



Department
for Education

Key stage 4 examination point scores

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Introduction to examination point scores used in the 2015 school and college performance tables

To enable the calculation of average point scores for pupils at the end of key stage 4 and 16 to 18 year olds at the end of advanced level studies, points are allocated to each exam result using the scoring systems set out in this document.

GCSE, A Levels and other approved qualifications

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

Qualifications that have been regulated by the regulatory authority (Ofqual) are assigned to a level. These accredited qualifications are subsequently approved by the Secretary of State for use by pupils of compulsory school age or for 16 to 18 year olds. Qualifications approved for use pre-16 and 16 to 18 include general, vocational and occupational categories.

The secondary school (key stage 4) tables report qualifications listed on the approved list of qualifications for 2015 which can be found on the [secondary school performance tables](#) website. The list includes AS levels, level 3 free standing maths and asset language ladder qualifications taken early as well as graded music exams with grades 6 to 8. The 16 to 18 tables report all approved level 3 qualifications (except graded exams).

Counting qualifications

For tables reporting purposes, the Department for Education (DfE) assigns a points value to all qualifications reported in performance tables to allow comparison between qualifications of a different level, size and grading system. These performance measurement figures are based on the relative challenge and size of a qualification.

DfE has assigned each qualification reported for key stage 4 pupils a threshold contribution figure expressed as a percentage as well as a point score:

- 5 GCSEs at A*-C (and equivalent) contribute 100% to the level 2 threshold
- 5 GCSEs at A*-G (and equivalent) contribute 100% to the level 1 threshold

Using this formula, a GCSE at A*-C is equal to one fifth or 20% of the level 2 threshold. In the same way, all qualifications included in the secondary school tables have been assigned a percentage contribution to the level 1 and 2 thresholds.

All qualifications included in the 2015 tables count as no more than one GCSE with points and thresholds scaled accordingly i.e. AS levels and qualifications which previously counted as two GCSEs are now the same size as one GCSE.

A level 3 qualification reported in the 16-18 performance tables has also been assigned a threshold contribution expressed as a percentage as well as a point score. Advanced level qualifications such as 2 A levels or a BTEC subsidiary Diploma level 3 contribute 100% to the level 3 threshold.

Similarly, one A level is equal to half, or 50% of the level 3 threshold. For the purposes of calculating the average level 3 point scores, in the same way, all other level 3 qualifications are also assigned a percentage contribution to the level 3 threshold.

While AS levels are normally counted towards the level 3 threshold, those taken and cashed in during key stage 4 will count towards the level 2 threshold and are reported in the secondary school tables.

Example of point scores

The following tables provide examples of qualifications at each level, their threshold contribution, size and their point scores based on the 2015 performance tables points system. Point scores for other qualifications on the approved list of qualifications can be found on Ofqual's register of regulated qualifications website: [regulated qualifications register](#). These are used in the secondary school and 16 to 18 tables when calculating performance measures.

Level 1 and 2 performance figures for use in key stage 4 tables¹

Qualification 2	NQF Level	Level 2 threshold contribution	Level 1 threshold contribution	Point score
GCSE - grade A*	level 2	20%	20%	58
GCSE - grade A	level 2	20%	20%	52
GCSE - grade B	level 2	20%	20%	46
GCSE - grade C	level 2	20%	20%	40
GCSE - grade D	level 1	0%	20%	34
GCSE - grade E	level 1	0%	20%	28
GCSE - grade F	level 1	0%	20%	22
GCSE - grade G	level 1	0%	20%	16
Cambridge International Certificate – grade B	level 1/2	20%	20%	46
AS – grade A ¹	level 3	20%	20%	67.5
AS – grade B	level 3	20%	20%	60
AS – grade C	level 3	20%	20%	52.5
AS – grade D	level 3	20%	20%	45
AS – grade E	level 3	20%	20%	37.5
BTEC Extended Certificate in Applied Science-Distinction ²	level 2	20%	20%	52
OCR Level 2 Principal Learning in Engineering – grade C	level 2	20%	20%	40

Table 1. Level 1 and 2 performance figures for use in key stage 4 tables

Source: Level 1, 2 and 3 performance tables points score document on www.gov.uk

¹ Since 2014 all qualifications in key stage 4 performance tables count as no more than one GCSE with points and thresholds scaled accordingly.

² The grading structure and/or points for BTEC qualifications vary depending on the qualification – please use Ofqual's website <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk> to find the performance points for a specific qualification.

Grade	Size	Points	Grade	Size	Points	Grade	Size	Points
GCE/Applied A level			GCE/Applied AS level			GCE/Applied Double Award		
A*	1	300	A	0.5	135	A*A*	2	600
A	1	270	B	0.5	120	A*A	2	570
B	1	240	C	0.5	105	AA	2	540
C	1	210	D	0.5	90	AB	2	510
D	1	180	E	0.5	75	BB	2	480
E	1	150				BC	2	450
						CC	2	420
						CD	2	390
						DD	2	360
						DE	2	330
						EE	2	300
BTEC Subsidiary Diploma³ (QCF)			BTEC Diploma³ (QCF)			BTEC Extended Diploma³ (QCF)		
D*	1	270	D*D*	2	540	D*D*D*	3	810
D	1	225	D*D	2	495	D*D*D	3	765
M	1	195	DD	2	450	D*DD	3	720
P	1	165	DM	2	420	DDD	3	675
			MM	2	390	DDM	3	645
			MP	2	360	DMM	3	615
			PP	2	330	MMM	3	585
						MMP	3	555
						MPP	3	525
						PPP	3	495
Extended Project level 3 Extended			Advanced Free Standing Maths			Level 3 Key Skill		
A*	0.3	90	A	0.17	45	P	0.3	63
A		81	B	0.17	40			
B		72	C	0.17	35			
C		63	D	0.17	30			
D		54	E	0.17	25			
E		45						

Table 2. Level 3 performance figures for use in 16 to 18 performance tables

Source: Level 1, 2 and 3 performance tables points score document on www.gov.uk

³ The grading structure and/or points for NVQ and BTEC qualifications vary depending on the qualification type – please use the OFQUAL’s website <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk/> to find the performance figures for a specific type of qualification.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Passes						Pre-U Certificate in		
Grade	Size	Points	Grade	Size	Points	Grade	Size	Points
45	5.5	1518	33	5.5	1122	D1	1	300
44	5.5	1485	32	5.5	1089	D2	1	282.5
43	5.5	1452	31	5.5	1056	D3	1	265
42	5.5	1419	30	5.5	1023	M1	1	247.5
41	5.5	1386	29	5.5	990	M2	1	230
40	5.5	1353	28	5.5	957	M3	1	210
39	5.5	1320	27	5.5	924	P1	1	190
38	5.5	1287	26	5.5	891	P2	1	170
37	5.5	1254	25	5.5	858	P3	1	150
36	5.5	1221	24	5.5	825			
35	5.5	1188						
34	5.5	1155						

Cont. Table 2 Level 3 performance figures for use in 16 to 18 performance tables

Source: Level 1, 2 and 3 performance tables points score document on www.gov.uk

Calculation of capped point score used in key stage 4 performance tables

The secondary school tables include all key stage 4 qualifications from the list of approved qualifications at level 1 and level 2, AS levels, level 3 free standing maths, asset language ladder qualifications taken early and graded music exams with grades 6 to 8. A capped point score is calculated, as the best eight GCSEs or equivalent. The following three steps (and examples below) describe this procedure:

Step One (see Figure 1)

Qualifications are compared to the size of a GCSE to determine a volume indicator (i.e. from 2014 no qualification counts as more than one GCSE, but some qualifications count as less than one).

Figure 1 - Pupil results/ Qualification	Grade	Volume Indicator	Total Points
AS level (taken early)	C	1.0	52.5
GCSE	A*	1.0	58
GCSE	E	1.0	28
GCSE	C	1.0	40
GCSE (Double Award)	BB	1.0	46
OCR Level 2 Principal Learning in Engineering – grade C	Pass	1.0	40
Level 3 Asset Language Qualification	Grade 10 Pass	0.5	27
GCSE	F	1.0	22
GCSE	G	1.0	16
Total		8.5	329.5

Figure 1. Step One

Source: Level 1, 2 and 3 performance tables points score document on [secondary school and college performance tables website](#)

Step Two (see Figure 2)

The total points value for each qualification is divided by the volume indicator to arrive at a standardised points figure. The pupil's qualifications are then sorted in descending order based on their standardised points.

Figure 2 -Pupil results in descending order	Grade	Volume Indicator	Total Points	Standardised Points
GCSE	A*	1.0	58	58
Level 3 Asset Language Qualification	Grade 10 Pass	0.5	27	54
AS level (taken early)	C	1.0	52.5	52.5
GCSE (Double Award)	BB	1.0	46	46
GCSE	C	1.0	40	40
OCR Level 2 Principal Learning in Engineering – grade C	Pass	1.0	40	40
GCSE	E	1.0	28	28
GCSE	F	1.0	22	22
GCSE	G	1.0	16	16

Figure 2. Step Two

Source: Level 1, 2 and 3 performance tables points score document on [secondary school and college performance tables website](#)

Step Three (see Figure 3)

Once qualifications have been ranked, the volume indicators should be summed until the cap of eight is reached. The total points for qualifications included in the best eight should then be summed to arrive at the “best eight” average total points score.

Figure 3 - Pupil results capped at 8 qualifications	Grade	Volume Indicator	Cumulative number of quals	Total points
GCSE	A*	1.0	1.0	58
Level 3 Asset Language Qualification	Grade 10 Pass	0.5	1.5	27
AS level (taken early)	C	1.0	2.5	52.5
GCSE (Double Award)	B	1.0	3.5	46
GCSE	C	1.0	4.5	40
OCR Level 2 Principal Learning in Engineering – grade C	Pass	1.0	5.5	40
GCSE	E	1.0	6.5	28
GCSE	F	1.0	7.5	22
GCSE	G	1.0	8.5	*50% of 16=8
Total –capped at best eight results				321.5

Figure 3. Step Three

Source: Level 1, 2 and 3 performance tables points score document on [secondary school and performance tables website](#)

The total capped point score for the best eight becomes $(58 + 27 + 52.5 + 46 + 40 + 40 + 28 + 22 + 8 = 321.5)$.

*Only an additional 0.5 is needed to reach the cap of 8.0 (i.e. 0.5 of 1.0 = 50% of this qualification is required) and therefore, only 50% of the points.

Calculation of average point score per student – full time equivalent 16 to 18 measure

The 16 to 18 performance tables report substantial level 3 qualifications in three separate performance categories: A level; academic; and vocational. The indicators reported in each performance category are based on only those students that meet the relevant cohort criteria. Information on the criteria and the average point score per student methodology which takes account of the proportion of time spent by students taking A levels; academic qualifications (including A levels); or vocational qualifications so that they are reflected as their full-time equivalent within each cohort can be found in the methodology and technical guides section on the performance tables website.



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