

Annual Qualifications Market Report 2013

Supplementary Report: Qualifications in Schools and School Sixth Forms

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Qualifications in schools and school sixth forms

Highlights

- For the 2012 summer exam series there were 5.5 million GCSE achievements, of which 87.9 per cent were in schools in England, 3.3 per cent in schools in Northern Ireland and 5.8 per cent in schools in Wales. The remainder were in other centres in England, Northern Ireland and Wales.
- English, maths and science were the most commonly achieved GCSE subjects in schools.
- For the 2012 summer exam series there were 876,500 A level achievements, of which 62 per cent were in schools in England, 4.1 per cent in schools in Northern Ireland and 3.4 per cent in schools in Wales.
- Maths and English were the most commonly achieved A level subjects in schools.
- The number of achievements in GCSEs and A levels in schools fell in 2012.
- Over 2,000 qualifications other than GCSEs and A levels registered achievements in schools in 2011/12. A total of 1.5 million achievements were recorded for these qualifications.
- The most commonly achieved non-GCSE or non-GCE qualification in schools was the OCR Level 2 National First Award in ICT, with 143,800 achievements.
- An indicative estimate of expenditure on GCSE and A level entries in 2011/12 is just over £300 million. This includes expenditure in centres other than schools and excludes expenditure on enquiries about results where we do not have robust data on the number of refunds given where the grade changed.

Types of qualifications in schools¹

For this section of the report we consider the role of qualifications in schools, including qualifications other than GCSEs and A levels. The types of schools included are: secondary comprehensive or middle community, voluntary aided/controlled; secondary selective community, voluntary aided/controlled; secondary modern community, voluntary aided/controlled; secondary comprehensive or middle foundation; secondary selective foundation; secondary modern foundation; independent; and academies.

GCSE achievements in schools

Figure 1: GCSE achievements in schools for the 2011 and 2012 summer exam series

	Number of achievements						
GCSE achievements	Summer ser	ies 2011	Summer ser	ies 2012			
Total achievements in all schools in England	4,885,500	88.2%	4,872,600	87.9%			
Total achievements in all schools in Northern Ireland	186,762	3.4%	180,562	3.3%			
Total achievements in all schools in Wales	314,404	5.7%	320,353	5.8%			
Total achievements in all centres in Eng, Wales & NI	5,539,900	-	5,543,900	-			

Source: Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) data (unmatched)

Note: Includes GCSE (full course), GCSE (short course), applied GCSE (double award) and applied GCSE (single award).

Schools in England accounted for around 88 per cent of achievements in GCSEs in the 2012 summer exam series. Achievements fell slightly from 2011, and achievements in Northern Ireland also fell, but Wales saw a rise in both raw numbers and their share of achievements.

¹ Throughout this report the term "schools" is used as an abbreviation for "schools and school sixth forms".

	Number of achievements					
	Number of ac	nievements				
	Summer series	Summer series				
GCSE subject	2011	2012				
English	539,900	562,100				
Maths	644,100	547,500				
Science	367,600	493,000				
English literature	441,400	420,400				
Religious studies	414,300	409,100				
Additional science	278,800	262,600				
Design & technology	239,900	224,700				
History	190,200	193,700				
Geography	161,500	167,100				
Art and design subjects	164,000	159,200				
Biology	134,100	151,400				
Chemistry	131,500	148,100				
Physics	130,300	146,700				
French	141,900	140,400				
Physical education	117,800	106,800				
All other subjects	788,400	740,000				
Total	4,885,500	4,872,600				

Figure 2: The 15 GCSE subjects with the most achievements in schools in England for the 2011 and 2012 summer exam series

Source: JCQ data (unmatched). Subjects are based on JCQ categories used in published results. A longer list of subjects is given in appendix 1.

Note: Includes GCSE (full course), GCSE (short course), applied GCSE (double award) and applied GCSE (single award).

Maths showed a large decrease in achievements of 15 per cent in a single year. English literature saw a 5 per cent decrease and, at the same time, achievements in English increased by 4 per cent to make it the most achieved subject. Science saw a leap of 34 per cent in achievements, which was also mirrored in the three distinct sciences – biology, chemistry and physics – which all showed growth of 13 per cent. However, additional science saw a moderate fall in achievements of 6 per cent. History and geography both saw increases, perhaps reflecting their inclusion in the English Baccalaureate performance measure, while French fell slightly – although achievements in languages (included in appendix 1) increased overall.

AS and A level achievements in schools

Figure 3: AS achievements in selected subjects in schools for the 2011 and 2012 summer exam series

	N	umber of a	chievements	
AS achievements	Summer ser	ies 2011	Summer ser	ies 2012
Total achievements in all schools in England	808,700	62.4%	771,500	62.2%
Total achievements in all schools in Northern Ireland	44,200	3.4%	46,300	3.7%
Total achievements in all schools in Wales	35,300	2.7%	34,500	2.8%
Total achievements in all centres in Eng, Wales & NI	1,296,300	-	1,241,100	-

Source: JCQ data (unmatched)

Notes: Includes GCE advanced subsidiary, applied GCE advanced and additional AS (double award), applied GCE advanced subsidiary (single award) and applied GCE advanced subsidiary (double award).

Figure 4: A level achievements in selected subjects in schools for the 2011 and 2012 summer exam series

	Number of achievements						
A level achievements	Summer ser	ies 2011	Summer series 2012				
Total achievements in all schools in England	549,800	62.3%	543,400	62.0%			
Total achievements in all schools in Northern Ireland	35,500	4.0%	36,100	4.1%			
Total achievements in all schools in Wales	30,500	3.5%	30,000	3.4%			
Total achievements in all centres in Eng, Wales & NI	883,200	-	876,500	-			

Source: JCQ data (unmatched)

Notes: Includes A level, applied A level (double award) and applied A level (single award).

There was an overall decrease in achievements in both A levels and AS. This was mirrored in the achievements in schools in England and Wales, although Northern Ireland saw an increase in both A levels and AS. Overall, the proportion of A levels and AS taken in schools in each country remained reasonably static, with Northern Ireland's share of AS achievements showing the largest change. The proportion of achievements in GCEs in schools will be lower than for GCSEs because many achievements are in further education and sixth form colleges.

	Number of achievements							
Subject	Summer	series 2011	Summer	series 2012				
	A level	A level AS		AS				
Maths	53,000	77,000	54,800	82,200				
English	54,400	75,900	54,100	73,600				
Biology	39,000	56,100	39,400	56,400				
History	33,300	44,500	33,700	43,200				
Psychology	32,400	50,100	32,900	47,700				
Chemistry	31,100	45,300	31,900	46,300				
Art & design subjects	27,400	39,800	27,500	35,700				
Physics	22,000	33,800	22,900	34,200				
Geography	21,400	28,100	21,900	28,500				
Business studies	22,400	30,800	21,400	29,300				
General studies	24,700	46,500	20,700	35,000				
Economics	16,900	21,800	17,200	24,100				
Media/film/TV studies	17,700	27,100	16,900	22,900				
Sociology	15,500	23,900	15,700	21,900				
Religious studies	15,100	22,000	15,200	21,600				
All other subjects	123,500	185,900	117,300	168,800				
Total	549,800	808,700	543,400	771,500				

Figure 5: The 15 GCE subjects with the most achievements in schools in England for the 2011 and 2012 summer exam series

Source: JCQ data (unmatched)

Notes: Includes GCE advanced subsidiary, applied GCE advanced and additional AS (double award), applied GCE advanced subsidiary (single award) and applied GCE advanced subsidiary (double award). A longer list of subjects is given in appendices 2 and 3.

The scale of the change in volumes of achievements at A level and AS is slight and does not really represent a trend in growth or decline of different subjects. The main variations to note come in the volumes of AS achievements, which show increases for maths and economics and decreases in psychology, art and design subjects, general studies and media/film/TV studies.

The reduction of achievements in some subjects might be attributed to the Russell Group guidance on "facilitating subjects",² that is subjects that are more frequently required to gain entrance to higher education courses. The subjects given as specific examples of being "facilitating" are: maths and further maths; physics; biology; chemistry; history; geography; modern and classical languages; and English literature.

² For more information on facilitating subjects please see the Russell Group FAQs available at: <u>www.russellgroup.ac.uk/faqs</u> (accessed 29th August 2013).

Other qualification achievements in schools

Over 2,000 'Other'³ qualifications recorded an achievement in 2011/12. The following table shows the number of achievements in schools by type of qualification. It does not capture achievements in the non-regulated qualifications such as some IGCSEs.

Figure 6: The number of achievements in schools by type of qualification for 2010/11 and 2011/12

	Number of achievements						
		2010/11			2011/12		
Qualification type	England	Wales	Northern Ireland	England	Wales	Northern Ireland	
Basic skills	136,600	200	200	96,400	100	500	
Diploma English for speakers of other	0	0	0	100	0	0	
languages	3,500	100	100	2,900	0	0	
Entry level	2,700	100	100	700	0	0	
Functional skills	160,200	0	0	129,600	0	0	
Higher level	700	0	0	700	0	0	
Key skills	49,900	10,500	6,300	43,500	6,600	6,800	
National vocational qualification	3,700	200	0	800	0	0	
Occupational qualification	100	0	0	0	0	0	
Other general qualification	70,500	2,400	4,600	53,600	7,000	4,900	
Principal learning	0	0	0	200	0	0	
Project Qualifications and credit	0	0	0	0	0	0	
framework	306,500	9,200	4,400	734,300	27,100	8,200	
Vocationally-related qualification	656,000	15,400	3,900	371,900	9,400	1,800	
Total	1,390,500	38,100	19,500	1,434,700	50,200	22,200	

Source: National Information System for Vocational Qualifications (NISVQ)

There were over 1.5 million achievements for 'Other' qualifications in schools in 2011/12. This represents an increase in the number of 'Other' qualification achievements in schools in all three countries. This is linked to the broadening of the curriculum and also reflects the fall in the number of GCSE achievements.

Distribution of achievements by awarding organisations

There were 44 awarding organisations providing regulated qualifications to schools in 2011/12. The following table shows the distribution of achievements across the top

³ 'Other' qualifications refers to all regulated qualifications other than all types of GCSE and GCE AS and A levels.

20 awarding organisations, which represent 99.5 per cent of achievements in schools.

Figure 7: Distribution of achievements across awarding organisations for 'Other' qualifications in schools for 2010/11 and 2011/12

	Number of achievements					
		2010/11			2011/12	
Awarding Organisation	England	Wales	Northern Ireland	England	Wales	Northern Ireland
Edexcel ⁴	656,500	15,100	2,900	706,500	25,600	4,400
OCR	345,400	15,000	2,900	368,500	19,200	2,900
AQA	107,100	700	600	86,600	200	800
ASDAN	73,700	2,400	700	70,600	2,800	900
Sports Leaders UK	71,200	800	200	55,600	500	200
National Open College Network	7,600	100	0	41,100	100	100
NCFE	30,400	200	0	31,700	400	0
BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT	14,800	200	100	12,300	100	100
Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment	0	0	10,500	0	0	12,300
City & Guilds	12,300	400	0	11,100	300	100
The ifs School of Finance	9,800	100	200	10,200	300	100
WJEC CBAC	8,500	0	0	8,500	0	0
Trinity College London	13,700	0	0	4,700	0	0
LAMDA Examinations	4,300	100	0	4,400	100	0
The Learning Machine	1,800	0	0	4,500	0	0
Council for Awards in Care, Health and Education	3,100	400	100	3,500	200	100
International Council for the Accreditation of Academic Evaluation	1,800	0	0	3,000	0	0
University of the Arts London	0	0	0	2,500	0	0
ABC Awards	2,500	0	0	1,700	0	0
VTCT	600	100	0	1,100	0	0
Other	29,000	25,300	2,400	1,300	7,400	6,800
Total	1,390,500	38,100	19,500	1,434,700	50,200	22,200

⁴ When reporting achievements, we make reference to both Edexcel and Pearson. Achievements were awarded using the Edexcel brand name up to and including the 2011/12 academic year. The Edexcel brand name on qualifications has recently been changed to Pearson. Pearson Education Ltd is the parent company of Edexcel Ltd and the latter is now a dormant company. Therefore the names 'Edexcel' and 'Pearson' should be used interchangeably throughout this report. Education Development International (EDI) is also part of the Pearson Education group. This organisation is now known as Pearson EDI.

Source: NISVQ

Edexcel awarded nearly half of the 1.5 million achievements recorded in 'Other' qualifications, with OCR providing a further quarter. There was a distinct difference between Northern Ireland and the other countries, as the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment does not operate outside Northern Ireland, where it is the largest awarding organisation.

Edexcel, OCR and the National Open College Network saw strong growth in 2011/12, while AQA, Sports Leaders UK and Trinity College London saw a decline in their share of achievements.

The following table lists the top 20 qualifications by volume of achievements over 2010/11 and 2011/12.

Figure 8: The 20 'Other' qualifications with the most achievements in schools for 2010/11 and 2011/12

	Number of achievements							
		2010/11			2011/12			
Qualification	England	Wales	Northern Ireland	England	Wales	Northern Ireland		
OCR Level 2 National First Award in ICT	135,800	200	1,900	140,100	200	3,500		
OCR Level 2 National Award in ICT	72,900	100	1,900	75,100	200	2,100		
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Applied Science (QCF)	20,700	0	400	71,000	300	1,700		
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Sport (QCF)	8,400	0	200	48,900	300	1,400		
Sports Leaders UK Level 1 Award in Sports Leadership (QCF) Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Sport	50,600	100	300	39,200	100	200		
(QCF) Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in Adult	17,100	0	500	35,800	100	1,400		
Numeracy Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in Adult	41,900	0	100	31,000	0	100		
Literacy	43,200	0	100	30,400	0	0		
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Business (QCF)	3,900	100	100	25,800	100	1,000		
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Performing Arts (QCF)	6,200	0	100	23,600	200	700		
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Applied Science (QCF)	11,700	0	600	19,400	300	2,300		
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Art and Design (QCF)	4,100	0	100	20,300	0	700		
AQA Level 2 Certificate in Preparation for Working Life	23,600	300	300	18,600	500	100		
OCR Level 2 National First Certificate in ICT	19,400	100	300	18,300	0	300		
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Diploma in Sport (QCF)	1,900	0	100	17,200	0	500		
AQA Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 2	19,500	0	0	15,800	0	0		
AQA Level 1 Certificate in Preparation for Working Life	18,400	100	300	15,100	100	100		
Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in Maths at Level 2	23,000	0	0	15,300	0	0		
National Open College Network Level 2 Award in General Religious Education (QCF)	0	0	0	15,300	0	0		
Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in ICT at Level 2	18,900	0	0	15,200	0	0		

Source: NISVQ

The OCR Level 2 National First Award in ICT continued to be the most commonly achieved qualification in schools. It was the most commonly achieved qualification in

both England and Northern Ireland but not in Wales, where numbers of all these qualifications were low in comparison to the other countries.

The qualifications in figure 8 represent 45 per cent of all achievements in 'Other' qualifications in schools. Changes to the list of qualifications for inclusion in school performance tables from 2015 onwards mean that most of these qualifications will no longer be taken in schools or will have been re-designed to be included in performance tables.

Future qualifications in schools in England

The government in England has reformed the role that qualifications other than GCSEs and A levels play in English school performance tables, and we are waiting to see what impact the government's changes to school performance tables will have on demand for these qualifications in schools.

These changes include the introduction of an English Baccalaureate as a benchmark for school performance. The English Baccalaureate is a measure of attainment in five key subject areas: English, maths, science, modern foreign languages and the humanities. For each of these subjects there is a list of qualifications that would demonstrate attainment, and to achieve the English Baccalaureate the student must achieve one qualification in each subject.

In addition to the English Baccalaureate, schools also have a performance measure of five GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and maths. Unlike the English Baccalaureate, this measure does not prescribe all the subjects and the qualifications used for it can also include a maximum of two GCSE substitutes.⁵

The majority of the qualifications that count towards the English Baccalaureate are GCSEs and AS. In addition to these qualifications there are some specific IGCSEs and level 1/2 certificates. Many IGCSEs are not currently accredited qualifications, and the Department for Education expects all schools to transfer to the accredited level 1/2 certificates after this year.

Until recently, in addition to GCSEs and AS, the only IGCSEs and level 1/2 certificates that counted towards standard performance measures were offered by Pearson Edexcel and Cambridge International Examinations, but the Department for Education has recently approved some AQA and WJEC qualifications for inclusion.

⁵ The list of qualifications that count towards this measure is available at: <u>www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/qandlearning/otherqualifications/a00217</u> <u>137/14-16-performance-tables-2015</u> (accessed 21st August 2013).

Following the Wolf Review,⁶ the following qualifications are also included in all performance measures except the English Baccalaureate:

- level 3 asset language ladder qualifications;
- level 3 free-standing maths qualifications;
- graded music exams at grade 6 and above at level 3;
- any qualification from the additional qualifications list (listed in appendix 4).

Purchasing behaviour

We are currently undertaking work on the purchasing behaviour of schools and colleges. As part of this work we will increase our understanding of the drivers behind the choices that schools and colleges make when selecting qualifications. The first part of this work, a survey of schools and colleges, is due to report later this year and will help shape future analysis of the demand for qualifications.

Purchasing behaviour is likely to be driven by many external factors, such as the availability of teachers, the cost of delivery and the needs of the students. Other factors will also apply.

Spending on qualifications and qualification fees

In this section of the report we consider expenditure on qualification fees and report on the fees for GCSEs, A levels and 'Other' qualifications.

Schools, colleges, independent training providers, employers and students pay money to awarding organisations for qualifications. In the 2010 *Annual Qualifications Market Report*⁷ we provided an indicative figure of £933 million on the value of the qualifications market.

Secondary school expenditure on qualification fees in England

The Department for Education collects information on school expenditure in England, which includes exam spending. This data return is for local authority maintained

⁶ Details of the Wolf Review of vocational education are available on the Department for Education website at:

www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/qandlearning/a0074953/review-ofvocational-education-the-wolf-report (accessed 21st August 2013).

⁷ Available at: <u>www.ofqual.gov.uk/downloads/category/35-economic-</u> <u>regulation?download=611%3Aannual-qualifications-market-report-2010</u> (accessed 27th August 2013).

schools in England. In previous reports we have shown the trends in exam spending and an analysis of exam expenditure as a percentage of school running costs. We have now discontinued this analysis because the data return to the Department for Education does not include academies. The Department for Education does provide information from the abbreviated accounts for academies, but the data sets are not directly comparable and cannot be used to understand the trends in exam spending. Figure 9 summarises spending in local authority maintained schools from 2002/03 to 2010/11. We would require a detailed breakdown of this information before we could judge exactly how much is paid to awarding organisations for their different services.

The information does, however, give us an indicative figure for how much is spent on exams.⁸

Figure 9: Expenditure on exams in local authority maintained secondary schools in England, 2002/03 to 2010/11

Year	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Nominal exam expenditure (millions)	154.0	172.3	196.8	218.3	239.2	263.3	281.0	302.6	328.3
Exam expenditure (Retail Price Index adjusted in millions)	154.0	167.7	185.8	200.8	212.3	224.8	228.5	249.6	258.8

Source: Department for Education England summary outturn tables⁹

There was a steady year-on-year increase in schools' nominal exam expenditure on what the Department for Education classifies as exam fees, from £154 million in 2002/03 to £328 million in 2010/11.

⁸ This includes:

- the costs of test and exam entry fees and any accreditation costs related to students, including GCSEs, A levels and AS;
- administrative costs, such as external marking.

⁹ Available at: <u>www.education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/statistics/allstatistics/a00195052/dfe-financial-reports-on-local-authority-planned-b</u> (accessed 21st August 2013).

Expenditure on exams is classified as a running cost in schools. Figure 10 compares exam fees expenditure with total running expenses¹⁰ in local authority maintained secondary schools in England.

Figure 10: Total running expenses and expenditure on exams in local authority maintained secondary schools in England, 2009/10 and 2010/11

	2009/10	2010/11	Percentage increase
Exam fees (millions)	£302.6	£328.3	8.5%
Total running expenses (millions)	£3,854.8	£3,798.2	-1.5%
Exam fees expenditure as a percentage of running			
expenses	7.8%	8.6%	10.1%

Source: Department for Education England summary outturn tables.⁶ Figures are nominal and not adjusted for inflation.

The reason for the increase in exam fees expenditure as a percentage of running expenses is due to a fall in total running expenses at the same time as spending on exam fees increased. Exam fees expenditure is the second largest running cost in local authority maintained secondary schools after learning resources.

There are four possible drivers of increased expenditure on exams:

- an increase in the level of the fees charged for qualifications;
- an increase in the number of qualifications being taken;
- an increase in the number of additional fees, such as late fees or unit re-sit fees, that are incurred;
- a shift in demand for qualifications towards those that have higher fees.

A combination of these factors would result in the rising expenditure shown in figure 9.

We are developing a revenue template to collect data from awarding organisations directly, in order to provide more meaningful analysis.

¹⁰ As defined by the Department for Education in the England summary outturn tables.

GCSE and A level fees

In previous editions of this report we presented average fees for a selection of GCSEs and A levels. In this year's report, we have updated the tables showing these fees and, for the first time, we are expanding this section to include 'Other' qualifications and other fees.

Information on qualification fees is normally available on awarding organisations' websites, but not always in a publicly accessible area, and it is presented in different formats.

The average¹¹ GCSE fee has been calculated from the fees charged by each awarding organisation for certain selected subjects. We chose these subjects to present a mix of subjects, including compulsory and the most popular, and cover a range of assessment methods. To ensure that comparable fees are calculated, we have taken the most commonly used specification from each awarding organisation and assumed that, where offered, no optional external examiner visits are included and no late or other fees are payable.

Average GCSE fee over time								
Subject	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	7 years
English language	£23.64	£24.46	£25.28	£26.30	£27.41	£27.78	£28.30	19.7%
Maths	£23.64	£24.46	£25.28	£26.30	£27.45	£27.78	£28.35	19.9%
Biology	£23.79	£24.60	£26.14	£27.18	£28.23	£28.53	£29.18	22.7%
French	£24.04	£24.88	£25.72	£26.74	£27.89	£28.24	£28.76	19.6%
History	£24.04	£24.88	£25.72	£26.74	£27.93	£28.27	£28.83	19.9%
Art & design	£23.64	£24.46	£25.28	£26.30	£27.43	£27.78	£28.31	19.8%
Retail Price Index	100.0	103.9	109.1	107.6	112.6	118.9	122.0	22.0%

Figure 11: Nominal arithmetic mean GCSE fees for certain subjects over time

Source: Awarding organisation fee lists. Retail Price Index figure is from the Office for National Statistics and is for September at the start of the academic year. September 2006 has been set as the base year.

Fees rose between 2006-7 and 2012-13, and this has, in most cases, been a steady increase. The Retail Price Index also rose by a similar amount.

Some awarding organisations have a flat-fee structure regardless of the subject, or whether the subject is offered as a linear or modular option, suggesting cross-subsidisation of fees across their range of GCSE qualifications. Other awarding

¹¹ We have calculated the arithmetic mean of the available fees for the five awarding organisations that award the selected GCSEs.

organisations have more variation in their fees across subjects, suggesting more cost-reflective pricing.

Average A level fee over time				Increase over last		
Subject	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	5 years
English language	£71.16	£73.77	£76.57	£76.59	£78.64	10.5%
Maths	£76.68	£79.43	£82.37	£83.39	£85.20	11.1%
Biology	£77.52	£80.33	£83.29	£84.43	£86.21	11.2%
French	£85.24	£83.05	£86.17	£92.86	£94.69	11.1%
History	£71.72	£74.33	£77.13	£78.07	£79.71	11.1%
Art & design	£77.64	£80.41	£83.45	£84.42	£86.07	10.9%
Retail Price Index	100	98.6	103.2	109	111.8	11.8%

Figure 12: Nominal arithmetic mean A level fees for certain subjects over time

Source: Awarding organisation fee lists. Retail Price Index figure is from the Office for National Statistics and is for September at the start of the academic year. September 2008 has been set as the base year.

The table above shows the average fees for six A level subjects between 2008-9 and 2012-13. In 2008-9 the structure of most A levels was changed from six to four units, due to specification changes. As with GCSEs, the increase in average fees has mirrored the Retail Price Index in most cases. Again, some awarding organisations offer a flat-fee structure regardless of the subject and others have more variation in their fees across different subjects.

Fees for other qualifications

Appendix 4, at the end of this report, lists the fees for all qualifications, other than GCSEs, A levels, IGCSEs and level 1/2 certificates, that will be included in performance tables from 2014.

In previous market reports we have not attempted to present fees for other qualifications. Unlike for GCSEs and A levels, different awarding organisations have different fee structures for other qualifications. Care must be taken when interpreting these fees as the different structures need to be considered to avoid misleading comparisons.

There are different types of fees that an awarding organisation may charge a school or college, and they can be broadly categorised as follows:

- candidate entry/registration fees, including late entry fees;
- school or college and qualification approval fees, either for an individual qualification or a suite of qualifications;

- assessment fees for example, for provision of external verification or for a visiting examiner to conduct oral language assessments;
- post-assessment fees for services such as enquiries about results and reissuing certificates.

There are also fees for other services, including the provision of learning materials and training events. Because these fees vary depending on factors such as the number of candidates and the number of qualifications a school or college delivers from a particular awarding organisation, the fees paid per candidate for a particular qualification will not be the same in every school or college. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of 'Other' qualification achievements in schools, and some of these qualifications have higher fees than GCSEs and A levels.

Using publicly available fee information, we have calculated that in 2012-13 the average fee for IGCSEs and level 1/2 certificates was £35.07.¹² This average is the same for each individual subject.

Figure 13 lists fees for the 20 non-GCSE/A level qualifications with the most achievements in schools.¹³

¹² This has been calculated as a simple arithmetic mean of single award IGCSE and/or level 1/2 certificate fees. Individual fees were searched for on the AQA, Pearson, Cambridge International and WJEC websites.

¹³ As listed in figure 8 on page 8 of this report. The list of 20 qualifications is based on the overall achievements and not on the separate lists for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Qualification	2012-13 fee
OCR Level 2 National First Award in ICT	£47.45
OCR Level 2 National Award in ICT	*
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Applied Science (QCF)	£77.00
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Sport (QCF)	£77.00
Sports Leaders UK Level 1 Award in Sports Leadership (QCF)	£19.95
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Sport (QCF)	£47.15
Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in Adult Numeracy	*
Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in Adult Literacy	*
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Business (QCF)	£77.00
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Performing Arts (QCF)	£77.00
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Applied Science (QCF)	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Art and Design (QCF)	£77.00
AQA Level 2 Certificate in Preparation for Working Life	£20.10
OCR Level 2 National First Certificate in ICT	*
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Diploma in Sport (QCF)	£123.20
AQA Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 2	£14.65
AQA Level 1 Certificate in Preparation for Working Life	£20.10
Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in Maths at Level 2	£12.60
NOCN Level 2 Award in General Religious Education (QCF)	£12.50
Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in ICT at Level 2	£12.60

Figure 13: Fees charged for the 20 non-GCSE/A level qualifications with the most achievements in schools

Note: Fees marked *" indicate that a qualification is no longer available to new candidates.

Expenditure on qualifications

It is difficult to quantify the level of expenditure on qualifications due to the sheer volume of qualifications and their differing fee structures. In future, we intend to collect revenue data directly from awarding organisations, which will enable us to quantify total expenditure on regulated qualifications. We summarise expenditure on GCSEs and A levels below. In future reports, we plan to quantify expenditure on a range of qualifications.

To estimate the total expenditure on GCSEs and A levels it is necessary to quantify expenditure on all aspects of provision. The most obvious expenditure will be on entry fees, but there will also be other expenditure on, for example, late entries, amendment fees and post-results services such as enquiries about results. Due to the assumptions made, these estimates are indicative only.

Using the entry fees listed earlier in this report and entry data that we hold, we have estimated expenditure on normal and late entries in 2011-12 as £181 million for

GCSEs and £122.9 million for A levels.¹⁴ This total includes the cost of re-sit entries but does not include entry amendment fees or make allowances where fees are waived, discounted or refunded. Due to the assumptions made, these estimates are indicative only.

¹⁴ We have estimated entries and late entries using the total number of achievements and the total number of unit entries for this and previous years.

Number of achievements		ments in schools
GCSE subject	Summer series 2011	Summer series 2012
English	539,900	562,100
Maths	644,100	547,500
Science	367,600	493,000
English literature	441,400	420,400
Religious studies	414,300	409,100
Additional science	278,800	262,600
Design & technology	239,900	224,700
History	190,200	193,700
Geography	161,500	167,100
Art & design subjects	164,000	159,200
Biology	134,100	151,400
Chemistry	131,500	148,100
Physics	130,300	146,700
French	141,900	140,400
Physical education	117,800	106,800
Drama	74,100	70,000
Spanish	59,700	66,600
Business studies	69,300	65,700
Media/film/TV studies	64,100	58,000
German	58,500	55,300
ICT	61,500	51,900
Statistics	49,900	47,700
Music	49,900 42,200	
		40,400
Citizenship studies	41,800	38,100
Social science subjects	29,800	32,500
Other modern languages	24,500	27,900
Home economics	27,800	27,000
Performing/expressive arts	21,800	20,100
Classical subjects	14,700	15,600
Health & social care	15,400	12,800
Business & communication systems	16,500	12,700
Humanities	15,700	12,500
Other sciences	6,800	6,800
Leisure & tourism	4,500	3,700
Engineering	3,500	3,300
Economics	2,800	3,100
Hospitality	2,300	2,400
Manufacturing	1,400	900
Applied business	500	700
Other technology	100	100
Maths (additional)	9,400	(
All other subjects	69,700	64,300
Total	4,885,500	4,872,600

Appendix 1: GCSE qualification achievements in schools and school sixth forms in England

Source: JCQ data (unmatched)

	Number of achievements in schools	
AS subject	Summer series 2011	Summer series 2012
Maths	77,000	82,200
English	75,900	73,600
Biology	56,100	56,400
Psychology	50,100	47,700
Chemistry	45,300	46,300
History	44,500	43,200
Art & design subjects	39,800	35,700
General studies	46,500	35,000
Physics	33,800	34,200
Business studies	30,800	29,300
Geography	28,100	28,500
Economics	21,800	24,100
Media/film/TV studies	27,100	22,900
Sociology	23,900	21,900
Religious studies	22,000	21,600
Design & technology	18,500	16,500
ICT	18,200	16,300
Maths (further)	11,800	13,600
Physical education	15,900	13,100
Drama	14,100	12,200
French	13,100	11,900
Political studies	11,500	11,600
Critical thinking	11,900	8,200
Music	9,000	8,100
	-	
Spanish Health & social care	6,600 7,200	6,900
Other modern languages	7,300	6,600
0 0	6,600 6 400	6,600
Law Classical autoinate	6,400	5,700
Classical subjects	4,800 5,400	5,000
German	5,400	4,900
Performing/expressive arts	3,900	3,200
Science	3,400	3,200
Computing	2,800	2,500
Other sciences	2,500	2,100
Travel & tourism	2,000	1,700
Communication studies	1,000	800
	800	600
Engineering	300	300
All other subjects	8,100	7,200

Appendix 2: AS qualification achievements in schools and school sixth forms in England

Source: JCQ data (unmatched)

	Number of achievements in schools	
A level subject	Summer series 2011	Summer series 2012
Maths	53,000	54,800
English	54,400	54,100
Biology	39,000	39,400
History	33,300	33,700
Psychology	32,400	32,900
Chemistry	31,100	31,900
Art & design subjects	27,400	27,500
Physics	22,000	22,900
Geography	21,400	21,900
Business studies	22,400	21,400
General studies	24,700	20,700
Economics	16,900	17,200
Media/film/TV studies	17,700	16,900
Sociology	15,500	15,700
Religious studies	15,100	15,200
Design & technology	12,800	12,000
ICT	12,100	10,800
Physical education	12,300	10,600
Drama	11,000	10,000
Maths (further)	8,600	9,400
Political studies	9,000	9,200
French	9,100	8,600
Other modern languages	6,100	6,300
Music	6,100	5,700
Health & social care	4,800	4,800
Spanish	4,800	4,600
Classical subjects	4,100	4,400
Law	4,400	4,000
German	3,800	3,400
Performing/expressive arts	2,700	2,300
Science	2,100	2,000
Computing	1,600	1,500
Other sciences	1,200	1,200
Travel & tourism	1,200	1,100
Communication studies	600	600
Critical thinking	1,000	600
Leisure	500	600
Engineering	200	200
All other subjects	3,400	3,400
Total	549,800	543,400

Appendix 3: A level qualification achievements in schools and school sixth forms in England

Source: JCQ data (unmatched)

Appendix 4: Fees for qualifications included in school performance tables from 2014

Qualification title	Fee
AQA Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Use of Maths	£38.70
AQA Level 1/2 Certificate in English Language	£28.95
AQA Level 1/2 Certificate in English Literature	£28.95
AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths	£35.05
BCS Level 1 Certificate in IT User Skills (Digital Creator) (ITQ)	£24.00
(QCF)	
BCS Level 2 Certificate in Creative Digital Media Skills (QCF)*	Note 3
BCS Level 2 Certificate in IT Application Skills (QCF)*	Note 4
Cache Level 2 Award in Child Development and Care*	£58.00
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Art and	£43.00
Design	
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Biology	£43.00
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Business	£43.00
Studies	
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in	£43.00
Chemistry	
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in English	£43.00
as a Second Language	
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in First	£43.00
Language English	
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in French	£43.00
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in	£43.00
Geography	
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in German	£43.00
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Greek	£43.00
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Hindi as	£43.00
a Second Language	
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in History	£43.00
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in ICT	£43.00
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in	£43.00
Literature (English)	
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in	£43.00
Mandarin Chinese	
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Maths	£43.00
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Music	£43.00
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Physics	£43.00
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Spanish	£43.00

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City & Guilds Level 1 Certificate in Engineering	£78.00
City & Guilds Level 1 Diploma for IT Users (ITQ)	Note 5
City & Guilds Level 1 Principal Learning in Construction and	£85.00
the Built Environment	
City & Guilds Level 1 Principal Learning in Hair and Beauty	£86.00
Studies	
City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate for IT Users (ITQ) – Schools	Note 4
(QCF)*	
City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate for Software Developers	Note 4
(QCF)*	
City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate in Mechanical Engineering	£80.00
(QCF)*	
City & Guilds Level 2 Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	£90.00
(QCF)*	
City & Guilds Level 2 Principal Learning in Construction and	£100.00
the Built Environment	
City & Guilds Level 2 Principal Learning in Engineering	£100.00
City & Guilds Level 2 Principal Learning in Hair and Beauty	£101.00
Studies	
EAL Level 1 Certificate in Engineering and Technology (QCF)	£72.00
EAL Level 2 First Certificate in Engineering Technology*	Note 4
EAL Level 2 First Diploma in Engineering Technology*	Note 4
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate for IT Users (ITQ) (QCF)	£31.55
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Applied Science (QCF)	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Art and Design (QCF)	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Business Administration	£47.15
(QCF)	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Construction (QCF)	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Creative Media	£47.15
Production (QCF)	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Engineering (QCF)	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Health and Social Care	£47.15
(QCF)	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Introduction to the	£47.15
Hospitality Industry (QCF)	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Introduction to the Travel	£47.15
and Tourism Industry (QCF)	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Performing Arts	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Sport and Active Leisure	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Diploma for IT Users (ITQ) (QCF)	£77.00
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Diploma in Applied Science (QCF)	£87.75

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Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Diploma in Art and Design (QCF)	£87.75
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Diploma in Business Administration (QCF)	£87.75
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Diploma in Construction (QCF)	£87.75
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Diploma in Creative Media Production	£87.75
(QCF)	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Diploma in Engineering (QCF)	£87.75
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Diploma in Health and Social Care	£87.75
(QCF)	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Diploma in Introduction to the Travel	£87.75
and Tourism Industry (QCF)	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Diploma in Performing Arts	£87.75
Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Diploma in Sport and Active Leisure	£87.75
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Application of	£47.15
Science	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Art and Design*	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Business*	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Children's Play,	£47.15
Learning and Development*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Construction and	£47.15
the Built Environment*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Creative Digital	£47.15
Media Production*	04745
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Engineering*	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Health and Social Care*	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Hospitality*	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in ICT*	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Music*	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Performing Arts	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Principles of	£47.15
Applied Science	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Sport*	£47.15
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Travel and	£47.15
Tourism*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Certificate in Art and	£77.00
Design*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Certificate in Business*	£77.00
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Certificate in Construction	£77.00
and the Built Environment*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Certificate in Creative	£77.00

Digital Media Production*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Certificate in Engineering*	£77.00
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Certificate in Health and	£77.00
Social Care*	211.00
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Certificate in Hospitality*	£77.00
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Certificate in ICT*	£77.00
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Certificate in Performing	£77.00
Arts*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Certificate in Sport*	£77.00
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Certificate in Travel and	£77.00
Tourism*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Extended Certificate in	£101.50
Applied Science*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Extended Certificate in Art	£101.50
and Design*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Extended Certificate in	£101.50
Business*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Extended Certificate in	£101.50
Engineering*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Extended Certificate in	£101.50
Health and Social Care*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Extended Certificate in	£101.50
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Extended Certificate in	£101.50
Performing Arts*	
Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Extended Certificate in	£101.50
Sport*	
Edexcel Level 1/2 Certificate in Geography	£36.90
Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Biology	£36.90
Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Chemistry	£36.90
Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Chinese	£36.90
Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in English Language	£36.90
Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in English Literature	£36.90
Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in French	£36.90
Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in German	£36.90
Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in History	£36.90
Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Maths	£36.90
Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Physics	£36.90
Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Science (Double Award)	£73.80
Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in Spanish	£36.90
Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in Digital Applications*	£32.20

Edexcel Level 2 Principal Learning in Creative and Media	£145.90
Edexcel Level 2 Principal Learning in Engineering	£145.90
NCFE Level 1 Award in Creative Craft using Art and Design	£39.00
NCFE Level 1 Award in Graphic Design	£39.00
NCFE Level 1 Certificate in Interactive Media	£49.00
NCFE Level 1 Certificate in Music Technology	£49.00
NCFE Level 1 Certificate in Performance Skills	£49.00
NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Art and Design*	£51.00
NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Graphic Design*	£51.00
NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Interactive	£51.00
Media*	
NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Music	£51.00
Technology*	
NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Performance	£51.00
Skills*	
OCR Level 1 Certificate for Creative iMedia (QCF)	£68.30
OCR Level 1 Diploma for Creative iMedia (QCF)	£117.00
OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Business and	£46.00
Enterprise*	
OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Creative	Note 4
iMedia*	
OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Health and	£46.00
Social Care*	
OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in ICT	£46.00
OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Science	£46.00
OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Science in	£46.00
the Workplace*	
OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Sport	£46.00
Science*	
OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Sport	£46.00
Studies*	
OCR Level 2 Principal Learning in Engineering	£135.60
TLM Level 1 Certificate in IT User Skills in Open Systems and	Note 6
Enterprise (ITQ)	
TLM Level 2 Certificate for IT User Skills in Open Systems and	Note 6
Enterprise (Schools) (QCF)*	
	1
VTCT Level 1 Principal Learning in Hair and Beauty Studies	£102.00
VTCT Level 1 Principal Learning in Hair and Beauty Studies VTCT Level 1 Principal Learning in Sport and Active Leisure	£102.00 £102.00
VTCT Level 1 Principal Learning in Sport and Active Leisure	£102.00

WJEC Level 1 Certificate in Latin Language and Roman Civilisation	£27.36
	007.00
WJEC Level 1 Certificate in Latin Literature	£27.36
WJEC Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in English Language	£27.36
WJEC Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in English Literature	£27.36
WJEC Level 2 Certificate in Latin Language	£27.36
WJEC Level 2 Certificate in Latin Language and Roman	£27.36
Civilisation	
WJEC Level 2 Certificate in Latin Literature	£27.36

Source: Department for Education publication 2015 Key Stage 4 Performance Tables: Inclusion of 14-16 Qualifications, Ofqual Register and awarding organisation fees lists. All publicly available fees have been checked with the awarding organisations; where no fees list is publicly available, fees have been provided by the awarding organisation.

Notes:

1. Some qualifications will only count towards performance tables from 2015 – these are indicated with an asterisk (*).

2. Where no fee is given, it is not publicly available, variable depending on candidate or centre details or the qualification is not currently available for registrations.

3. The BCS Level 2 Certificate in Creative Digital Media Skills (QCF) is a new qualification that has been withdrawn prior to release.

4. The following qualifications are new and have not yet been released: BCS Level 2 Certificate in IT Application Skills (QCF); City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate for IT Users (ITQ) – Schools (QCF); City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate for Software Developers (QCF); EAL Level 2 First Certificate in Engineering Technology; EAL Level 2 First Diploma in Engineering Technology; OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Creative iMedia.

5. The City & Guilds Level 1 Diploma for IT Users (ITQ) has two different routes and the fee will vary depending on the units selected. City & Guilds has provided us with fee data but, as the total fee is variable, it is not possible to include it in this table.

6. TLM has provided us with its fees for its qualifications included in this table, but it operates a fee structure that is based at the school or college level and not on a per-candidate basis. The fee charged per candidate will be variable depending on the number of candidates each school or college has and it would, therefore, be misleading to present these fees in this table.

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