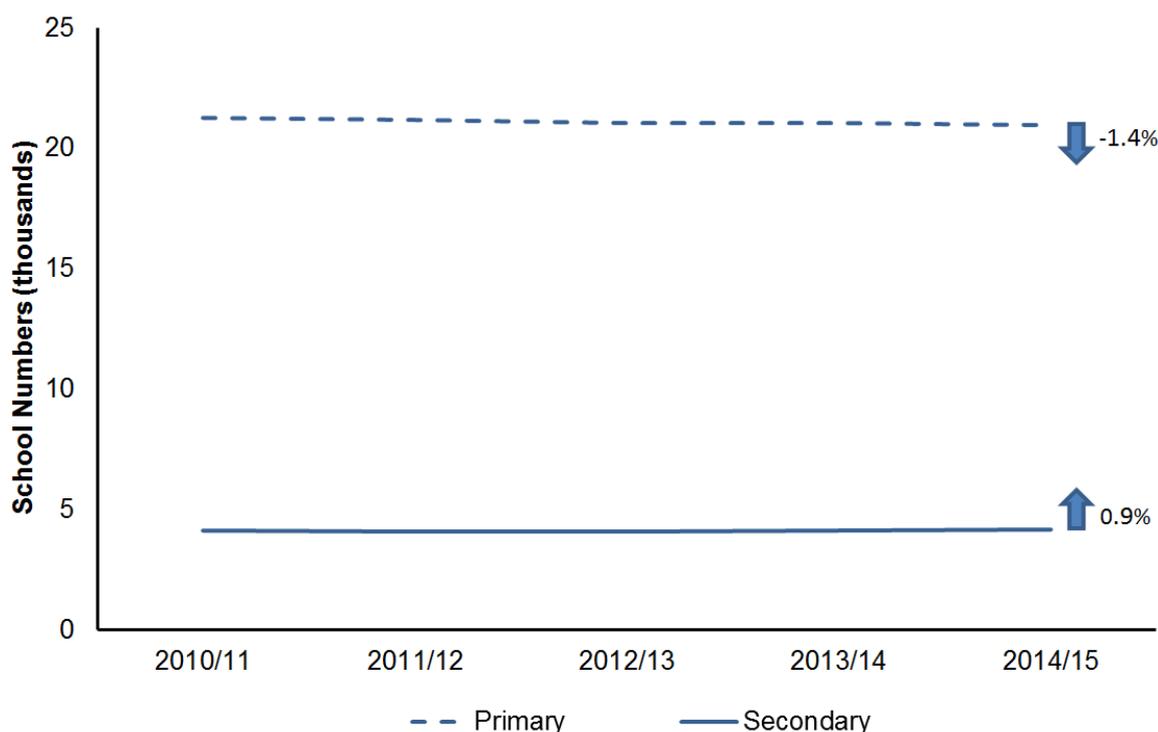
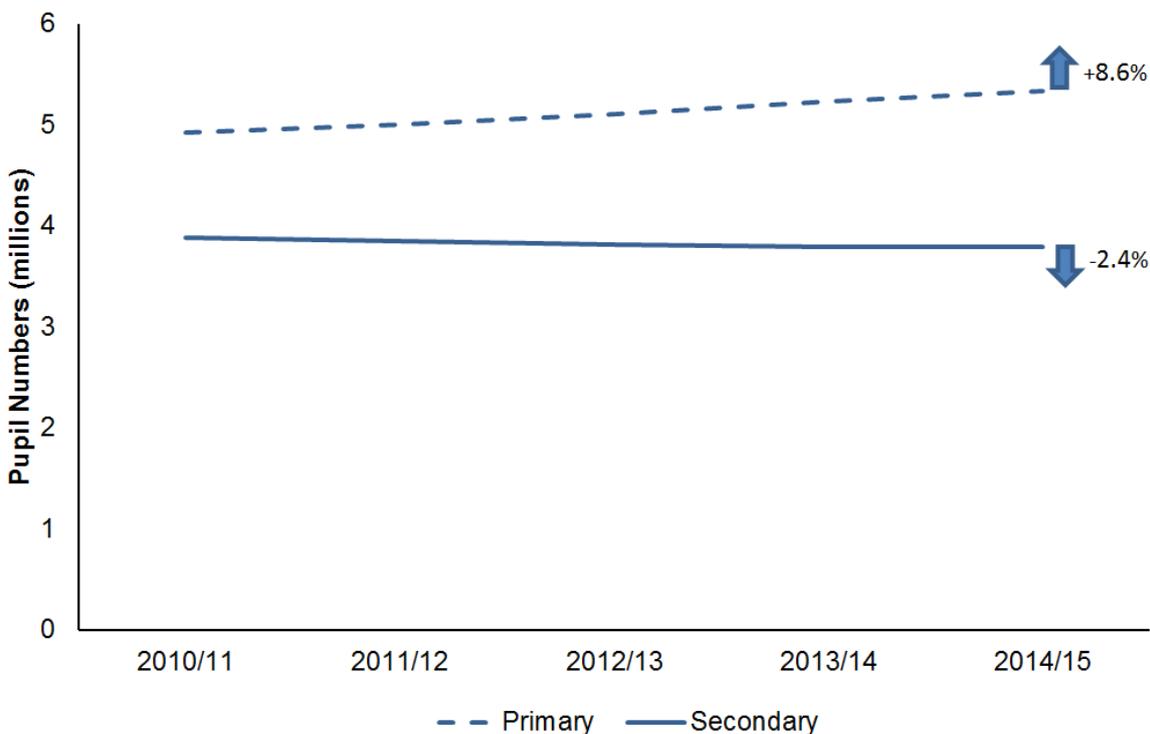


Figure 1.3 presents the trends in pupil numbers between 2010/11 and 2014/15. Over this period, the number of primary school pupils increased by 422,000 (8.6%), from 4.9 million pupils in 2010/11 to 5.3 million pupils in 2014/15. In contrast, the number of secondary school pupil numbers decreased by 94,200 (2.4%), from 3.9 million pupils in 2010/11 to 3.8 million in 2014/15 (Table 1.2.1).

**Figure 1.3** Trend in the number of primary and secondary pupils across the UK (2010/11 to 2014/15)



**Teachers (Table 1.3)**

**The number of full-time qualified teachers has increased**

There were 512,800 full-time qualified teachers in UK schools in 2014/15 compared to 506,100 in 2013/14 (Table 1.3).

**As in previous years, there were more female teachers than male teachers**

In 2014/15 70% of full-time qualified teachers in the UK were female. 83% of full-time qualified teachers in nursery and primary schools and 60% in secondary schools were female (Table 1.3).

**The pupil: teacher ratio for all schools in the UK has remained fairly stable over the last 5 years**

The pupil: teacher ratio for all schools was 16.4 in 2014/15, compared to 16.3 in 2013/14 and 16.4 in 2010/11 (Table 1.4). The pupil: teacher ratio was 20.7 in primary schools and 15.4 in secondary schools.

## 2. Post-compulsory Education (Table 2.1 – 2.5)

### Post-compulsory Education and Training (Tables 2.1, 2.2, 2.2.1 and 2.3-2.5)

The numbers of Further Education Colleges (FEC) and Higher Education Institutions (HEI) other than universities have been falling both in recent years and also in the longer term. FEC numbers have reduced from 416 in 2010/11 to 385 in 2013/14 and the numbers of HEIs other than universities has reduced from 37 in 2010/11 to 26 in 2013/14 (Table 2.1).

<b>Increase in the number of full-time academic staff in FECs and HEIs</b>	Full-time academic staff in FECs have increased from 51,000 in 2010/11 to 76,000 in 2013/14 and in HEIs the numbers have increased from 117,000 in 2010/11 to 127,000 in 2013/14 (Table 2.1).
<b>Decrease in the number of FE students</b>	FE student numbers in the UK have decreased from 5.6 million in 2008/09 to 4.5 million in 2013/14 (Table 2.4).
<b>The number of HE students has remained much the same</b>	There were 2.5 million HE students in the UK in 2013/14 and 2.6 million in 2008/09 (Table 2.4). There were 2.5 million HE students in the UK in 2013/14 and 2.6 million in 2008/09 (Table 2.4). The stability in the total number of students masks an increase in full-time students and a decrease in part-time students.

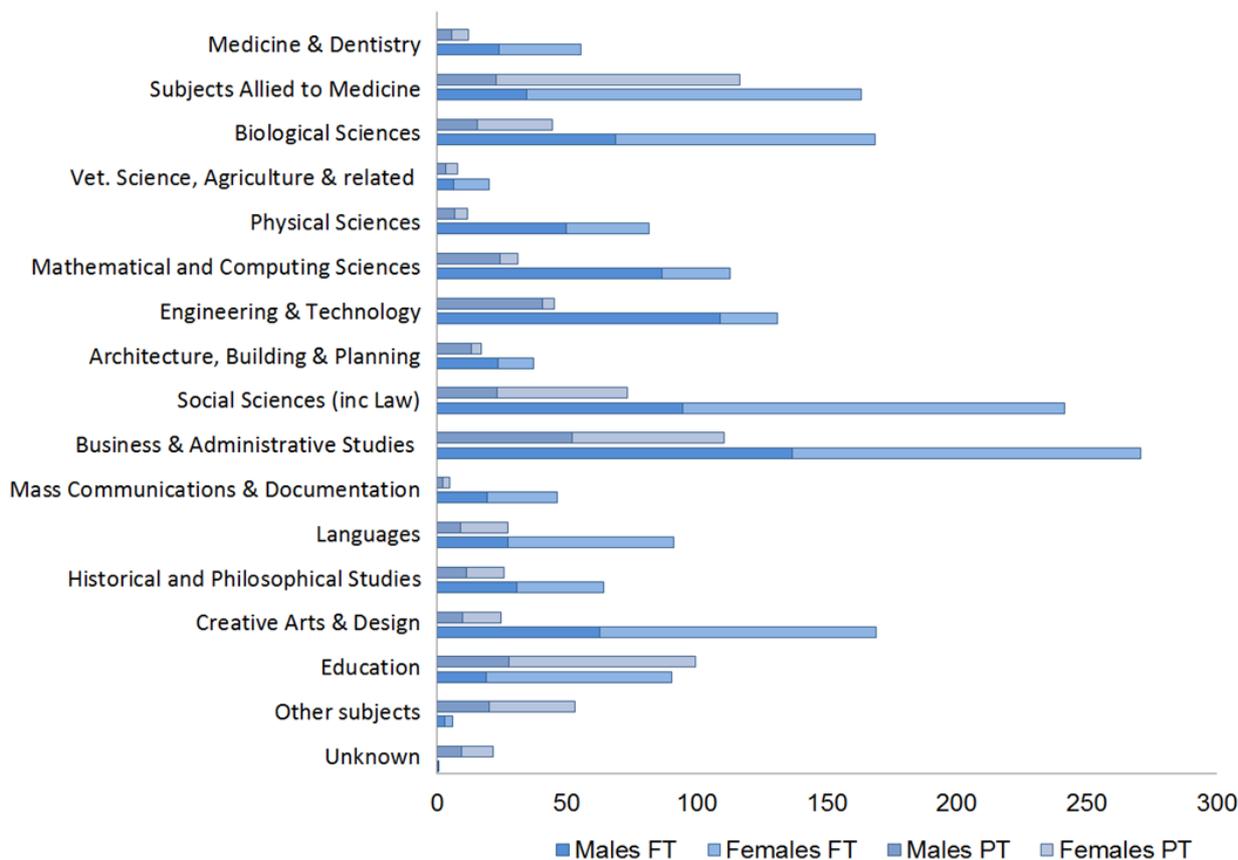
Figure 2.1 shows the trend in the number of full-time students studying for a first or post graduate degree from 2009/10 to 2013/14. Since 2009/10, there has been an increase in the number of students studying for first degrees of 11%, as well as a small increase in those studying for postgraduate degrees (2%). The increase in postgraduate degrees has been driven by an increase in those studying for a PhD which has seen an increase of 21% over the five year period (Table 2.4).

**Figure 2.1** Full-time students in higher education in the UK by level (2009/10 to 2013/14) (thousands)

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
<b>First Degree</b>	<b>1,215.9</b>	<b>1,258.0</b>	<b>1,319.8</b>	<b>1,319.6</b>	<b>1,351.8</b>
<b>Postgraduate</b>	<b>298.9</b>	<b>310.5</b>	<b>309.7</b>	<b>297.0</b>	<b>305.4</b>
of which Masters	237.5	245.0	240.2	225.6	231.1
of which PhD	61.4	65.5	69.5	71.3	74.4

Figure 2.2 (Tables 2.2 and 2.2.1) shows that the most popular subjects for full-time higher education students in the UK in 2013/14 were Business & Administrative Studies, and Social Sciences (including Law). For full-time students, 83% studying Engineering & Technology and 77% studying Mathematical and Computing Sciences were male; and, 79% studying Education and 79% studying Subjects Allied to Medicine were female. The most popular subjects for part-time higher education students in the UK in 2013/14 were Subjects Allied to Medicine, Business & Administrative Studies, and Education. For part-time students, 81% of students studying Subjects Allied to Medicine were female and 72% of students studying Education were female; 89% of students studying Engineering & Technology, 79% studying Mathematical and Computing Sciences, and 77% studying Architecture, Building and Planning were male. For higher education students in the UK, the most popular subjects for both full-time and part-time students have remained the same for the past 4 years (Table 2.2).

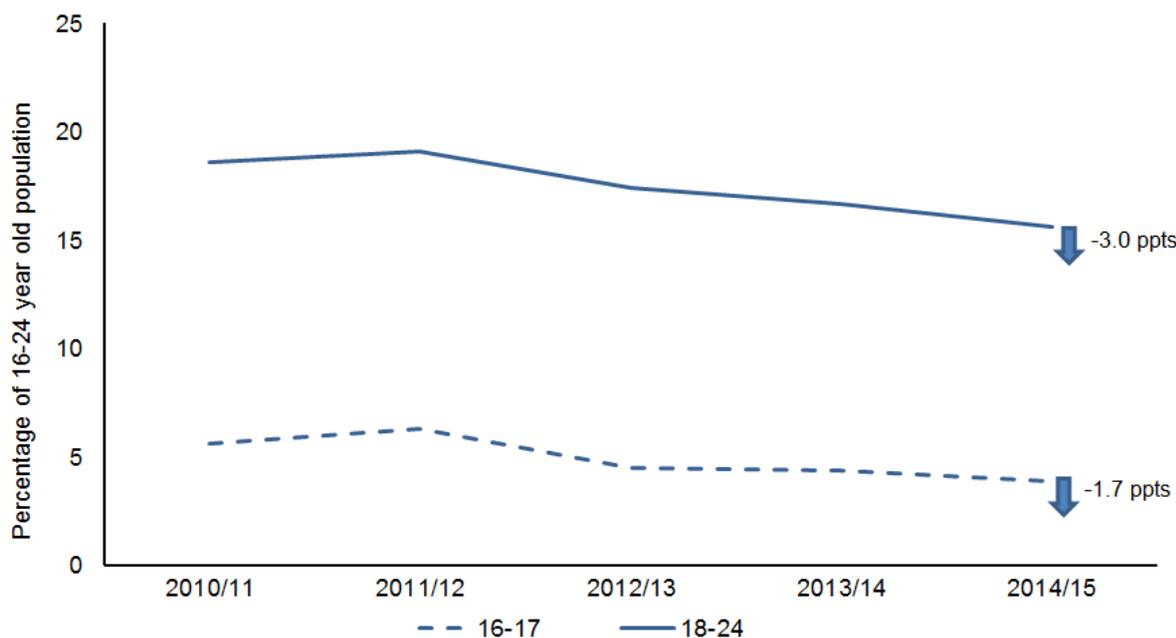
**Figure 2.2:** Full- and part-time higher education students by subject and gender (2013/14) (thousands)



### 16 to 24 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) by age

Figure 2.2 shows a fall in the proportion of 16-24 year-olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) for both 16-17 and 18-24 year-olds between 2010/11 and 2014/15. The proportion of 18-24 year-olds NEET is higher than those aged 16-17 by an average of 12.5 percentage points.

**Figure 2.2** 16 to 24 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) by age (10/11 to 14/15)



### 3. Qualifications (Tables 3.1 – 3.3)

#### Qualifications (Tables 3.1, 3.2 a, b, c and d, 3.3 a, b, c and d, 3.4)

This section takes a closer look at qualifications at aged 16 and 18.

##### Qualifications at age 16 and 18 in the UK

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, pupils commonly take GCSEs at 16 and A levels at 18.

Qualifications in Scotland are based on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). There are 12 levels on the framework, SCQF levels 1 to 7 are covered by school education. The new National qualifications, along with Standard Grades and Intermediates make up SCQF levels 3 to 5. Since 2013/14, under Curriculum for Excellence, Standard Grades are being phased out and replaced with National 3, 4 and 5 qualifications, and Intermediates will cease to exist from 2015/16. For most young people in Scotland S4 is the last compulsory year of school but the majority will choose to stay on and complete S5 and S6. Highers (SCQF level 6) are generally taken in S5/S6; Highers, sometimes along with Advanced Highers (SCQF level 7, usually taken in S6) are the qualifications required for entry to Higher Education. School leaver data looks at a pupil's attainment throughout their school education. The leaver cohort is made up of all pupils who leave during or at the end of that year, so it contains pupils who leave at various stages of their schooling. Although Standard Grades were not available in 2013/14, the 2013/14 school leaver data will include Standard Grade attainment of leavers who sat these qualifications in earlier years of their schooling.

It is not possible to present a comparative picture of pupil performance across the four UK countries, because of the differences between national qualification systems, and from 2013/14, differences in the measures used for GCSE qualifications in England; and Wales and Northern Ireland. The numbers and percentages of pupils passing GCSE, A level examinations and SCQF qualifications rose from 2000/01 until 2012/13 (Education and Training Statistics for the United Kingdom: 2014).

#### A level qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (Table 3.1)

Figure 3.1 shows the percentage of young people achieving two or more passes at A level or equivalent increased from 52.8% in 2010/11 to 54.8% in 2012/13 and decreased to 54.3% in 2013/14. Percentages for females were higher than percentages for males; the gap between these percentages was 10.5 percentage points in 2013/14 (Table 3.1).

**Figure 3.1:** Percentage of young people achieving 2 or more passes at A level or equivalent England, Wales and Northern Ireland 2000/01 and 2010/11 to 2013/14

	2000/01	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
All	37.4	52.8	54.7	54.8	54.3
Males	33.4	48.0	49.7	50.1	49.2
Females	41.6	57.9	60.1	59.9	59.7

## Qualifications achieved by school leavers in Scotland (Table 3.1)

Figure 3.2 shows the percentage of school leavers attaining one or more Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) qualification at level 6 or above increased from 55.8% in 2012/13 to 58.8% in 2013/14 and that the percentage for females in 2012/13 was higher than the percentage for males.

**Figure 3.2:** Percentage of school leavers attaining one or more SCQF qualifications (2011/12 to 2013/14)

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
<b>All</b>			
Percentage of school leavers attaining			
1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 4 or better	95.8	96.3	96.3
1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 5 or better	81.6	82.7	84.4
1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 6 or better	55.8	55.8	58.8
<b>Males</b>			
Percentage of school leavers attaining			
1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 4 or better	95.1	95.8	95.7
1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 5 or better	79.8	81.0	82.3
1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 6 or better	50.6	50.6	53.6
<b>Females</b>			
Percentage of school leavers attaining			
1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 4 or better	96.5	96.8	96.9
1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 5 or better	83.4	84.5	86.6
1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 6 or better	61.1	61.1	64.1

## GCSE (or equivalent) attainment in England (Tables 3.2a(i) and 3.2a(ii))<sup>1</sup>

In 2013/14 53.4% of pupils at the end of key stage 4 achieved 5 or more GCSE passes at grade A\*-C including English and mathematics (Table 3.2a(i)).

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<b>Higher GCSE attainment rates for girls</b>	Girls outperformed boys with 58.9% of girls and 48.2% of boys achieving 5 or more GCSE (or equivalent) passes at grade A*-C including English and mathematics (Table 3.2a(i)).
<b>Subjects most commonly studied are mathematics, English and English literature</b>	The most frequently studied subjects in terms of examination entries were mathematics, English and English literature (Table 3.2a(ii)).
<b>Physics, biological science and chemistry have the highest percentage of passes</b>	The subjects with the highest percentages of passes at grade A*-C were physics (92%), biological science (91%) and chemistry (91%).

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## A level attainment in England (3.3a(i) and 3.3a(ii))

- Girls outperformed boys with 61.2% of girls and 50.7% of boys achieving two or more passes (Table 3.3a(i)).
- In 2013/14 55.8% of young people (16-18) in England passed two or more A levels (or equivalent).
- Mathematics, English (including English literature), and biological science were the most frequently studied subjects; modern languages, further mathematics and classical studies had the highest percentages of passes at grades A\*-C.

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<sup>1</sup> GCSE attainment in the first entry for each subject is counted for 2013/14 and attainment may appear to be lower compared with attainment in previous years based on best entry in circumstances where young people have entered more than once. These figures cannot be directly compared with previous years or with figures for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

## GCSE (or equivalent) attainment in Wales (Tables 3.2b(i) and 3.2b(ii))

In 2013/14 55.4% of pupils in their last year of compulsory education in Wales achieved 5 or more GCSE (or equivalent) passes at grade A\*-C including English and mathematics.

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### Higher GCSE attainment rates for girls

Girls outperformed boys with 59.7% of girls and 51.4% of boys achieving 5 or more GCSE (or equivalent) passes at grade A\*-C including English and mathematics (Table 3.2b(i)).

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### Most popular subjects are mathematics, English and English literature

The most frequently studied subjects in terms of GCSE examination entries were mathematics, English and English literature (Table 3.2b(ii)).

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### Physics, biological science and chemistry have the highest percentage of passes

The subjects with the highest percentages of passes at grade A\*-C were biological science (92%), chemistry (92%) and physics (92%).

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## A level attainment in Wales (Tables 3.3b(i) and 3.3b(ii))

- In 2013/14 30.0% of young people (16-18) in Wales passed two or more A levels.
- Girls outperformed boys with 34.1% of girls and 26.2% of boys achieving two or more passes (Table 3.3b(i)).
- English (including English literature), mathematics and history were the most frequently studied subjects.

## Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) attainment at level 5 or better (Tables 3.2c(i) and 3.2c(ii))

In 2013/14 84.4% of school leavers in Scotland obtained one or more qualifications at SCQF level 5 or better.

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### Higher SCQF level 5 attainment rates for girls

Girls outperformed boys with 86.6% of girls and 82.3% of boys gaining one or more qualifications at SCQF level 5 or better (Table 3.2c(i)).

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### Most popular subjects are mathematics, English

The most frequently studied subjects in terms of examination entries for all learners at SCQF levels 3-5 were mathematics and English (Table 3.2c(ii)).

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## Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) attainment at level 6 or better (Tables 3.3c(i) and 3.3c(ii))

In 2013/14 58.8% of school leavers in Scotland obtained one or more qualifications at SCQF level 6 or better.

- Girls outperformed boys with 64.1% of girls and 53.6% of boys gaining one or more qualifications at SCQF level 6 or better (Table 3.3c(i)).
- The most frequently studied subjects in terms of examination entries for all learners at SCQF level 6 were English (32,300 entries) and mathematics (21,900) (Table 3.3d(ii)). The percentages of passes at grade A for these subjects were 22% for English and 25% for Mathematics.

## GCSE (or equivalent) attainment in Northern Ireland (Tables 3.2d(i) and 3.2d(ii))

In 2013/14 65.2% of pupils in their last year of compulsory education in Northern Ireland achieved 5 or more GCSE (or equivalent) passes at grade A\*-C including English and mathematics.

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### Higher GCSE attainment rates for girls

Girls outperformed boys with 69.3% of girls and 60.9% of boys achieving 5 or more GCSE (or equivalent) passes at grade A\*-C including English and mathematics (Table 3.2d(i)).

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### Most popular subjects are mathematics and English

The most frequently studied subjects in terms of GCSE examination entries were mathematics and English (Table 3.2d(ii)).

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### Physics and biological science have the highest percentage of passes

The subjects with the highest percentages of passes at grade A\*-C were biological science (95%) and physics (95%).

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## A level attainment in Northern Ireland (Tables 3.3d(i) and 3.3d(ii))

- In 2013/14 51.5% of young people in Northern Ireland passed two or more A levels.
- Girls outperformed boys with 58.7% of girls and 44.6% of boys achieving two or more passes (Table 3.3d(i)).
- Mathematics, biological science, religious studies, English (including English literature) and history were the most frequently studied subjects; further mathematics, government and politics, and modern languages had the highest percentages of passes at grades A\*-C.

## Highest qualification held by working age adults (Table 3.4)

In 2014 41% of working age adults (aged 19-64) in the UK had a qualification at NVQ Level 4 or above or equivalent qualification; 41% in England had a qualification at this level, 36% in Wales and 32% in Northern Ireland. In 2014 45% of working age adults in Scotland had a qualification at SCQF level 7 or better (Table 3.4).

- Slightly more females (42%) have an NVQ Level 4 or above in the UK than males (39%).
- In 2014 50% of 30-39 year olds had a qualification at NVQ Level 4 or above. This compares with 29% of 19-24 year olds and 35% of 50-64 year olds.

## 4. Education Expenditure (Table 4)

Total expenditure on education in 2014-15 was some £83.4 billion (Table 4). Total expenditure in real terms and as a percentage of GDP decreased over the period from 2010-11. The decrease in total expenditure from 2013-14 is due to the decreased impact of student loan impairments on expenditure on tertiary education. Earnings forecasts improved during 2014-15 (a reduction of around £1.4bn), and along with further modelling improvements (another reduction of around £1.4bn), the cost of new loans was partially offset by improvements to the value of existing loans. This reduction (£2.8bn), combined with the large increase in 2013-14 (£2.2bn), explains the significant decrease in total expenditure on education in 2014-15.

## 5. Accompanying tables

The following tables are available in Excel format on the [department's statistics website](#)

<b>Schools</b>		<b>Qualifications</b>	
1	Number of schools, by type of school	3.1	GCSE, A level, SCE/NQ and vocational qualifications obtained by pupils and students
1.2	Full-time and part-time pupils by age, gender and school type	3.2a(i)	GCSE and vocational qualifications obtained by pupils at the end of key stage 4 by gender
1.2.1	Full-time and part-time pupils by gender and school type	3.2a(ii)	GCSE entries and achievements for pupils at the end of key stage 4 by subject and gender
1.2.2	Full-time and part-time pupils by age, gender and school type	3.2b(i)	GCSE and vocational qualifications obtained by pupils in their last year of compulsory education by gender
1.3	Qualified teachers by type of school and gender	3.2b(ii)	GCSE entries and achievements for pupils in their last year of compulsory education by subject and gender
1.4	Pupil: teacher ratios (PTRs) and pupil: adult ratios (PARs) within schools, by type of school	3.2c(i)	SQA Qualifications obtained by school leavers
		3.2c(ii)	SQA qualifications entries and achievements at SCQF levels 3-5 by subject, all learners
2.1	Number of establishments of further and higher education by type, and full-time academic staff by gender	3.2d(i)	GCSE and vocational qualifications obtained by pupils in their last year of compulsory education by gender
2.2	Students in higher education by level, mode of study, gender and subject group	3.2d(ii)	GCSE entries and achievements for pupils in their last year of compulsory education by subject and gender
2.2.1	Home and Overseas Students in higher education by mode of study, gender and subject group	3.3a(i)	A level and equivalent vocational qualifications obtained by young people in Schools and Further Education Colleges by gender
2.3	Students in further education by country of study, mode of study, gender and age,	3.3a(ii)	A level and equivalent vocational qualifications obtained by young people in Schools and Further Education Colleges by gender
2.4	Students in further and higher education	3.3b(i)	A level and equivalent vocational qualifications obtained by young people in schools and further education colleges by gender
2.5	People aged from 16 to 24 Not in Education, Employment or Training ('NEET') by gender	3.3b(ii)	A level entries and achievements for young people in schools by gender and subject
		3.3c(i)	SQA qualifications obtained by school leavers
		3.3c(ii)	SQA qualifications entries and achievements at SCQF level 6 (Highers) by subject, all learners

## Qualifications

- 3.3d(i) A level and equivalent vocational qualifications obtained by young people in schools and further education colleges by gender
- 3.3d(ii) A level entries and achievements for young people in schools by gender and subject
- 3.4 Highest qualification held by working age adults, by gender, age and region

## Education Expenditure

- 4 Education expenditure on services

When reviewing the tables, please note that:

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### Rounding conventions and suppression

The National Statistics Code of Practice requires that reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that all published or disseminated statistics produced by the Department for Education protect confidentiality.

In most tables the figures are presented as whole numbers while in some tables, percentages are displayed to 1 decimal point. The rounding convention is as follows: any fractions of 0.5 and above will be rounded up, anything less than 0.5 will be rounded down.

The following conventions have been used in the tables:

- . not applicable
  - .. not available
  - nil or negligible
  - x suppressed because of small numbers
- 

## 6. National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

The department has a set of [statistical policies](#) in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

## 7. Technical Information

A quality and methodology information document accompanies this SFR. This provides further information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data, including how it is validated and processed.

## 8. Got a query? Like to give feedback?

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If from the media

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