

## Variability in AS results for individual schools and colleges 2014-2015



### Key points

- Even when there are no changes to qualifications, individual schools and colleges will see variation in their year-on-year results: this is normal.
- Year-on-year results in the AS subjects being reformed for 2016 have previously been relatively stable. However, it is likely that there will be more variation in individual schools and colleges in 2016.

AS results for England, Wales and Northern Ireland have been relatively stable in recent years, with only very small changes in the overall percentages of students achieving grade A. But we know that individual schools and colleges may see variation in the proportion of students achieving particular grades from one year to the next. This can be due to many different factors, including differences in the mix of the students entered for particular subjects, different teaching approaches, changes in teaching staff or teaching time, and changes to qualifications.

New AS qualifications in 13 subjects<sup>1</sup> are being awarded in England for the first time in summer 2016. These new AS qualifications will not count towards students' A level grades.

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<sup>1</sup> Art & design, biology, business, chemistry, computing, economics, English language, English language and literature, English literature, history, physics, psychology, sociology

We have not previously published data on year-on-year variability for AS so we collected data from the exam boards to show the variability in results at school/college level between 2014 and 2015. There were no changes to the AS qualifications in those years, and so we expect variability to be relatively low. We expect that there will be more variability between 2015 and 2016, particularly in the 13 subjects that are awarded for the first time in 2016. We will publish 2016 data when results are issued on 18 August.

We have analysed the year on year variation in the proportion of students achieving grade A in the 13 subjects being awarded for the first time in summer 2016, using the summer results published by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)<sup>2</sup>. The evidence suggests that the variation at school/college level has been very similar to that seen in A level in previous years<sup>3</sup>. We have looked only at schools and colleges with 20 or more students in a subject in both years: smaller cohorts are likely to be less stable and to show more variation.

We have plotted the variation seen in each of several hundred schools and colleges. Each bar in the graphs represents the number of schools and colleges with a particular level of variation, measured in intervals of 2.5 percentage points. For example, the two bars either side of zero represent schools that had either a drop of up to 2.5 percentage points or an increase of up to 2.5 percentage points. The higher the peaks in the middle, the greater the stability from one year to the next.<sup>4</sup>

We have also looked at the variation for students in Year 12 only (students aged 17)<sup>5</sup> shown on the graphs in blue. Since Year 12 students make up most of the AS entry, it is not surprising that the pattern of variation is similar.

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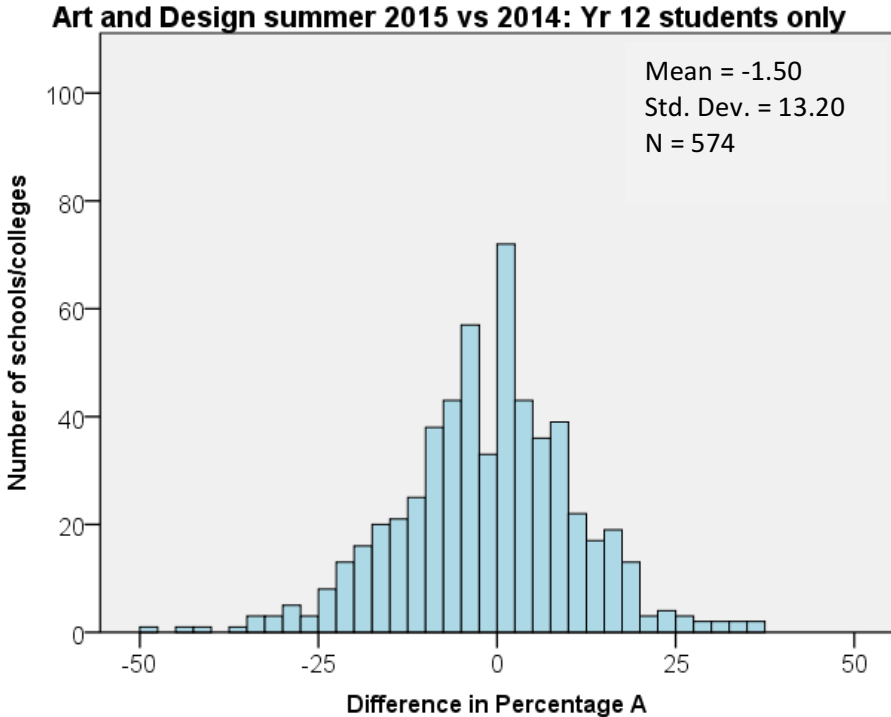
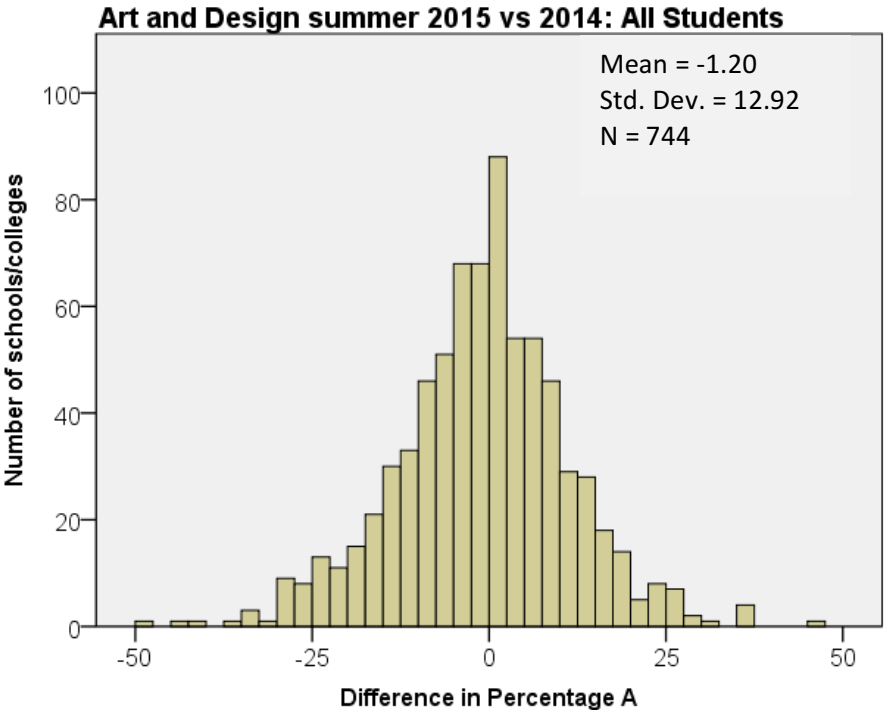
<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results/a-levels>

<sup>3</sup> See [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/453377/2015-08-13-a-level-centre-variability-2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/453377/2015-08-13-a-level-centre-variability-2015.pdf)

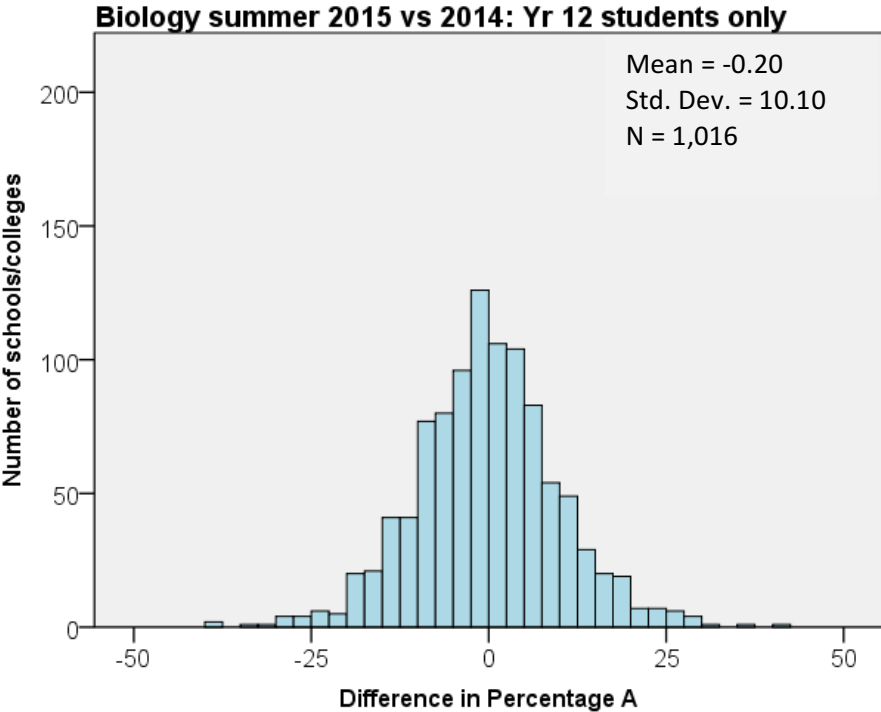
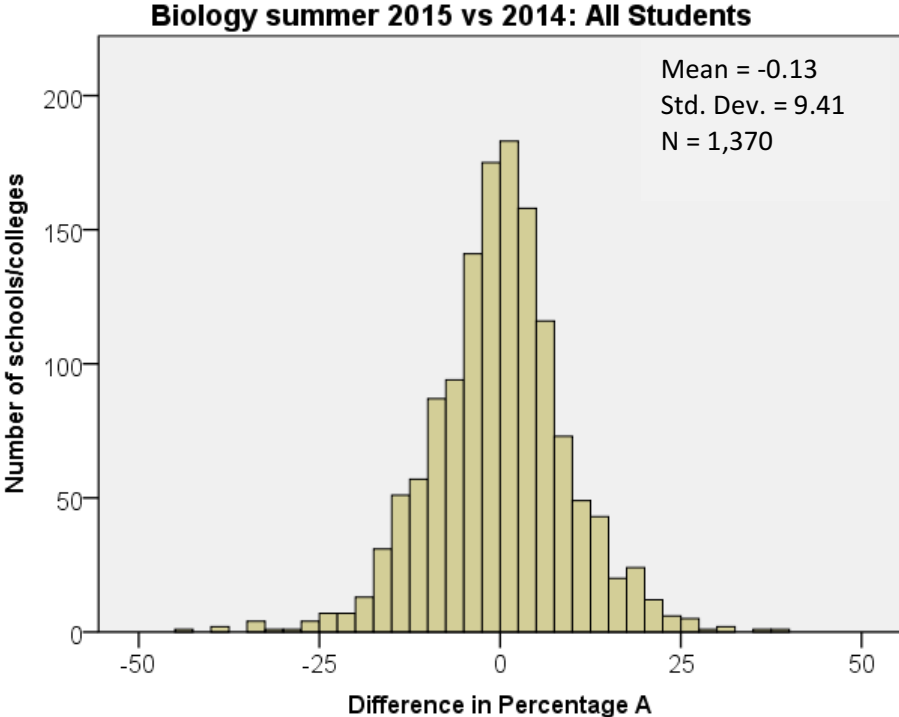
<sup>4</sup> Note that, although the same scales are used for the y axis on each of the graphs within a subject, the scales do vary between subjects

<sup>5</sup> Note that the number of schools/colleges is slightly lower in the Year 12 only graphs, because we have only included schools and colleges with 20 or more Year 12 students

# AS art and design

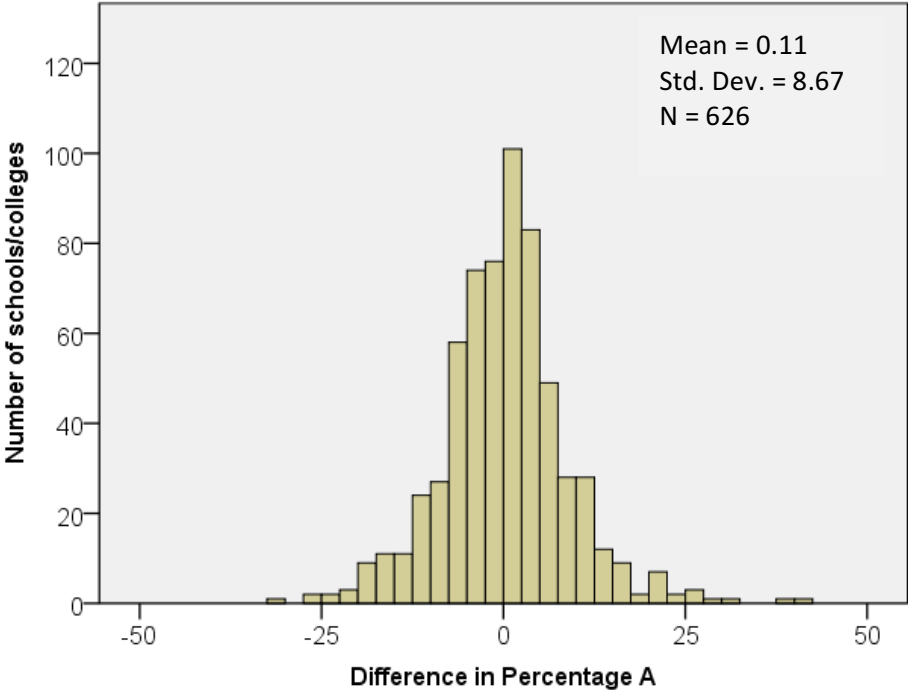


AS biology

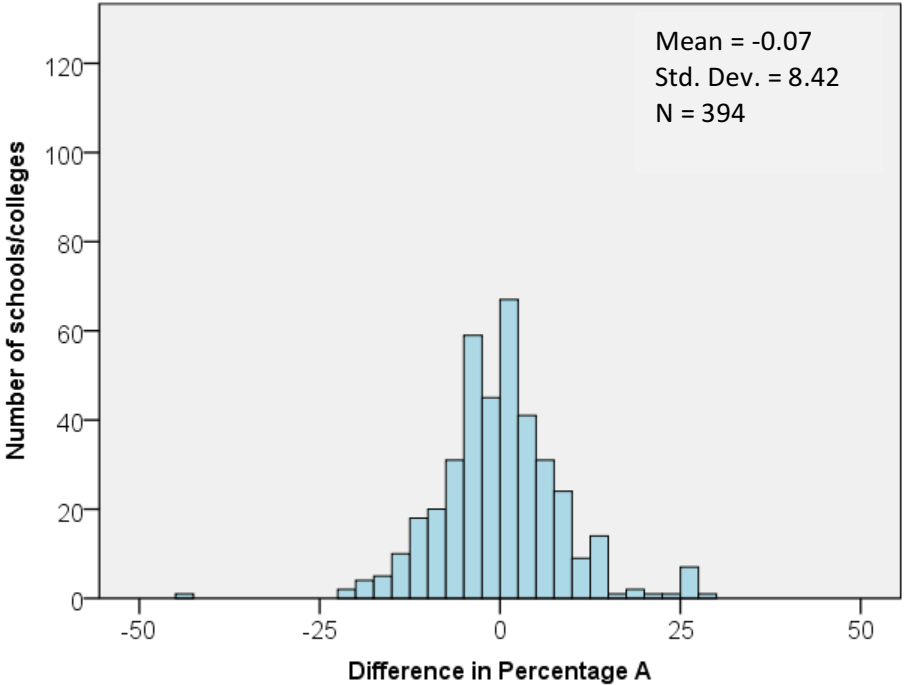


# AS business studies

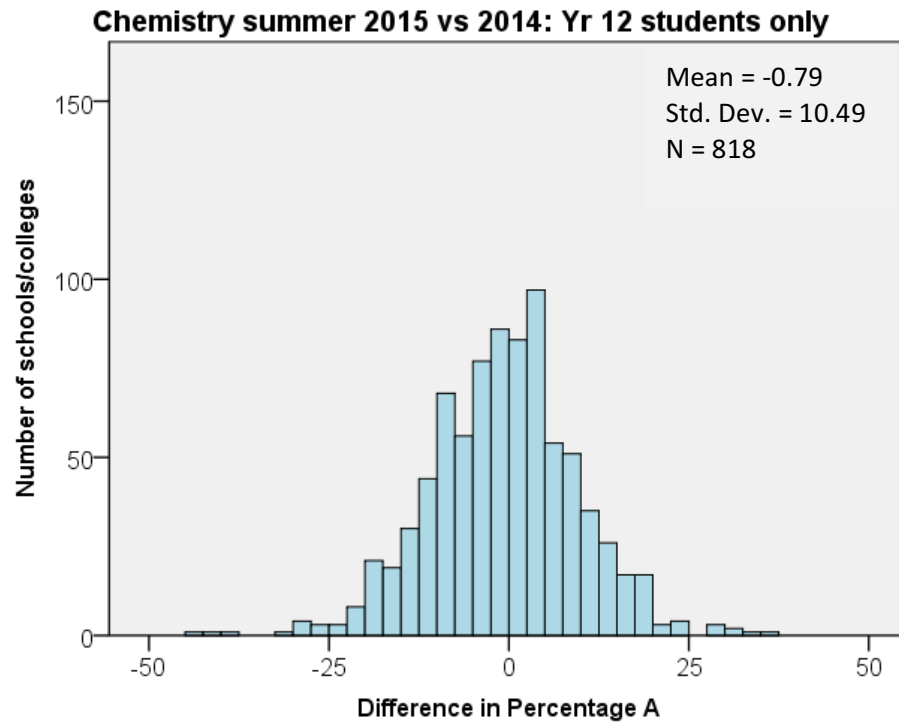
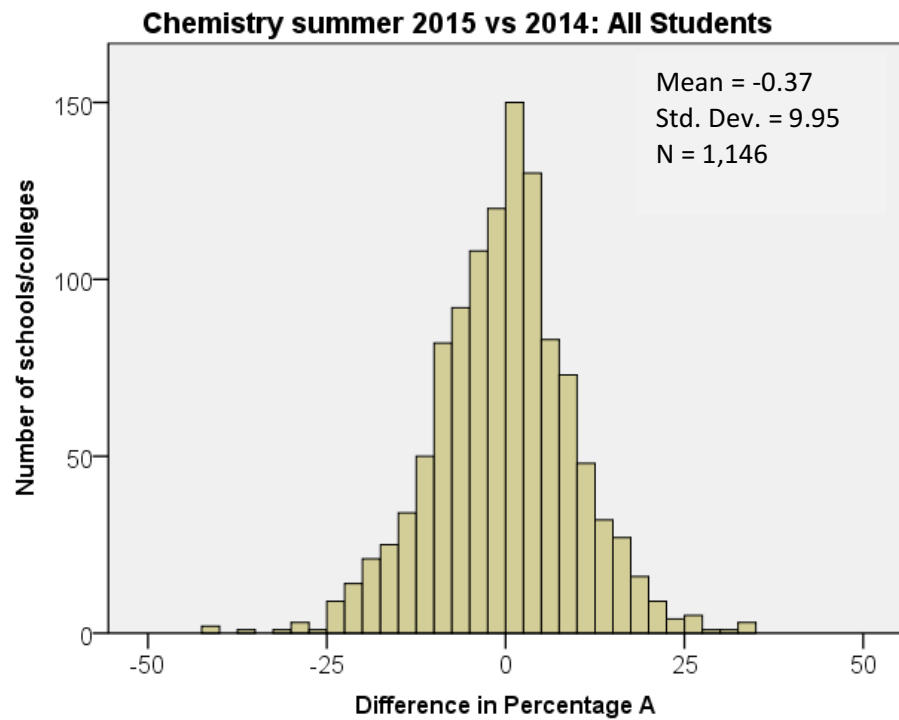
**Business Studies summer 2015 vs 2014: All Students**



**Business Studies summer 2015 vs 2014: Yr 12 students only**

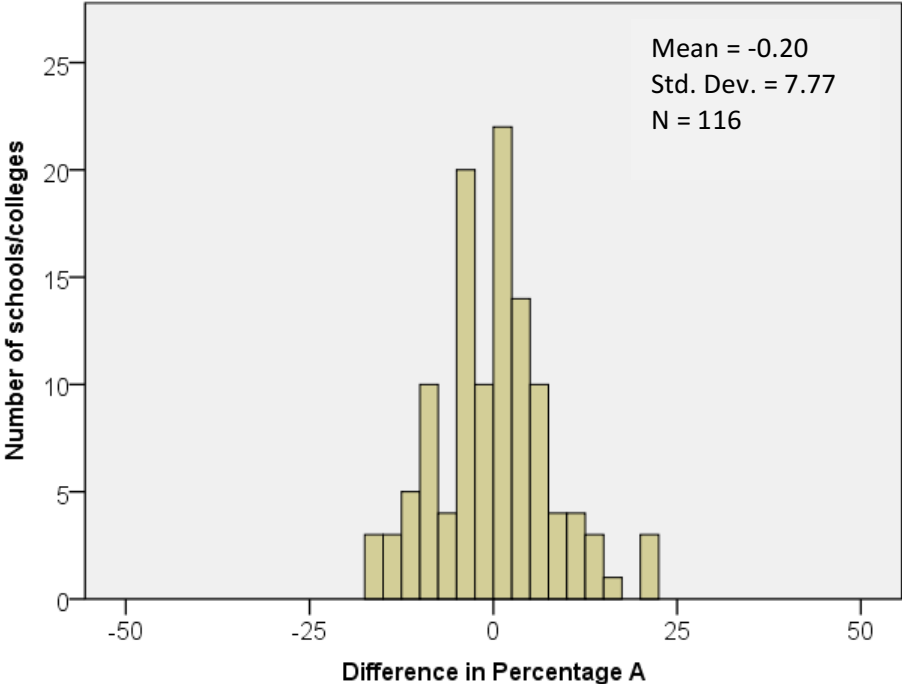


# AS chemistry

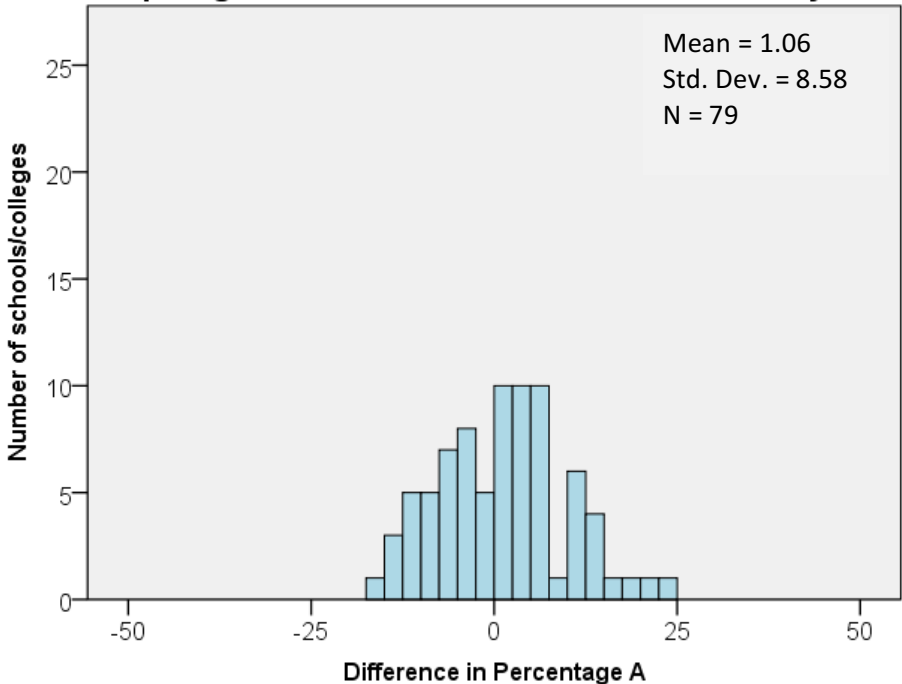


# AS computing

Computing summer 2015 vs 2014: All Students

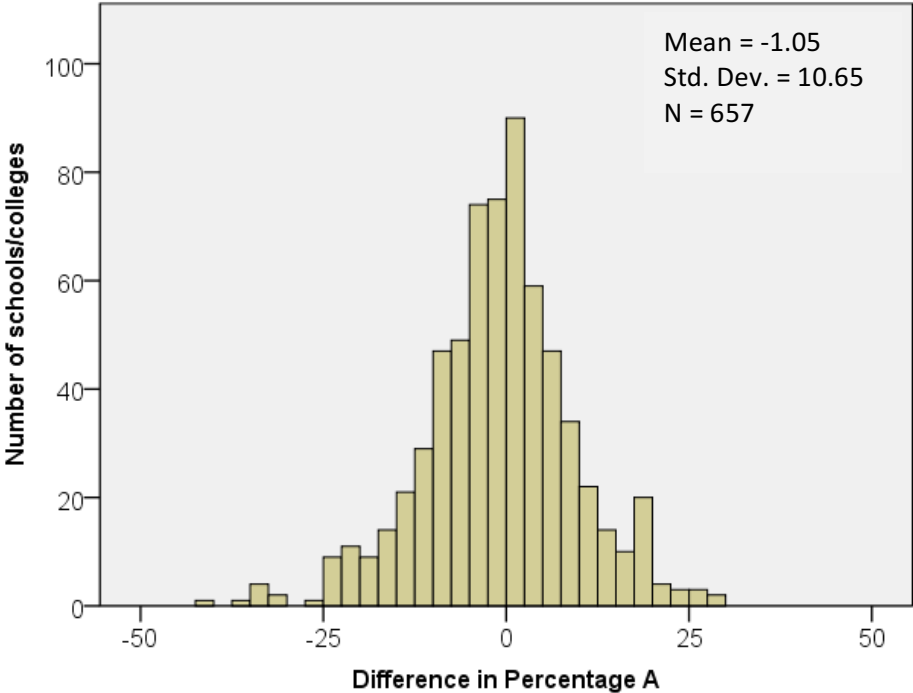


Computing summer 2015 vs 2014: Yr 12 students only

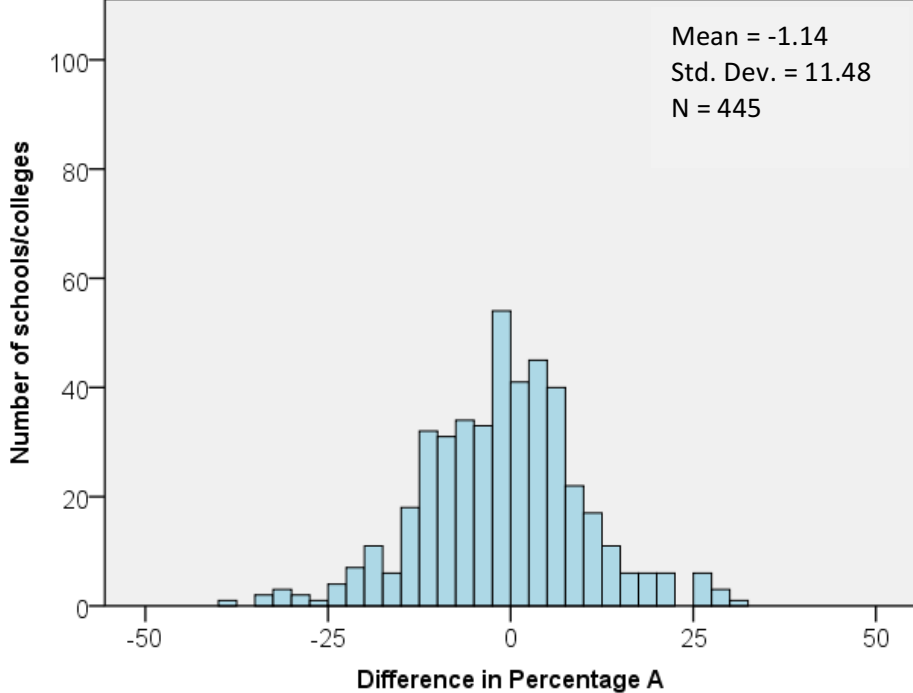


# AS economics

### Economics summer 2015 vs 2014: All Students

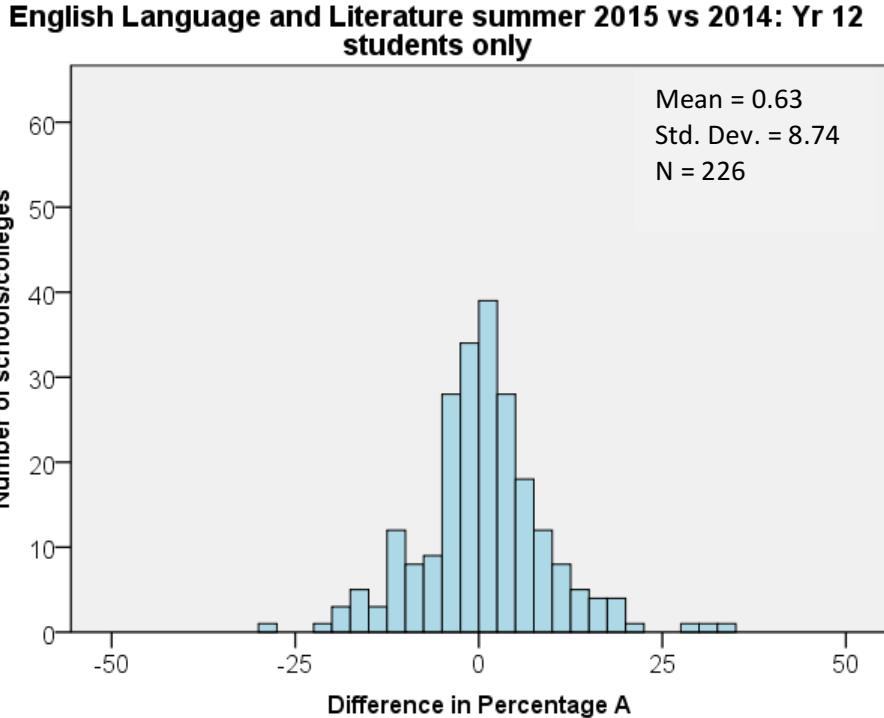
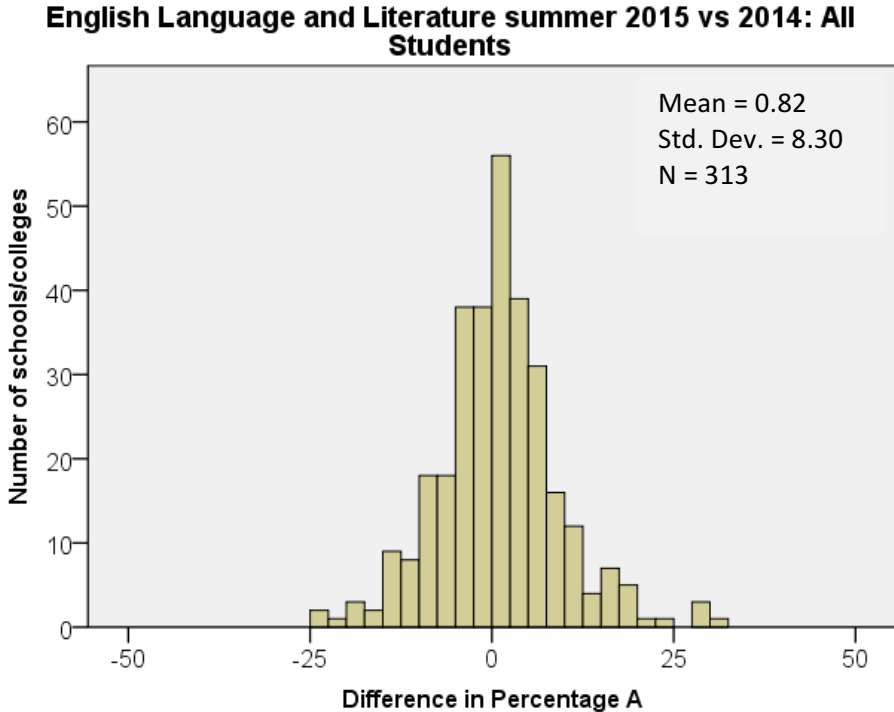


### Economics summer 2015 vs 2014: Yr 12 students only



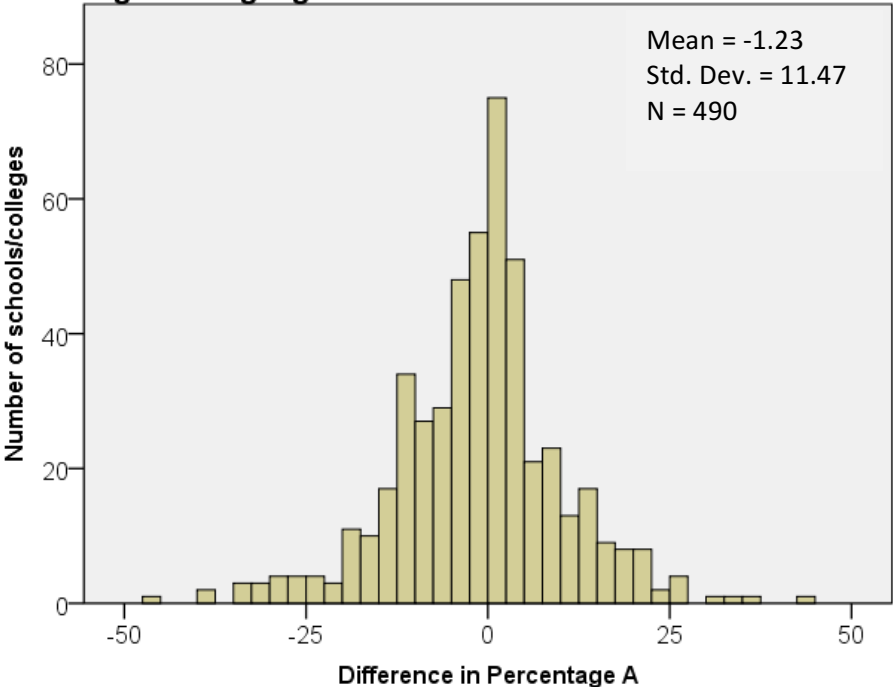


# AS English language and literature

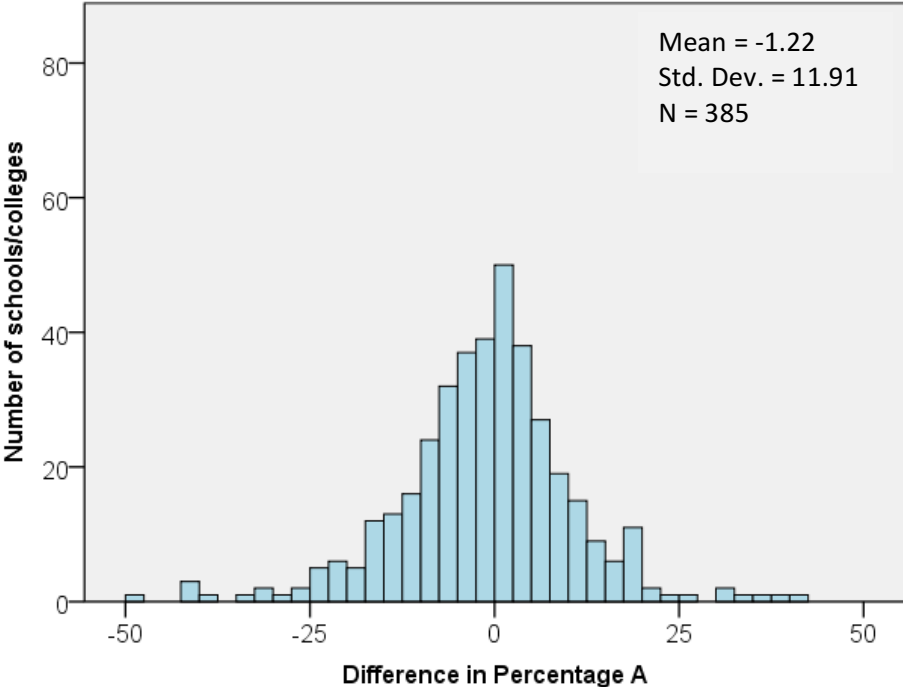


# AS English language

English Language summer 2015 vs 2014: All Students

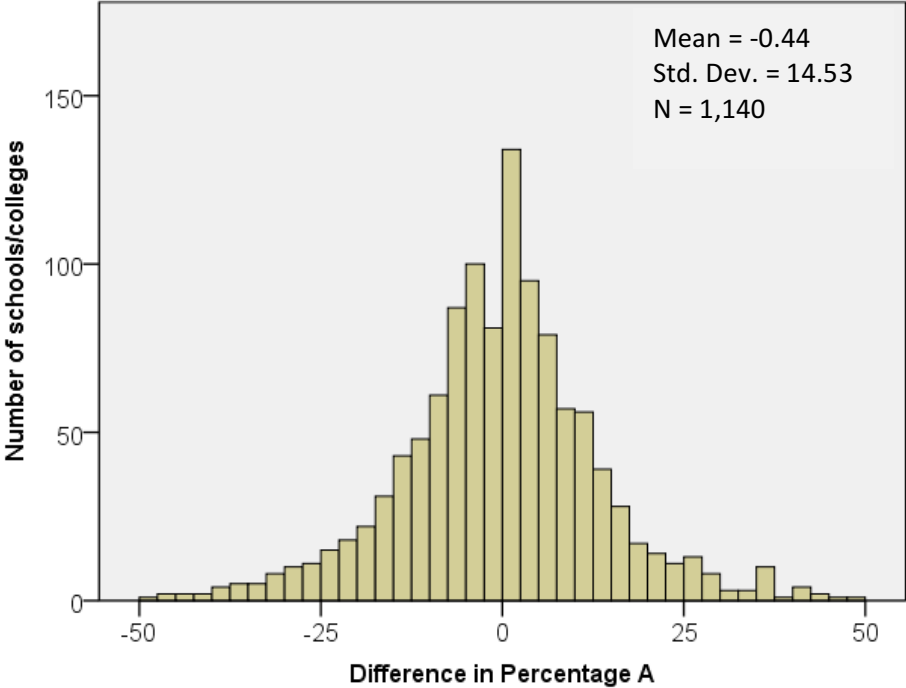


English Language summer 2015 vs 2014: Yr 12 students only

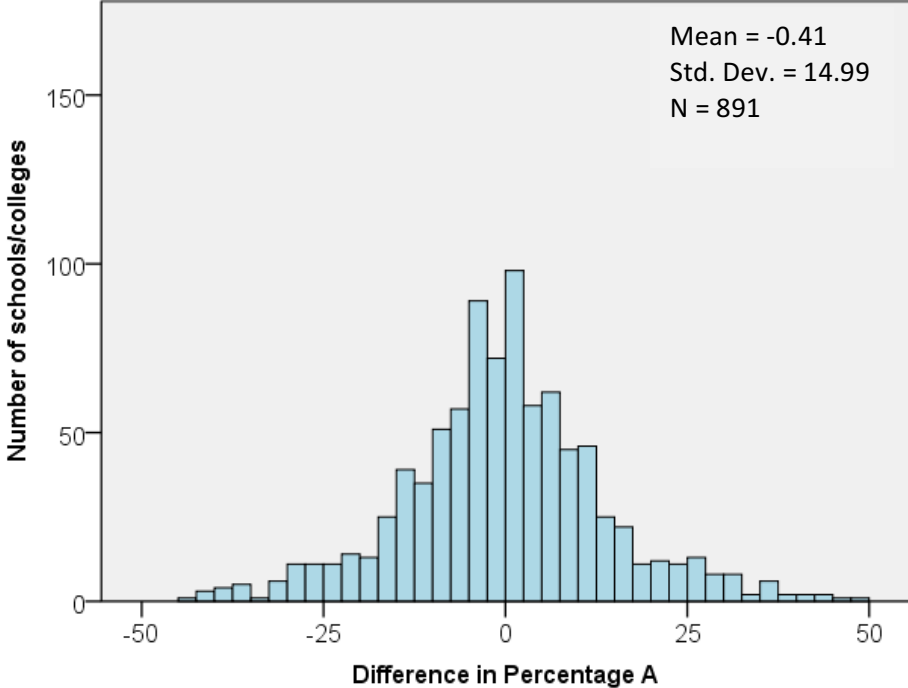


# AS English literature

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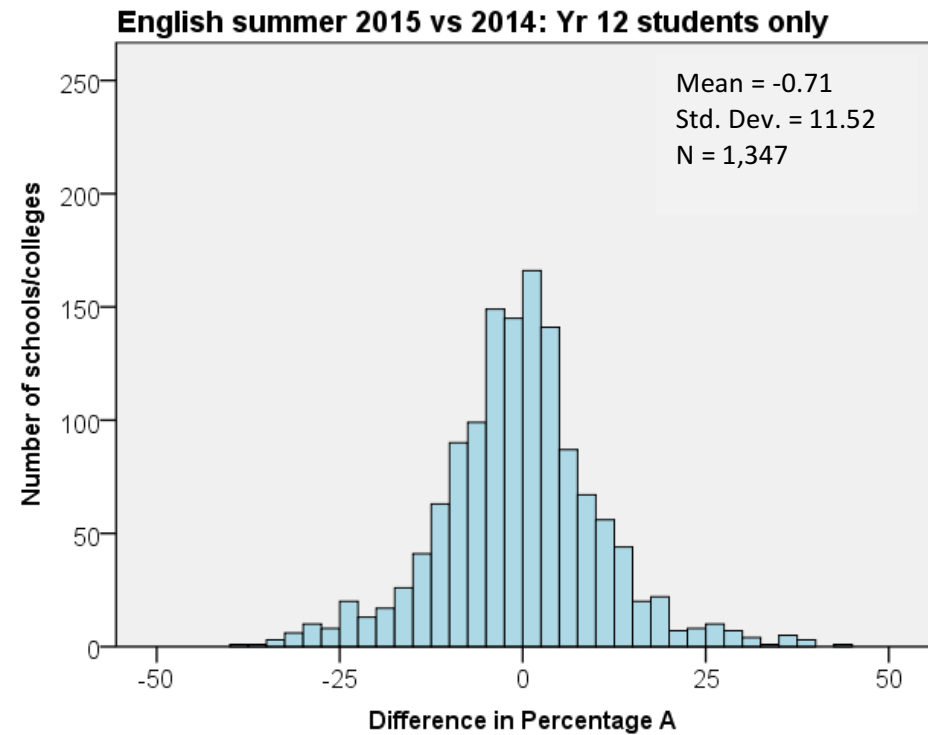
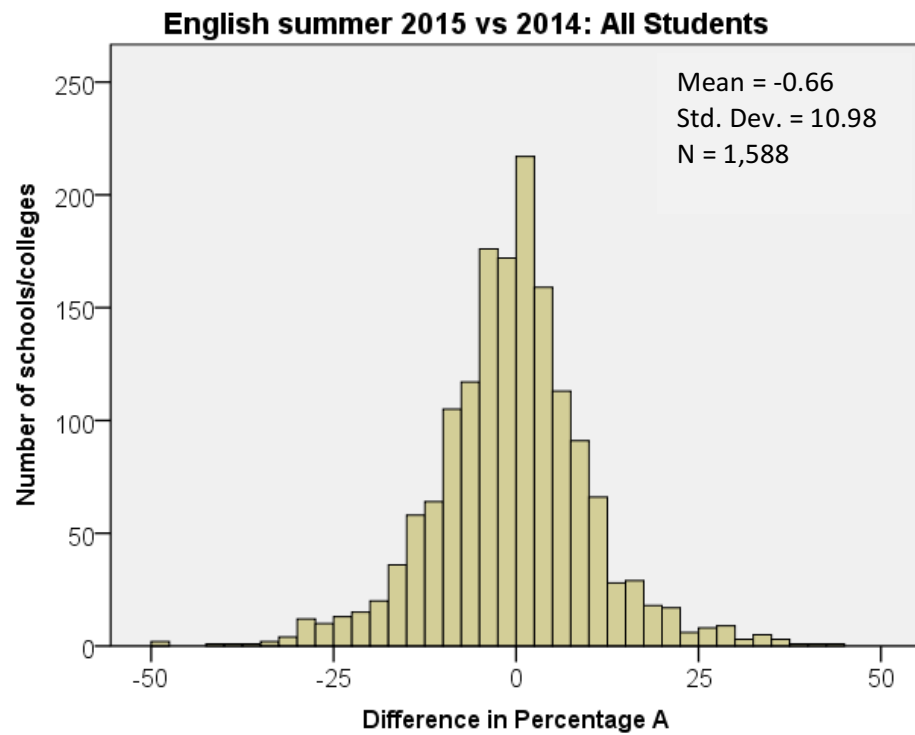


English Literature summer 2015 vs 2014: Yr 12 students only

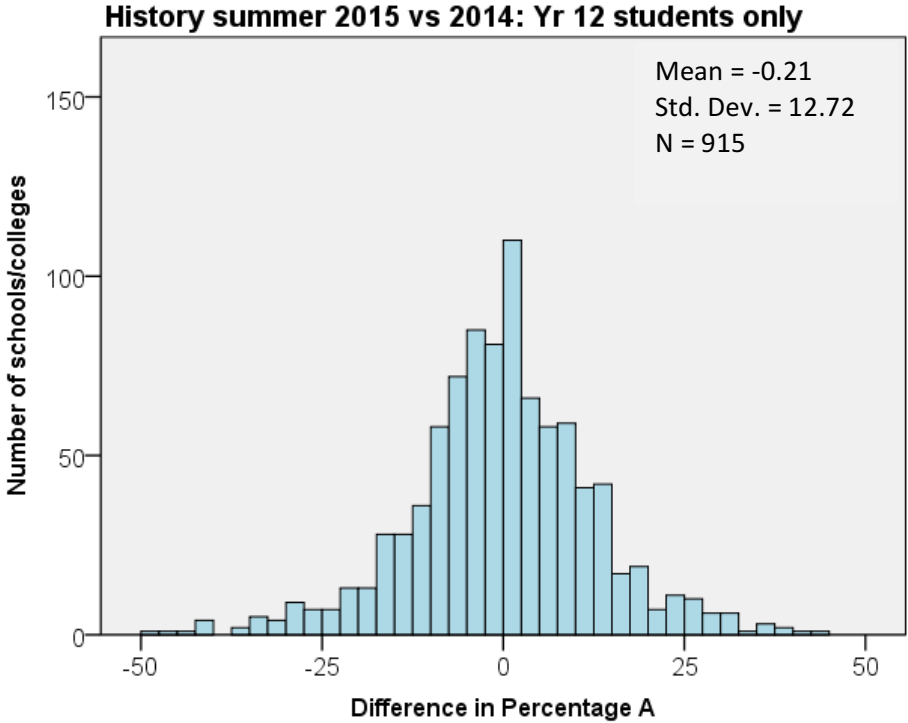
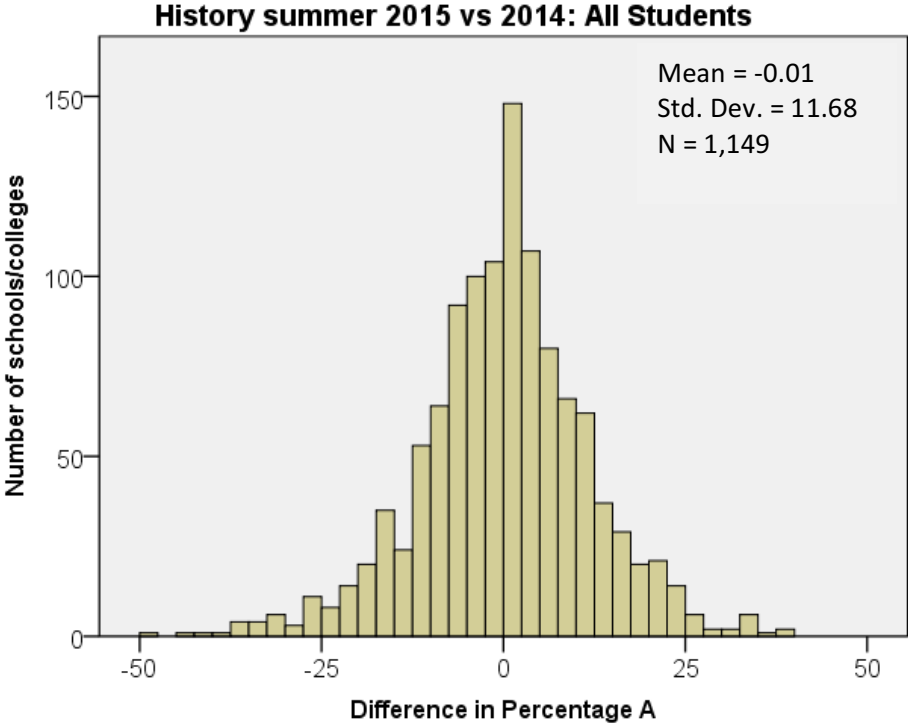


## AS English language and literature, English language, English literature

These three related subjects are reported in the summer JCQ results under the heading “English”. We have combined results for the three subjects in the graphs below.

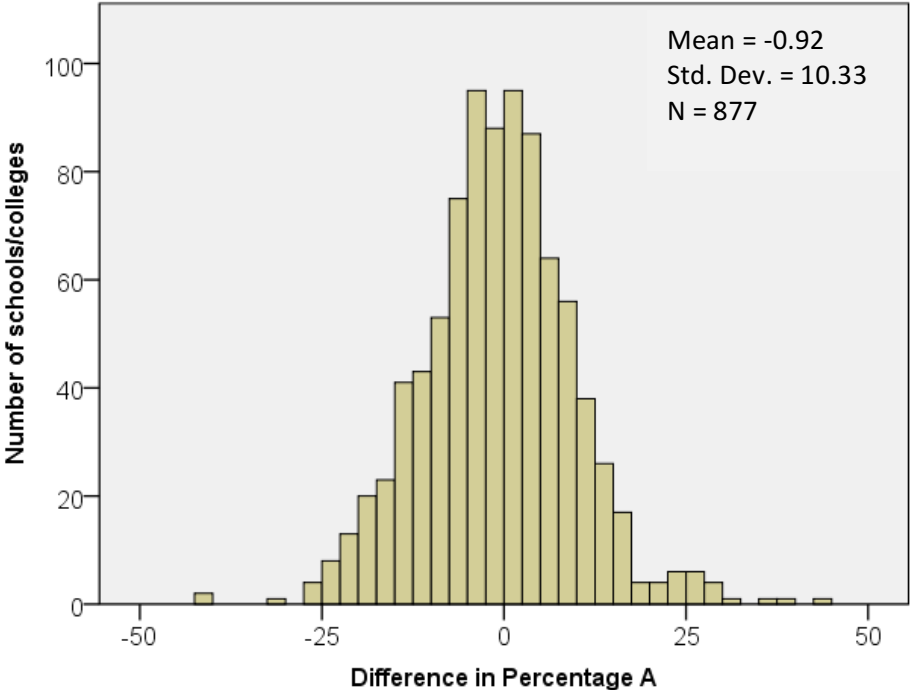


AS history

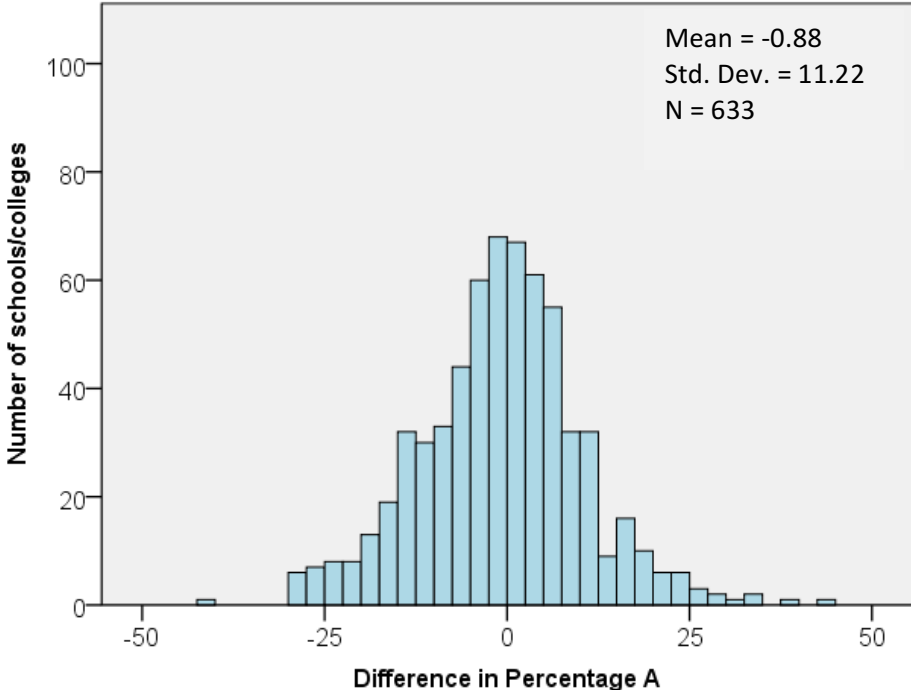


# AS physics

### Physics summer 2015 vs 2014: All Students

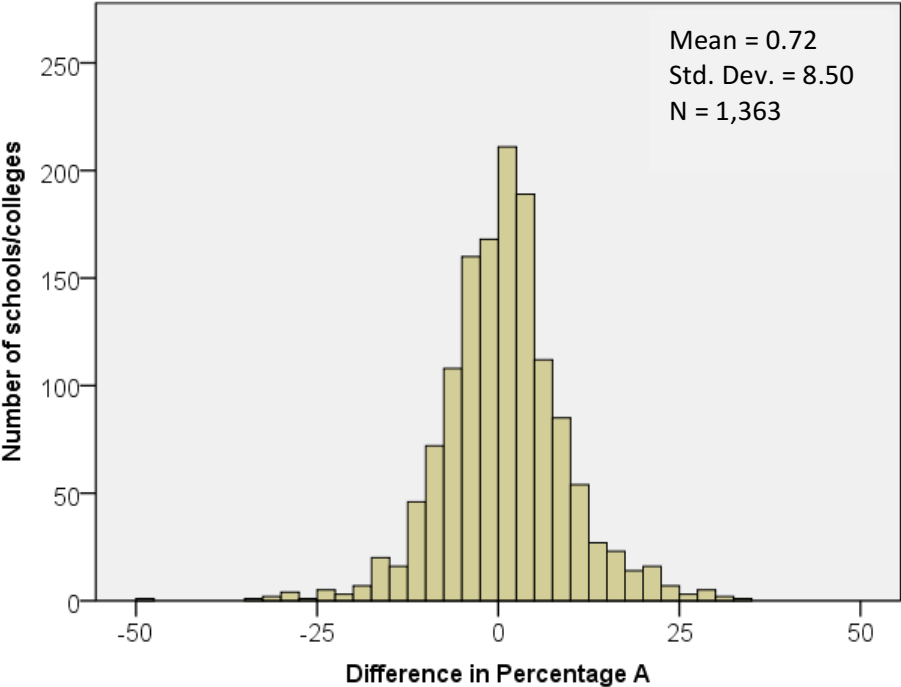


### Physics summer 2015 vs 2014: Yr 12 students only

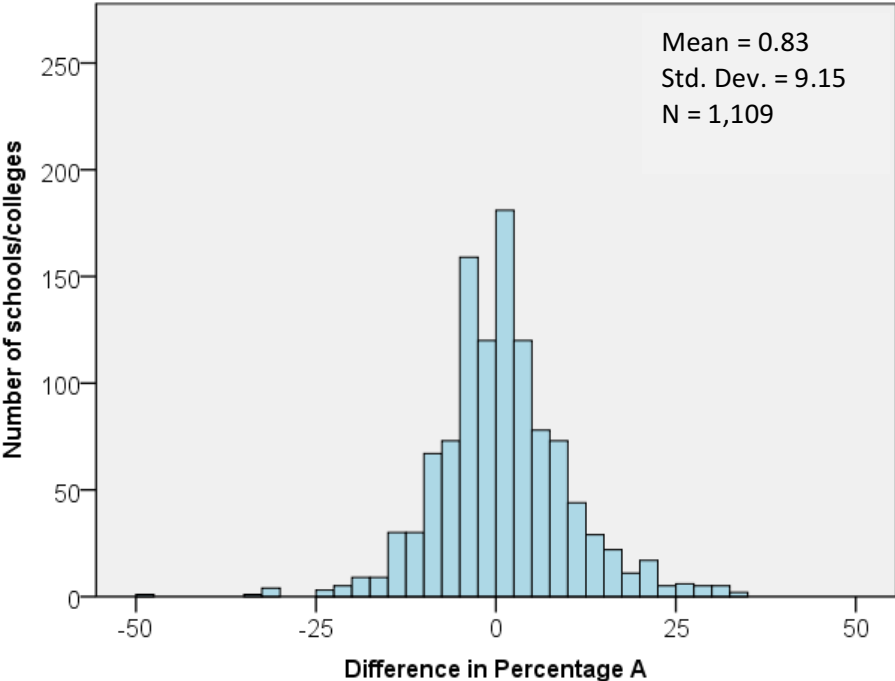


# AS psychology

**Psychology summer 2015 vs 2014: All Students**

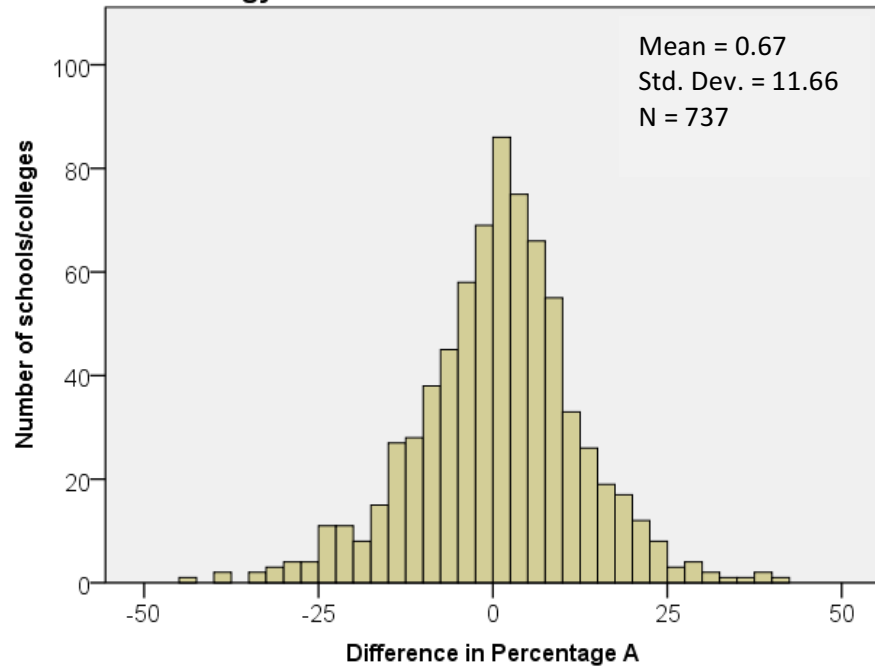


**Psychology summer 2015 vs 2014: Yr 12 students only**

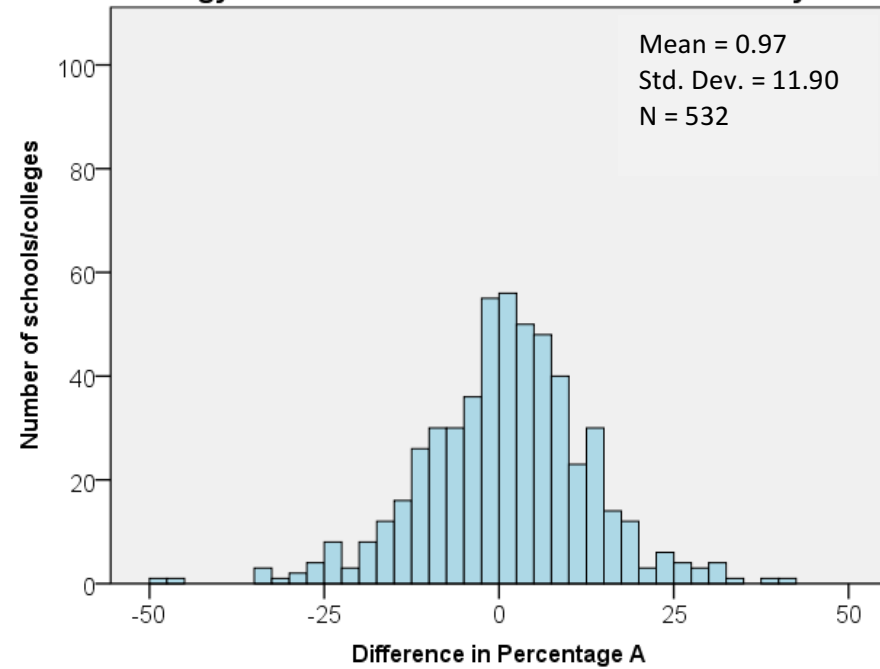


# AS sociology

### Sociology summer 2015 vs 2014: All Students



### Sociology summer 2015 vs 2014: Yr 12 students only





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