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A level and other Level 3 results in England, academic year 2012 to 2013 (provisional)

INTRODUCTION

This Statistical First Release (SFR) provides the earliest information on the overall achievements of young people in advanced level examinations (A levels and other Level 3 qualifications).

The coverage of this release is 16 to 19 year old students¹ at the end of their final year of post-16 study in schools and colleges in England. The information is based on data collated for the 2013 School and College Performance Tables and covers achievements in all Level 3 qualifications approved under Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act (2000). More information on the Performance Tables can be found here: www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/

The 2013 School and College Performance Tables will be published in January 2014, and will contain new indicators for three different cohorts of students based on the type of qualifications they are taking: A level, academic and vocational. The new indicators have been introduced to the Performance Tables to recognise vocational performance distinct from academic performance and take account of students that are on mixed programmes. These new measures are included in the SFR. Please see the technical notes section for details of the changes.

The achievement data underpinning the SFR is currently being processed following checks by schools and colleges. Revised figures will be published in January 2014 accounting for amendments made by schools during the checking exercise.

2011/12 figures shown in this SFR have been updated from revised to final.

¹ Students aged 16 to 18 at the start of the 2012/13 academic year, i.e. as at the 31st August 2012. Refer to technical notes.

KEY STATISTICS

This section provides an overview of the key messages and statistics for A level and other Level 3 results in England in the academic year 2012 to 2013.

These findings are based on provisional 2012/13 data and all comparisons are made against final² 2011/12 figures. To note, performance tends to increase between provisional and final data³.

More students entered for qualifications	6.7 per cent more students entered for at least one substantial Level 3 qualification in 2012/13, 409,896 compared to 384,017 in 2011/12. ⁴
Lower percentage achieved at least two qualifications	90.4 per cent of students achieved at least two substantial Level 3 qualifications compared with 93.6 per cent in 2011/12.
Average point score per student dropped	The average point score per student entered for at least one substantial Level 3 qualification dropped to 709.1 compared with 733.3 ³ in 2011/12.
Average point score per entry was almost unchanged	The average Level 3 point score per entry was relatively unchanged at 212.7 compared to 212.8 in 2011/12.
Percentage of males and females achieving two qualifications was similar	89.9 per cent of males and 90.9 per cent of females achieved at least two substantial Level 3 qualifications.
Average point scores were higher for females	The average total point score achieved by females was 727.1. This was 37.8 points higher than the average point score for males, which was 689.3. The average points per entry was 216.5 for females which was 8.1 points higher than males, where the average points per entry was 208.4.
But, percentage of males achieving top scores was higher than females	12.6 per cent of males entered for at least one A level achieved three A* or A grades compared to 11.7 per cent of females.

² These figures are referred to as 'final' because they are based on the final KS5 data for the reporting year, which is not subject to any further change. The final data has been amended by schools and colleges via the school and college checking exercise, and includes any additional data supplied by awarding organisations. This data is published in the Performance Tables.

³ Earlier Data indicates that the percentage of students achieving the equivalent of two or more A levels will increase between provisional and final data. For example, the provisional 2011/12 percentage was 91.7 per cent, compared with the final figure of 93.6 per cent.

⁴ A 'substantial' advanced level academic or vocational qualification is defined as a qualification that is at least the size of an A level (180 guided learning hours per year), such as a BTEC Subsidiary Diploma (Level 3). To note, academic qualifications include A levels.

DETAILED STATISTICS

This section provides a further break-down of the key statistics, including trends over time and break-downs by different cohorts, institution-types, A level subjects, and grade combinations.

The 2012/13 SFR presents new statistics for three different 'cohorts' of students following programmes of differing qualification types: 'A level'; 'academic'⁵ (includes A level students); and vocational cohort.

New ways of presenting the data have also been introduced, such as presenting statistics for each cohort on:

- Number of students in the cohort
- The average point score per entry for the cohort
- Number of full-time equivalent students in the cohort
- The average point score per full-time equivalent for the cohort
- The percentage of students in the cohort who achieve two or more substantial advanced level qualifications in the cohort.

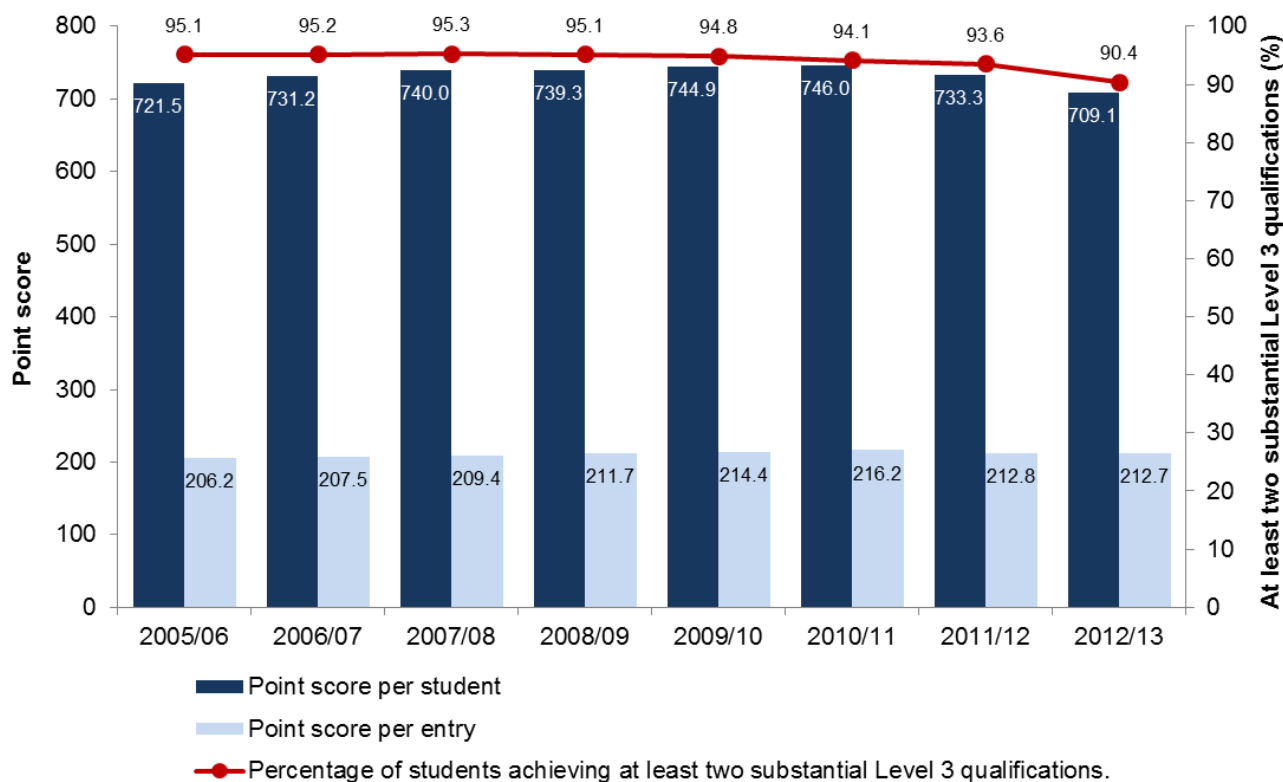
The overall results for students across all Level 3 qualifications are still presented as in previous SFRs, along with information on A level student achievements, such as the percentage achieving three A* or A grades or better.

Level 3 trends over time (Chart 1)

- There has been a gradual decline in the percentage of students who achieved at least two substantial Level 3 qualifications between 2007/08 and 2012/13, down from 95.3 per cent to 90.4 per cent (see footnote 3 on page 2).
- For the second year running, there was a fall in average point scores per student and per entry from 2011/12, which contrasts with a broadly increasing trend in the six years up to 2010/11.

⁵ Often simply referred to as the 'academic' cohort in the SFR.

Chart 1: Average point score for all Level 3 qualifications per student and per entry and the percentage of students achieving at least two substantial Level 3 qualifications in all schools and colleges in England, 2005/06 to 2012/13 (see Table 1b)



Level 3 results for students aged 16 to 19 in all schools and colleges in England by cohort and institution-type (Table 1d)

This section reports separate information on A level, academic and vocational students. Some students may belong to more than one cohort, therefore full-time equivalent (FTE) figures are provided alongside student numbers. Refer to the Technical notes section for more information on cohorts and full-time equivalent methodology.

The A level cohort is a sub-set of the academic cohort. Academic performance is mainly driven by A level entries and so the pattern of achievement is similar across the A level and academic cohorts (see charts 2 and 3). The following key points will therefore draw comparisons between academic and vocational performance only.

Key points (Chart 2 and 3)

- Academic students achieve more substantial qualifications than vocational students across all institutions but the average grade per academic and vocational entry is similar (214.9 and 213.1, respectively, equivalent to a 'C' grade at A level).
- Independent schools have the strongest performance, most noticeably they score a grade higher (equivalent to a B grade) per academic and vocational qualification compared to other institutions (equivalent to a C grade).
- The average point score per FTE academic student is substantially higher than per FTE vocational student across all institution types. FE sector colleges score substantially lower per FTE vocational student than in state-funded and independent schools. This score takes account of the size of qualifications taken by students achieving both academic and vocational qualifications.

- The average grade per vocational qualification is also higher in schools (grade B-) compared to FE colleges (grade C average).

Chart 2: Average point score per entry by cohort and institution type, 2012/13

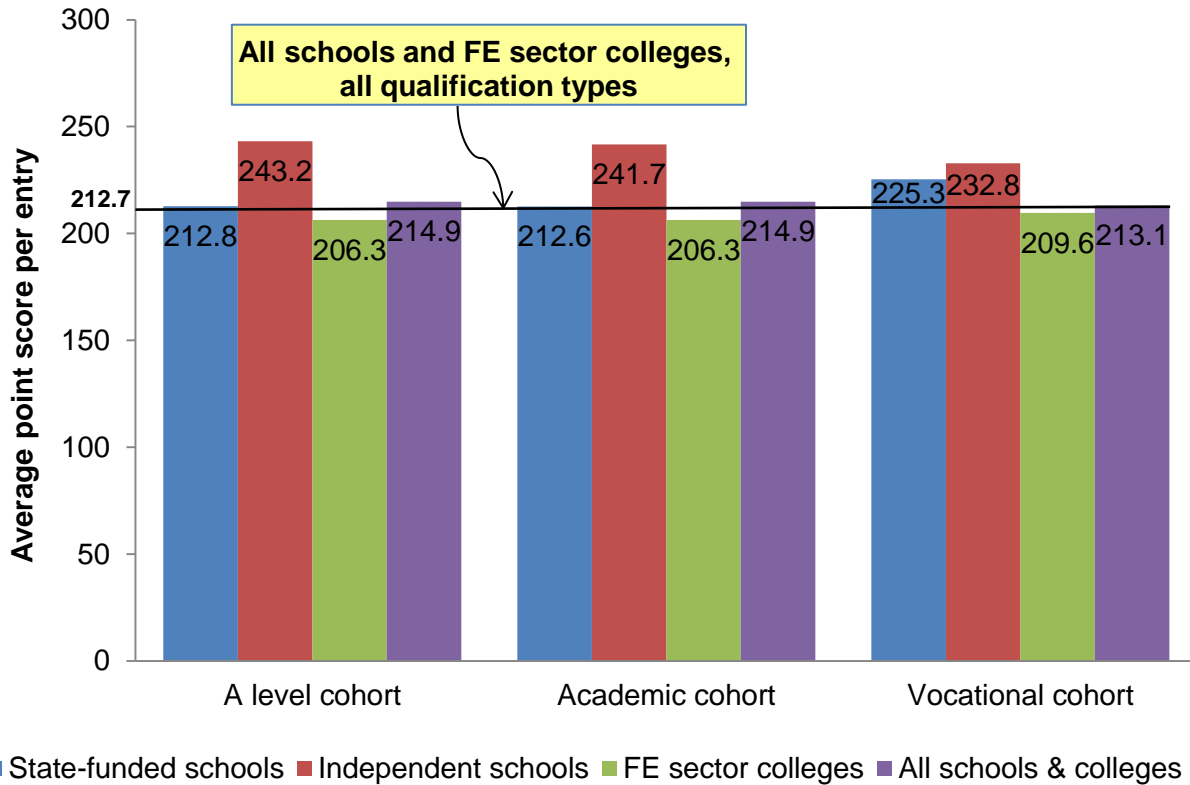
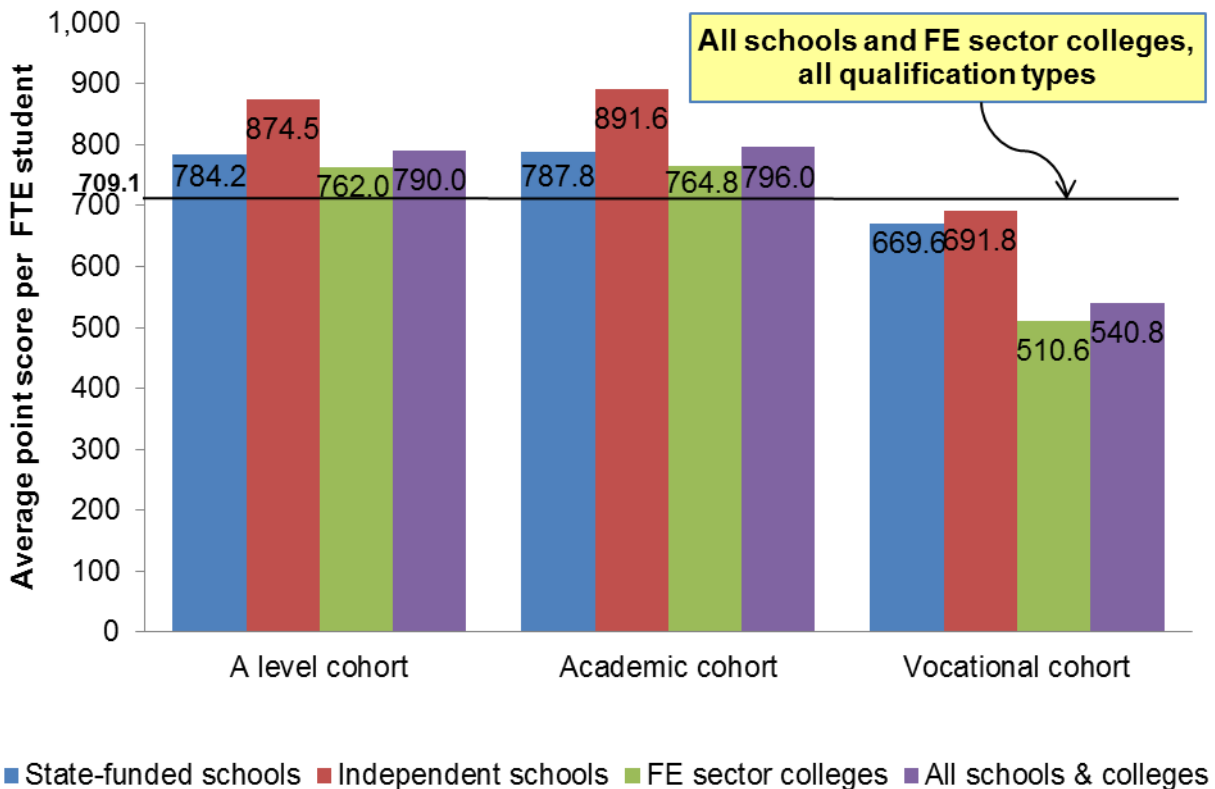


Chart 3: Average point score per full-time equivalent (FTE) student by cohort and institution type, 2012/13



A level cohort_(Table 1d)

This cohort includes A level and Applied A level students.

Average point score per entry

- There were 266,074 students entered for at least one A level, Applied single award A level or Applied double award A level qualifications in 2012/13, up 1.6 per cent from 262,003 in 2011/12.
- The average point score per entry for the A level cohort was 214.9 (a grade C at A level is equal to 210 points), and was higher for females (217.5) than males (211.8). This average differed between institution types; students at independent schools achieved an average point score per entry of 243.2 compared to 212.8 in state-funded schools and 206.3 in FE colleges.

Average point score per full-time equivalent

- There were 248,822 full-time equivalent students entered for at least one A level, Applied single award A level and Applied double award A level qualifications in 2012/13.
- The average point score per full-time equivalent student was 790.0, and was again higher for females (799.6) than males (778.3). Independent schools achieved much higher average point scores per full-time equivalent (874.5) compared to state-funded (784.2) and FE colleges (762.0).

Achievement of two substantial qualifications

- Of the 266,074 students who entered for at least one qualification in this cohort, 92.6 per cent achieved at least two A level/Applied A level qualifications.

Academic cohort (Table 1d)

This cohort includes A level students and students entered for other Level 3 academic qualifications.

Average point score per entry

- There were 269,652 students entered for at least one substantial Level 3 academic qualification in 2012/13.
- The average point score per entry was 214.9 and was higher for females (217.5) than males (211.8). Similarly to the A-level cohort, students in independent schools achieved much better scores (241.7) compared to state-funded and FE colleges (212.6 and 206.3, respectively).

Average point score per full-time equivalent

- There were 255,383 full-time equivalent students entered for at least one substantial Level 3 academic qualification in 2012/13.
- The average point score per full-time equivalent student was 796.0, and was again higher for females (805.5) than males (784.3). Similarly to the A-level cohort, independent schools achieved higher average point scores per full-time equivalent (891.6) compared to state-funded schools and FE colleges (787.8 and 764.8, respectively).

Achievement of two substantial qualifications

- Of the 269,652 students who entered for at least one qualification in this cohort, 92.7 per cent achieved at least two substantial Level 3 academic qualifications.

Vocational cohort (table 1d)

This cohort includes students entered for Level 3 vocational qualifications.

Average point score per entry

- There were 172,688 students entered for at least one substantial Level 3 vocational qualification in 2012/13.
- The average point score per entry was 213.1 and was higher for females (219.0) than males (207.7). Both state-funded and independent schools achieved average point scores above this (225.3 and 232.8, respectively) compared to a below average point score by students at FE colleges (209.6).

Average point score per full-time equivalent

- There were 154,513 full-time equivalent students entered for at least one vocational qualification in 2012/13.
- The average point score per full-time equivalent student was 540.8, and was again higher for females (553.2) than males (529.2). State-funded and independent schools average point scores are much higher (669.6 and 691.8, respectively) compared to FE sector colleges (510.6).

Achievement of two substantial qualifications

- Of the 172,688 students who entered for at least one qualification in this cohort, 65.9 per cent achieved at least two substantial Level 3 vocational qualifications. This is nearly a third less than the proportion of academic students who achieved two substantial qualifications.

A level statistics (table 1a)

A level results by grade and institution type

Of the students entered for at least one A level, Applied single award A level or Applied double award A level in 2012/13:

- Fewer students achieved the top A*/A grades in three A levels (12.1 per cent compared to 12.8 per cent in 2011/12, a decrease of 0.7 percentage points).
- 14.9 per cent–achieved grades AAB or better at A level, at least two of which were in facilitating subjects⁶.

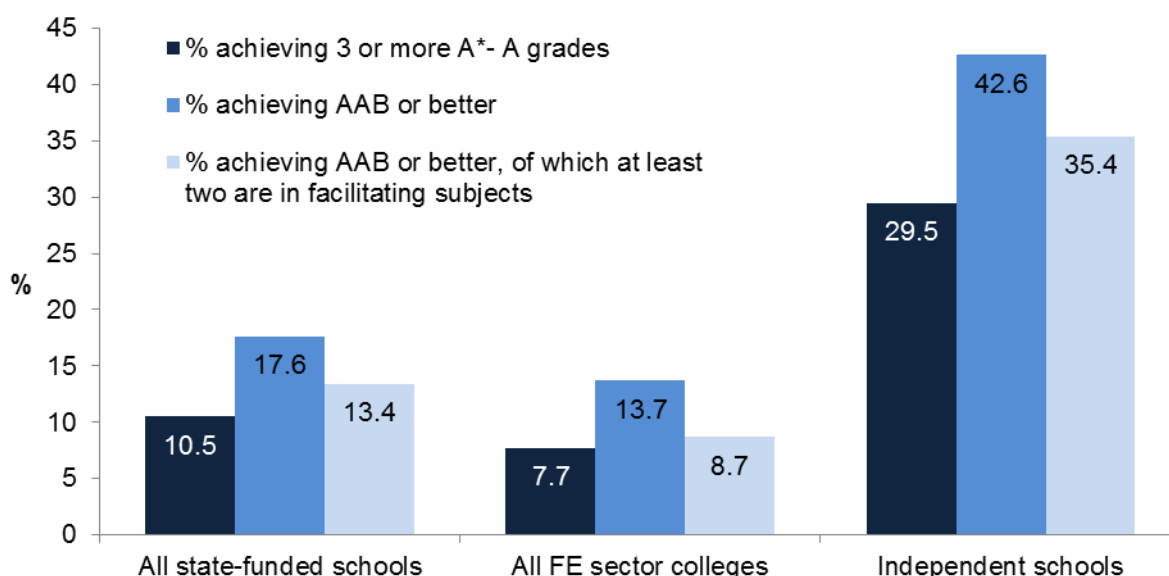
⁴ Facilitating A level subjects are biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, further mathematics, geography, history, English (Literature), modern and classical languages. See technical notes for information on the 'AAB' methodology for facilitating subjects.

- A greater percentage of male students achieved the highest grades compared to female students:
 - A higher percentage of male students (12.6 per cent) achieved three A*/A grades compared to female students (11.7 per cent).
 - A higher percentage of male students (16.1 per cent) achieved AAB in two facilitating subjects compared to female students (13.9 per cent).

The percentage of these students achieving the highest grades at A level varies between institution type (Chart 4). A substantially higher proportion of students in independent schools attain the highest grades compared to other institutions.

- 29.5 per cent of students in independent schools achieved three A*/A grades compared with state-funded schools (10.5 per cent) and Further Education (FE) sector colleges (7.7 per cent).
- 42.6 per cent of students in independent schools achieved grades AAB or better compared with 17.6 per cent in state-funded schools 13.7 per cent and FE sector colleges.
- 35.4 per cent achieved grades AAB or better at A level, of which at least two were in facilitating subjects compared with 13.4 per cent state-funded schools and 8.7 per cent of FE sector colleges.

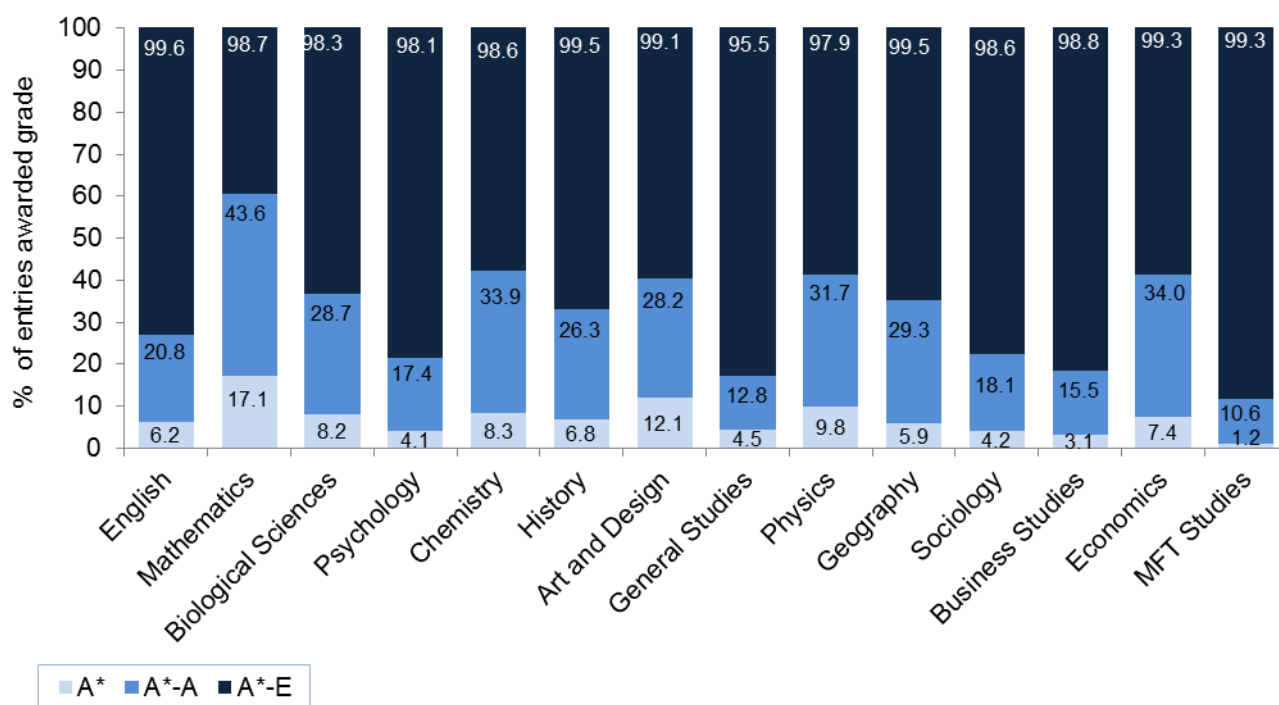
Chart 4: Percentage of A level/Applied A level students achieving 3 A* - A grades or better, AAB or better and AAB or better, of which at least two are in facilitating subjects by type of institution, 2012/13 (Table 1a)



A level examination entries and results by subject for students aged 16 to 19 in all schools and colleges in England in 2012/13 (Table 2)

- There were 773,645 A level entries, a decrease of 0.7 per cent from 779,479 in 2011/12.
- The pass rate (percentage of entries awarded A* to E grades) was 98.7 per cent which is relatively unchanged from last year (98.6 per cent). The grades awarded in the most popular subjects (those with over 20,000 entries), including A* and A*/A grades, are shown in Chart 5.
- There was a slight decrease (0.6 percentage points) in the percentage of A level entries awarded an A* or A grade compared to a peak of 2010/11, down from 27.2 per cent to 26.6 per cent (7.8 per cent A* grades and 18.8 per cent A grades). This is still substantially higher than the 1995/96 figure of 16.2 per cent.
- A high percentage of entries in Further Mathematics (28.0 per cent) and Mathematics (17.1 per cent) were awarded A* grades. In 2011/12 these figures were 28.5 per cent and 18.0 per cent, respectively.

Chart 5: Grades achieved by 16 to 18 year olds in the most popular A level subjects, all schools and colleges in England, 2012/13 (Table 2)



Note: MFT studies is Media/Film/Television studies

A level examination entries by subject (table 2)

- A level entries in traditional science subjects increased when compared with 2011/12. Entries in biological sciences were up by 2.5 per cent, chemistry by 5.8 per cent and physics by 3.8 per cent. Entries in mathematics and further mathematics also increased, by 3.2 per cent and 4.0 per cent respectively.
- Entries in the all modern foreign languages figures were lower overall (down by 3.9 per cent) when compared with 2011/12. French entries were down 9.2 per cent, German entries down 10.3 per cent and other modern languages down 0.2 per cent. In contrast, entries in Spanish increased by 5.2 per cent. Most of the other modern languages had a relatively small number of entries, with Chinese having the highest number of entries (2,668).
- A level subjects which showed the greatest percentage increase in entries compared to 2011/12 were economics (up 8.9 per cent), chemistry (up 5.8 per cent) and home economics (up 5.4 per cent).
- A level subjects which showed the greatest percentage decrease in entries compared to 2011/12 were physical education (down 12.4 per cent), other communication studies (down 11.7 per cent) and general studies (down 11.2 per cent).

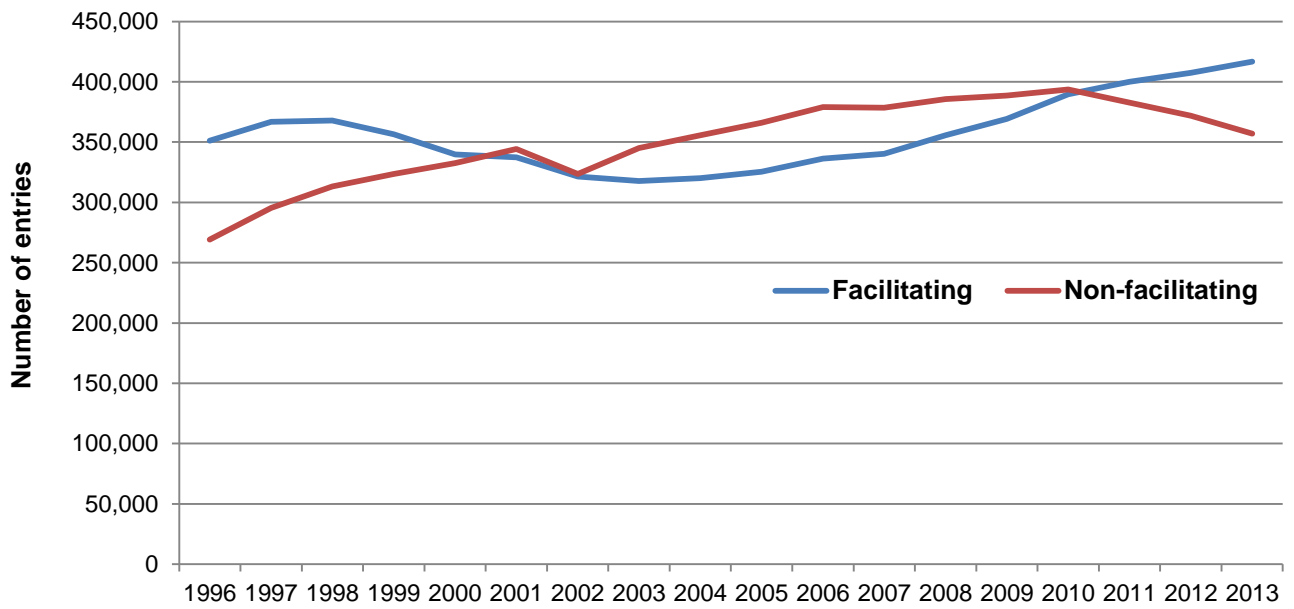
Trends in A level examination entries since 1996 by facilitating and non-facilitating subjects (Chart 6)

Chart 6 shows the number of entrants in A level 'facilitating' and 'non-facilitating' subjects where possible based on the subject breakdowns available in Table 2. For the purpose of this chart, subjects categorised as 'facilitating' are: biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, further mathematics, geography, history, English and all language subjects⁷. All other subjects are categorised as 'non-facilitating'.

- Entries in facilitating subjects have increased overall year on year since 2003, whereas entries in non-facilitating subjects have decreased since 2010 (see chart 6).
- The number of entrants in facilitating subjects has been greater than the number of entrants in non-facilitating since 2011 (416,740 entrants in facilitating subjects in 2013 compared to 356,905 in non-facilitating subjects in 2013).

⁷ To note, English Literature is specified as a 'facilitating' subject and used to calculate the new AAB indicator, English Language is not. For the purpose of Chart 6 however, both are included as facilitating subjects given Table 2 does not include a breakdown of 'English' into English Literature and English Language. Similarly, Classical languages, is not specified in the subject breakdown in Table 2 and therefore not included as a 'facilitating subject' in Chart 6. In this way, the trend lines in Chart 6 are approximations based on subject breakdowns traditionally produced for this SFR.

Chart 6: Entries in facilitating and non-facilitating A level subjects by 16 to 19 year olds since 1996, all schools and colleges in England (Table 14)



TABLES

These tables show information for England and are available from DfE at:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/series/statistics-a-as-levels-key-stage-5

National level

Table 1a: GCE (General Certificate of Education) A level and Level 3 results of students aged 16 to 19 by institution type and gender, 2012/13

Table 1b: Time series of GCE A level and Level 3 results of students aged 16 to 19 by gender, 2005/06 to 2012/13

Table 1c: GCE A level and Level 3 results of state-funded school students aged 16 to 19 by admission basis and gender, 2012/13

Table 1d: Level 3 results of students aged 16 to 19 by institution type, cohort and gender

Table 2: GCE A level examination results of students aged 16 to 19 by subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 2m: GCE A level examination results of male students aged 16 to 19 by subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 2f: GCE A level examination results of female students aged 16 to 19 by subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 3: GCE AS level examination results of students aged 16 to 19 by subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 3m: GCE AS level examination results of male students aged 16 to 19 by subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 3f: GCE AS level examination results of female students aged 16 to 19 by subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 4: 2012 GCE AS level examination results of current Year 13 students aged 16 to 19 by subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 4m: 2012 GCE AS level examination results of current Year 13 male students aged 16 to 19 by subject and grade

Table 4f: 2012 GCE AS level examination results of current Year 13 female students aged 16 to 19 by subject and grade

Table 5: GCE Applied Single A level examination results of students aged 16 to 19 by gender, subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 6: GCE Applied Single AS level examination results of students aged 16 to 19 by gender, subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 7: GCE Applied Double Award A level examination results of students aged 16 to 19 by gender, subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 8: GCE Applied Double Award AS level examination results of students aged 16 to 19 by gender, subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 9: GCE A level examination results of students aged 16 to 19 by institution type, gender and grade, 2012/13

Table 10: GCE A level examination results of state-funded school students aged 16 to 19 by admission basis, gender and grade, 2012/13

Table 11a: GCE A level examination results of state-funded school students aged 16 to 19 by subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 11b: GCE A level examination results of independent school students aged 16 to 19 by subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 11c: GCE A level examination results of all further education sector college students aged 16 to 19 by subject and grade, 2012/13

Table 11d: GCE A level examination results of sixth form college students aged 16 to 19 by subject and grade, 2012/13

Local Authority/Regional level: state-funded institutions only

Table 12a: GCE A level and Level 3 results of all state-funded students aged 16 to 19 by gender, local authority and region, 2012/13

Table 12b: GCE A level and Level 3 results of state-funded school students aged 16 to 19 by gender, local authority and region, 2012/13

Table 13a: Number of GCE A level examination entries by all state-funded students aged 16 to 19 by subject, local authority and region, 2012/13

Table 13b: Number of GCE A level A-A* grades achieved by all state-funded students aged 16 to 19 by subject, local authority and region, 2012/13

Table 13c: Number of GCE A level A*-E grades achieved by all state-funded students aged 16 to 19 by subject, local authority and region, 2012/13

Time series

Table 14: GCE A level examination results of students aged 16 to 19 by subject, grade and gender, 1995/96 to 2012/13

Table 15: GCE AS level examination results of students aged 16 to 19 by subject, grade and gender, 2000/01 to 2012/13

TECHNICAL NOTES

Coverage

The statistics in this first release cover the data currently being prepared for the publication of the 2013 16-19 School and College Performance Tables due to be published in January 2014.

The 16-19 Performance Tables report cumulative achievements of students aged 16 to 19 who are at the end of 'advanced level' study, typically lasting two years (often referred to as 'being at the end of Key Stage 5' or KS5).

Therefore, results achieved by students in the two most recent academic years are included in the 16-19 Performance Tables, giving a cumulative picture of achievement by the reporting year. However, to avoid double counting results, qualification discounting is applied where, for example, if a student achieves an AS en route to achieving an A level in the same subject, only the A level pass is included.

Students will be eligible to be reported in the 2013 16-19 Performance Tables (to be published in January 2014) if they satisfy the following criteria:

1. Were aged 16, 17 or 18 on 31 August 2012
2. Were on roll in January 2013
3. Were in, or deemed to be in, Year 13
4. Completed their advanced studies in the 2012/13 academic year

Students are identified as being at the end of KS5 for the 16-19 Performance Tables checking exercise by counting those students meeting the 1st, 2nd and 3rd criteria above, and who have been entered for at a Level 3 qualification of at least the size of one A level in the 2012/13 academic year. Schools and colleges can subsequently make amendments to add or remove students during the checking exercise where appropriate (e.g. where students are part way through their studies, so not at the end of KS5).

Similarly, this SFR includes 16 to 19 year old students at the end of their final year of post-16 study. A similar set of 'inclusion' criteria are also used, e.g. students must be aged 16, 17 or 18 at the start of the reporting year (i.e. as at 31st August 2012), and they must have been entered for a Level 3 qualification of at least the size of one A level in the 2012/13 academic year.

Tables 1a, b, c & d and 12a & b show cumulative results obtained by students in the academic years 2011/12 and 2012/13.

Minor methodology change

This change relates to the number of students entered for GCE/Applied A level or Double Awards shown in Table 1a, and used in a small number of calculations such as the 'AAB' measures.

Previously this number was based on A level entries in the summer of the reporting year (for this SFR it would be summer 2013 entries). However, following changes for the 2013 Performance Tables and the introduction of academic and vocational indicators, this number is now based on entries 'in the reporting year' (for this SFR, the reporting year is 2012/13).

The rationale for the change relates to the way entries and results are possible earlier during the reporting year, i.e. not just the summer period. In reality, however, for the A level entries this does not make much of impact.

Table 1a shows that the number of students entered for GCE/Applied A level or Double Award in the 2012/13 reporting year was 266,074, whereas the equivalent number for summer entries was 266,033. This change has a negligible impact on indicators which use this measure.

Approved qualifications and Performance Table tariff

The range of qualifications reported in this SFR covers all Level 3 qualifications approved under Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act (2000). In order to do so the Performance Table tariff for Level 3 qualifications has been adopted in this SFR.

Annex A lists some common qualifications and their point scores based on the Performance Table tariff. For the purposes of calculating average Level 3 point scores, Level 3 qualifications are also assigned a "size" relative to A level. General/Applied General AS has a size of 0.5, whereas an Applied General Double Award has a size of 2 compared to an A level of size 1.

Other approved qualifications at Level 3 and their point scores can be found at www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk

Definitions

- Age used for reporting examinations and awards is "age in years at start of academic year, i.e. 31 August 2012". Students aged 18 at the start of an academic year will turn 19 during that year. Therefore, the age range 16 to 19, rather than 16 to 18, is used to give a more accurate description of the students reported in this SFR.
- Further notes on coverage and definitions can be found at the bottom of each table.

School status

For the purposes of this SFR, the date of 12 September 2012 has been used to determine the status of a school. Any schools which converted to an academy on or before this date have been published as an Academy and those that have converted after this date have been treated as their predecessor school type. This is the same as the policy adopted in the School Performance Tables and in other school level releases.

AS and A levels

The AS (Advanced Subsidiary) can be studied as either a free standing qualification, or as the first half of the full A level. At the end of the AS, students can either take the AS as the final qualification or continue to the (usually) second year and undertake the full A level by taking the A2. The A2 is not a separate qualification, but the second half of the A level and is designed to deepen the knowledge gained during the AS.

On completion of the AS, results can be claimed or 'cashed-in' with the examination board or delayed to re-sit a module, or possibly not cashed-in at all if the student progresses on to the A2 part of the A level. This 'cashing-in' behaviour appears to have changed given recent policy changes on how qualification success rates are calculated and funding allocations derived (see 'Uncashed AS Results' and 'Impact of Cashing-in').

‘Uncashed’ AS results

Since the 2010/11 academic year, performance measures and success rates for all qualifications (including the AS) are calculated according to when the qualifications are due to end (i.e. the planned end date), regardless of whether they are cashed-in (i.e. claimed). Any AS that has a one year end date that is not cashed-in will be treated as a ‘fail’ for success rate purposes. As most AS courses are taught over 1 year, it is expected that the vast majority will be ‘cashed-in’ at the end of one year’s teaching.

Impact of ‘cashing-in’

The number of examination entries and results in this SFR are affected by whether the AS is ‘cashed-in’. If an AS is not cashed-in then it will not appear in the figures presented in this SFR. The above policy change appears to have changed cashing-in behaviour, resulting in a higher number of examination entries recorded in this SFR and last year’s SFR (see AS entries with discounting -Table 3).

Discounting of AS entries and results (table 4)

Where qualifications taken by a student are in the same subject area and similar in content, ‘discounting’ rules have been applied in this SFR, so that qualifications are not double counted. For example, where a student has gained an AS en route to an A level in the same subject, only the A level result will count (i.e. the AS is ‘discounted’ as it is part of the A level). However, if a student fails to obtain a pass grade at A level, the AS pass grade would be reported.

The same discounting principle is applied to the 16-19 School and College Performance Tables, with discounting taking place over two years as students are expected to complete an A level in that period of time by the end of KS5 (typically age 18). Single year discounting is applied in this SFR to discount the AS if it was cashed-in in the same year as the A level result. In the SFR, results are published for a particular year rather than reporting on results by the end of KS5.

By applying discounting the number of examination entries and results is underestimated for the reporting year in this SFR. In order to show the effect of discounting, this SFR shows two sets of AS tables, one with discounting applied and one which shows the discounted entries. Table 4 shows the AS levels which were ‘cashed in’ during the current year, but which were discounted by an A level.

Students do not tend to do the AS and the A level in the same year. If the AS is cashed in same year as the A level it will be discounted in this SFR using single year discounting for the reporting year. In most cases where an AS qualification is discounted by an A level, it is likely to be from the previous SFR reporting year, but was not cashed in at the time.

This is why the title of Table 4 states that it shows those AS results that are from 2012 (not 2013) and were taken by the current Year 13 students (i.e. those predominantly at the end of KS5 after 2 years in 2013). Table 4 is intended to show that the AS entries/results in Table 3 of this SFR cannot be taken as a true measure of participation due to a mix of cashing-in and qualification discounting.

A* grade at A level (Table 2)

The A level consists of the ‘AS’ and the ‘A2’, which together make up the overall A level grade (see above). A new A* grade was awarded for the first time in 2010 to reward exceptional performance in A2 units. It is awarded to students who achieve a grade A overall at A level and who also achieve 90 per cent or more on the uniform mark scale (UMS) across their A2 units.

Participation figures

Discounting and cashing-in behaviour affect the examination entry (and achievement) figures shown in this SFR. Therefore the entry data should not be taken as a measure of participation. The DfE SFR '*Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16 to 18 Year Olds in England*' should be consulted for participation data, the latest version of which can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/participation-in-education-training-and-employment-by-16-to-18-year-olds-in-england-end-2011

A DfE analysis paper investigating the impact of discounting and 'cashing-in' was published with SFR27/2011 and is provided in the 'Additional text' document at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/provisional-gce-or-applied-gce-a-and-as-and-equivalent-examination-results-in-england-academic-year-2010-to-2011

AAB indicators

There are three 'AAB' indicators provided in this SFR (see tables 1a,1c, 12a and 12b):

1. The percentage of students achieving grades AAB or better at A level or Applied single/double award A level.
2. The percentage of students achieving grades AAB or better at A level, of which at least two are in facilitating subjects.
3. The percentage of students achieving grades AAB or better at A level, all of which are in facilitating subjects.

Methodology for calculating the AAB indicators

1. The percentage of students achieving grades AAB or better at A level or Applied single/double award A level = the number of students achieving grades AAB or better at A level or Applied single/double award A level / number of students entered for at least one A level or Applied single/double award A level
2. The percentage of students achieving grades AAB or better at A level, of which at least two are in facilitating subjects = the number of students achieving grades AAB or better at A level of which at least two are in facilitating subjects / number of students entered for at least one A level or Applied single/double award A level.
3. The percentage of students achieving grades AAB or better at A level, all of which are in facilitating subjects = the number of students achieving grades AAB or better at A level all of which are facilitating subjects / number of students entered for at least one A level or Applied single/double award A level.

Facilitating subjects cover biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, further mathematics, geography, history, English literature, modern and classical languages.
A full list of facilitating subjects is available here:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/16to18_12/KS5Facil.pdf

New cohorts

The 2013 School and College Performance Tables will be published in January 2014, and will contain new indicators for different cohorts of students undertaking particular types of qualifications. The 'cohorts' are grouped as:

1. A level cohort: includes GCE A level, Applied A level and Double Award A level.
2. Academic cohort: includes 'substantial' advanced level academic qualifications, defined as qualifications that are at least the size of an A level (180 guided learning hours per year). More specifically, this includes A level cohort qualifications; International Baccalaureate; Pre-U; Advanced Extension Award; Free Standing Maths Qualification Level 3; Extended Project (Diploma); and other Level 3 academic qualifications.
3. Vocational cohort: includes 'substantial' advanced level vocational qualifications, defined as qualifications that are at least the size of an A level (180 guided learning hours per year). More specifically, this includes BTEC Level 3 awards, certificates and diplomas; NVQ level 3 qualifications; QCF Level 3 language qualifications; OCR Level 3 National certificates and diplomas; VRQ Level 3; and other Level 3 vocational qualifications.

This SFR uses some of the new indicators/cohorts, including the average point score per full-time equivalent (APS/FTE) for the A level, academic and vocational cohorts.

APS/FTE for the A level, academic and vocational cohorts

These new indicators have been introduced to the PTs with the intention of allowing a fairer comparison of the different cohorts, particularly where students are undertaking a mix of academic and vocational qualifications. The APS/FTE uses a 'cohort weighting/proportion' based on the size of the qualifications an individual is learning.

Example

If someone is undertaking 1 A level and a BTEC qualification equivalent to 3 A levels, the new FTE 'weighting' approach would result in this individual having a FTE of 0.25 in the both the academic and A level cohorts and 0.75 in the vocational cohort. The current approach (used for the APS per student indicators) would simply place this individual in all 3 cohorts and take no account of the fact that they are involved in significantly more vocational than academic learning.

Methodology

The proportion of time spent taking academic or vocational qualifications is calculated by:

Academic proportion = Total size of academic qualifications taken by students in the academic cohort / (Total size of academic qualifications taken by students in the academic cohort + total size of vocational qualifications taken by students in the vocational cohort). This proportion is calculated per student.

Vocational proportion = Total size of vocational qualifications taken by students in the vocational cohort / (Total size of academic qualifications taken by students in the academic cohort + total size of vocational qualifications taken by students in the vocational cohort). This proportion is calculated per student.

A level proportion = Total size of A level qualifications taken by students in the A level cohort / (Total size of academic qualifications taken by students in the academic cohort + total size of vocational qualifications taken by students in the vocational cohort). This proportion is calculated per student.

Academic APS/FTE = Total point score for all academic qualifications taken by students in the academic cohort / sum (Academic proportion).

Vocational APS/FTE = Total point score for all vocational qualifications taken by students in the vocational cohort / sum (Vocational proportion).

A level APS/FTE = Total point score for all A level qualifications taken by students in the A level cohort / sum (A level proportion).

National Statistics Publication

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, which are published at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-for-official-statistics-published-by-the-department-for-education

Confidentiality

The Code of Practice for Official Statistics requires that reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that all published or disseminated statistics produced by the DfE protect confidentiality. The following suppression conventions have been used in this statistical release:

- Any numbers less than 3 (1 to 2 inclusive) have been suppressed and have been replaced by an 'x'.
- Percentages are displayed to one decimal place but where the numerator is between 1 and 2 inclusive, they have been suppressed.
- Where any number is shown as zero (0), the original figure submitted was zero.
- A '.' represents data not applicable.

More information on the Code of Practice for Official Statistics is available here: www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html

Related Publications

Earlier A level/Level 3 SFR publications are available here:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/series/statistics-a-as-levels-key-stage-5

Provisional GCSE and equivalent results and national curriculum teacher assessments at key stage 3 in England: academic year 2012 to 2013

This publication and earlier publications are available at:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/series/statistics-gcses-key-stage-4

Performance Tables: Information on the achievements of secondary pupils and 16 to 19 year old students in schools and colleges in England:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/

Examination Results, 2012/13 (provisional): This publication is produced by the Welsh Government and provides the earliest results of external examinations taken by pupils aged 15 or 17 in schools in Wales in 2012/13.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/schools2013/examination-results-2012-13-provisional/?lang=en>

The Department for Education Northern Ireland (DENI) have published A and AS level headline statistics 2013 on their website, which are available at:

www.deni.gov.uk/index/facts-and-figures-new/education-statistics/115-curriculum-and-assessment-qualifications-pg/a-and-as-level-headline-statistics-2013.htm

'Summary statistics for attainment, leaver destinations and healthy living, No. 3: 2013 Edition' is published by the Scottish Government and is available at:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/06/7503

ENQUIRIES

Enquiries about the figures contained in this press release should be addressed to:

Schools Performance Data Unit
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
LONDON
SW1P 3BT
Telephone Number: 0870 000 2288
Email: Attainment.STATISTICS@education.gsi.gov.uk

Press enquiries should be made to the Department's Press Office at:

Press Office Newsdesk,
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
LONDON
SW1P 3BT
Telephone Number: 020 7783 8300

ANNEX A – EXAMPLE PERFORMANCE TABLES TARIFF POINTS

The DfE Performance Tables can be found at: www.education.gov.uk/performancetables/

GCE/Applied A level		
Grade	Size	Points
A*	1	300
A	1	270
B	1	240
C	1	210
D	1	180
E	1	150

BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma (QCF)		
Grade	Size	Points
D*	1	270
D	1	225
M	1	195
P	1	165

International Baccalaureate Diploma		
Grade	Size	Points
45	5.5	1518
44	5.5	1485
43	5.5	1452
42	5.5	1419
41	5.5	1386
40	5.5	1353
39	5.5	1320
38	5.5	1287
37	5.5	1254
36	5.5	1221
35	5.5	1188
34	5.5	1155
33	5.5	1122
32	5.5	1089
31	5.5	1056
30	5.5	1023
29	5.5	990
28	5.5	957
27	5.5	924
26	5.5	891
25	5.5	858
24	5.5	825

GCE/Applied AS level		
Grade	Size	Points
A	0.5	135
B	0.5	120
C	0.5	105
D	0.5	90
E	0.5	75

BTEC Level 3 Diploma (QCF)		
Grade	Size	Points
D*D*	2	540
D*D	2	495
DD	2	540
DM	2	420
MM	2	390
MP	2	360
PP	2	330

GCE Applied Double Award		
Grade	Size	Points
A*A*	2	600
A*A	2	570
AA	2	540
AB	2	510
BB	2	480
BC	2	450
CC	2	420
CD	2	390
DD	2	360
DE	2	330
EE	2	300

BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma (QCF)		
Grade	Size	Points
D*D*D*	3	810
D*D*D	3	765
D*DD	3	720
DDD	3	675
DDM	3	645
DMM	3	615
MMM	3	585
MMP	3	555
MPP	3	525
PPP	3	495

Advanced Free Standing Maths		
Grade	Size	Points
A	0.17	45
B	0.17	40
C	0.17	35
D	0.17	30
E	0.17	25

Advanced Extension Award		
Grade	Size	Points
D	0	27
M	0	23

Level 3 Key Skill		
Grade	Size	Points
P	0.3	63

END