



Department
for Education

Performance points

A practical guide to key stage 4 and
16 to 18 performance points

September 2016

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Summary

This publication provides non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education. It has been produced to help schools, colleges and parents understand how points are calculated for key stage 4 and 16 to 18 performance tables, from 2016 onwards.

Expiry or review date

This guidance will be reviewed before August 2017.

Who is this publication for?

This guidance is for:

- school and college leaders, school and college staff and governing bodies in schools in England offering provision at key stage 4 or at age 16 to 18
- parents who wish to find out more about how points for key stage 4 and 16 to 18 performance tables are calculated

Main points

This document contains an overview of how points are calculated for qualifications which are eligible for key stage 4 and 16 to 18 performance tables. Firstly, the number of guided learning hours is used to determine the size of the qualification. This information is used along with the number of grades in the qualification to determine its performance points. Tables are provided to look up the size and points structure for eligible qualifications.

Introduction

Performance points and GCSE/GCE size equivalence are used within the key stage 4 and 16 to 18 performance tables as they allow qualifications of different size and grade structures to be compared.

This document is a practical introduction to calculating points. It does not attempt to explain how they are used within the performance tables.

Using this document, you should be able to find the necessary information about a qualification's guided learning hours on [Ofqual's Register of Regulated Qualifications](#) (hereafter referred to as the Register), and calculate the appropriate points for that qualification.

The performance tables are only used to compare schools or colleges in England and therefore points cannot be calculated for qualifications which are only relevant in other parts of the UK.

Intentions and limitations of the system

The system is designed to be used for reporting the performance of the institution and is intended only to be used in the production of the performance tables.

It cannot and should not be compared to systems designed to measure an individual's achievement – for example the UCAS tariff.

In order to maintain accuracy, the Department for Education regularly reviews the points scores and will make updates if necessary where this improves the quality of performance tables. All updates will be communicated to schools through published guidance.

Eligibility

To be eligible for points a qualification must:

- be regulated by Ofqual
- be approved for the relevant age range, under Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 (hereafter referred to as Section 96)
- be approved by the Department for Education for inclusion in performance tables

If a qualification is regulated then it will have been given a qualification number (QN), previously known as a qualification accreditation number (QAN). It will also have a regulation start date. All qualifications on the Register are regulated.

You can check whether a qualification has been approved by checking the [Section 96 website](#).

Furthermore, the inclusion of qualifications in key stage 4 and 16 to 18 performance tables is also based upon the recommendations of the 2011 '[Wolf review of vocational education](#)'.

A [complete list of qualifications eligible in 2016 for points at key stage 4](#) is available.

A [complete list of qualifications eligible in 2016 for 16 to 18 performance points](#) is also available.

Calculating points

Key stage 4 performance points

All information about how to calculate key stage 4 performance points for 2016 to 2018 is contained in the document ['Progress 8 measure in 2016, 2017, and 2018'](#).

16 to 18 performance points

Some of the information (apart from how to calculate a qualification's size) on how to calculate 16 to 18 performance points from 2016 onwards is also contained in the document ['16 to 19 accountability headline measures: technical guide'](#).

Note that from 2017 onwards, some level 2 qualifications will be included in the 16 to 18 performance tables; these points are still to be finalised, and this information will be published on [GOV.UK](#) when available. The information on calculating performance points for level 3 qualifications contained in this document will not change in the 16 to 18 performance tables for 2017.

An overview of how 16 to 18 points are calculated

The calculation of points is defined as 'size' times 'challenge'.

Size is a measure of the average length of time it takes to teach the qualification. Average time is taken from the guided learning hours (GLH) from the Register. If a single GLH value is not available, a notional GLH is created. More information about calculating notional GLH is given in Appendix A.

Challenge reflects the level of the qualification and grade achieved.

To calculate points for a qualification which counts towards the 16 to 18 performance tables, follow the rules below:

1. First use the GLH value to calculate the GCE A level size equivalence of the qualification, using Table 1.
2. The size can then be used to determine points, depending on the type of qualification. For certain qualification types, any qualification of this type will have the same points structure: Applied GCE Award (Single or Double); GCE A levels; Applied GCE AS levels (Single or Double); GCE AS levels; Applied GCE A level/AS level Combined; Advanced Extension Award; Core Maths, Extended Project; Free Standing Mathematics (Level 3); certain components of the International Baccalaureate; Principal Learning (Level 3); Pre-Us. Tables 2a to 2i should be used for these qualifications.

3. For other eligible qualification types, the points structure depends on the number of possible (passing) grades as well as the size of the qualification. Tables 3a to 3k contain instructions on how to calculate points for these qualifications.

Section 1: Size table

Table 1 – Size:

Size band	GLH		GCSE (Level 1 or 2) size equivalence ¹	GCE A level (Level 3) size equivalence
	Minimum	Maximum		
A	1	44	0.25	0.1
B	45	89	0.5	0.2
C	90	144	1	0.3
D	145	234	2	0.5
E	235	324	3	0.75
F	325	414	4	1
G	415	504	5	1.25
H	505	594	6	1.5
I	595	684	7	1.75
J	685	774	8	2
K	775	864	9	2.25
L	865	954	10	2.5
M	955	1044	11	2.75
N	1045	1134	12	3
O	1135	1224	13	3.25
P	1225	-	N/A	3.5

Table 1: Size

¹ Size information for qualifications at these levels is given for reference purposes only as they are not needed for the purposes of calculating points; points for all qualifications of this level are given in the [‘Progress 8 measure in 2016, 2017, and 2018’](#) document. Note also that since 2014, GCSE size equivalence is capped at a maximum value of 1 in the key stage 4 tables.

For example, Table 1 shows that a qualification of 120 GLH at level 3 would be the equivalent to 0.3 of an A level. A similarly sized qualification at either level 1 or level 2 would have a size equivalence of one GCSE.

Section 2: Performance points for level 3 qualifications in 16 to 18 tables

The Department for Education calculated 16 to 18 performance points for the following types of qualifications:

- Applied GCE Award (Single or Double)
- GCE A levels
- Applied GCE AS levels (Single or Double)
- GCE AS levels
- Applied GCE A level/AS level Combined
- Advanced Extension Award
- Core Maths
- Extended Project
- Free Standing Mathematics (Level 3)
- International Baccalaureate
- Principal Learning (Level 3)
- Pre-Us

The performance points scores from 2016 onwards are calculated using the following formula, based on the previous (2015) performance points scores.

$$\text{New perf. point score} = \frac{\text{Old perf. point score}}{3} - 40 \times \text{A level size equivalence}$$

Formula 1: Calculating new performance points

Old points scores are thus given for reference purposes. A level size equivalence is obtained from Table 1 above.

Table 2a – A level, Applied A level, AS level, Applied AS level, Core Maths:

Grade	AS level or Core Maths Size: 0.5 / Band: D		A level Size: 1 / Band: F	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
A*			300	60
A	135	25	270	50
B	120	20	240	40
C	105	15	210	30
D	90	10	180	20
E	75	5	150	10
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 2a – A level, Applied A level, AS level, Applied AS level, Core Maths

Table 2b – Applied A level Double Award, AS level Double Award, Combined A and AS level:

Grade	Double AS level Size: 1 / Band: F		Combined A and AS level Size: 1.5 / Band: H		Double A level Size: 2 / Band: J	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
A*A*					600	120
A*A			435	85	570	110
AA	270	50	405	75	540	100
AB	255	45	382.5	67.5	510	90
BB	240	40	360	60	480	80
BC	225	35	337.5	52.5	450	70
CC	210	30	315	45	420	60
CD	195	25	292.5	37.5	390	50
DD	180	20	270	30	360	40
DE	165	15	247.5	22.5	330	30
EE	150	10	225	15	300	20
FAIL	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2b – Applied A level Double Award, AS level Double Award, Combined A and AS level

Table 2c – Advanced Extension Award:

Grade	Advanced Extension Award Size: 0 / Band: N/A	
	Old points	New points
D	27	9
M	23	7.7
Fail	0	0

Table 2c – Advanced Extension Award

Table 2d – Extended Project (Diploma) and Principal Learning (Diploma):

Grade	Extended Project (Diploma) Size: 0.3 / Band: C		Principal Learning (Diploma) Size: 1.5 / Band: H	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
A*	90	18	450	90
A	81	15	405	75
B	72	12	360	60
C	63	9	315	45
D	54	6	270	30
E	45	3	225	15
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 2d – Extended Project (Diploma) and Principal Learning (Diploma)

Table 2e – Free-Standing Mathematics Qualification (Level 3):

Grade	Free-Standing Mathematics Size: 0.17 / Band: N/A	
	Old points	New points
A	45	8.2
B	40	6.53
C	35	4.87
D	30	3.2
E	25	1.53
Fail	0	0

Table 2e – Free Standing Mathematics Qualification (Level 3)

Table 2f – International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme:

Grade	International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Size: 5 / Band: N/A	
	Old points	New points
Grade 45	1518	300
Grade 44	1485	290.5
Grade 43	1452	281
Grade 42	1419	271.5
Grade 41	1386	262
Grade 40	1353	252.5
Grade 39	1320	243
Grade 38	1287	233.5
Grade 37	1254	224
Grade 36	1221	214.5
Grade 35	1188	205
Grade 34	1155	195.5
Grade 33	1122	186
Grade 32	1089	176.5
Grade 31	1056	167
Grade 30	1023	157.5
Grade 29	990	148
Grade 28	957	138.5
Grade 27	924	129
Grade 26	891	119.5
Grade 25	858	110
Grade 24	825	100.5
Fail	0	0

Table 2f – International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

Table 2g – IBO standard and higher level components:

Grade	Standard level component Size: 0.5 / Band: D		Higher level component Size: 1 / Band: F	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
7	135	25	270	60
6	112.5	20	225	48
5	97.5	15	195	36
4	82.5	10	165	24
3	0	5	0	12
2	0	0	0	0
1	0	0	0	0
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 2g – IBO standard and higher level components

Table 2h – IBO core components:

Grade	Reflective Project Size: 0.2 / Band: B		Extended Essay Size: 0.2 / Band: B		Theory of Knowledge Size: 0.3 / Band: C	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
A	54	10	54	8	81	12
B	48	8	48	6	72	9
C	42	6	42	4	63	6
D	36	4	36	2	54	3
E	30	2	30	0	45	0
FAIL	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2h – IBO core components

Table 2i – Pre-U:

Grade	Short Course Subject Size: 0.5 / Band: D		Principal Subject Size: 1 / Band: F	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
D1	150	30	300	60
D2	141.25	27.08	282.5	54.17
D3	132.5	24.17	265	48.33
M1	123.75	21.25	247.5	42.5
M2	115	18.33	230	36.67
M3	105	15	210	30
P1	95	11.67	190	23.33
P2	85	8.33	170	16.67
P3	75	5	150	10
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 2i – Pre-U

Note that tables 2a to 2i above are also contained in the document '[16 to 19 accountability headline measures: technical guide](#)'.

Section 3: Performance points for level 3 qualifications with differing grade structures

The Department for Education calculated 16 to 18 performance points for the following types of qualifications, where eligible. Note that the [complete list of qualifications eligible for 16 to 18 performance points in 2016](#) is also available.

- BTEC Certificates/Diplomas/National Subsidiary Awards
- OCR Cambridge Technical Certificates/Diplomas/Extended Diplomas/Introductory Diplomas/Subsidiary Diplomas
- various other vocational qualifications

The points for these qualifications depend on both the size of the qualification (as obtained from Table 1), and the number of passing grades of the qualification. It is important to note that the key factor in the grade structure is the number of grades – not the names of the grades. For example, a Pass/Merit/Distinction/Distinction* grade structure is the same as a C grade/B grade/A grade/A* grade structure, because there are four grades in both.

The 2016 performance points scores are again calculated using Formula 1, based on the previous (2015) performance points scores.

$$\text{New perf. point score} = \frac{\text{Old perf. point score}}{3} - 40 \times A \text{ level size equivalence}$$

Formula 1: Calculating new performance points

Table 3a – One-grade structure, eg Pass only:

Grade	Size	Band	Old points	New points
Pass	0.5	D	105	15
	0.75	E	157.5	22.5
	1	F	210	30
	1.25	G	262.5	37.5
	1.5	H	315	45
	1.75	I	367.5	52.5
	2	J	420	60
	2.25	K	472.5	67.5
	2.5	L	525	75
	2.75	M	577.5	82.5
	3	N	630	90
	3.25	O	682.5	97.5
	3.5	P	735	105
Fail			0	0

Table 3a – One-grade structure, eg Pass only

Table 3b – Two-grade structure, eg Pass/Merit:

Grade	Size: 0.5 / Band: D		Size: 0.75 / Band: E	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
Merit	120	20	180	30
Pass	97.5	12.5	146.25	18.75
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 3b – Two-grade structure, eg Pass/Merit

Table 3c – Three-grade structure, eg Pass/Merit/Distinction (size 0.5 to 1.25):

Grade	Size: 0.5 Band: D		Size: 0.75 Band: E		Size: 1 Band: F		Size: 1.25 Band: G	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
D	135	25	202.5	37.5	270	50	337.5	62.5
M	112.5	17.5	168.75	26.25	225	35	281.25	43.75
P	82.5	7.5	123.75	11.25	165	15	206.25	18.75
Fail	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 3c – Three-grade structure, eg Pass/Merit/Distinction (size 0.5 to 1.25)

Table 3d – Three-grade structure, eg Pass/Merit/Distinction (size 1.5 to 2.25):

Grade	Size: 1.5 Band: H		Size: 1.75 Band: I		Size: 2 Band: J		Size: 2.25 Band: K	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
D	405	75	472.5	87.5	540	100	607.5	112.5
M	337.5	52.5	393.75	61.25	450	70	506.25	78.75
P	247.5	22.5	288.75	26.25	330	30	371.25	33.73
Fail	0	0	0	0	0	0		0

Table 3d – Three-grade structure, eg Pass/Merit/Distinction (size 1.5 to 2.25)

Table 3e – Three-grade structure, eg Pass/Merit/Distinction (size 2.5 to 3):

Grade	Size: 2.5 Band: L		Size: 2.75 Band: M		Size: 3 Band: N	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
D	675	125	742.5	137.5	810	150
M	562.5	87.5	618.75	96.25	675	105
P	412.5	37.5	453.75	41.25	495	45
Fail	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 3e – Three-grade structure, eg Pass/Merit/Distinction (size 2.5 to 3)

Table 3f – Four-grade structure, eg Pass/Merit/Distinction/Distinction* (size 0.5 to 1.25):

Grade	Size: 0.5 Band: D		Size: 0.75 Band: E		Size: 1 Band: F		Size: 1.25 Band: G	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
D*	135	25	202.5	37.5	270	50	337.5	62.5
D	112.5	17.5	168.75	26.25	225	35	281.25	43.75
M	97.5	12.5	146.25	18.75	195	25	243.75	31.25
P	82.5	7.5	123.75	11.25	165	15	206.25	18.75
Fail	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 3f – Four-grade structure, eg Pass/Merit/Distinction/Distinction* (size 0.5 to 1.25)

Table 3g – Four-grade structure, eg Pass/Merit/Distinction/Distinction* (size 1.5 to 3):

Grade	Size: 1.5 Band: H		Size: 1.75 Band: I		Size: 2 Band: J		Size: 3 Band: N	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
D*	405	75	472.5	87.5	540	100	810	150
D	337.5	52.5	393.75	61.25	450	70	675	105
M	292.5	37.5	341.25	43.75	390	50	585	75
P	247.5	22.5	288.75	26.25	330	30	495	45
Fail	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 3g – Four-grade structure, eg Pass/Merit/Distinction/Distinction* (size 1.5 to 3)

Table 3h – Five-grade structure, eg A*/A/B/C/D:

Grade	Size: 0.5 Band: D		Size: 0.75 Band: E		Size: 1.5 Band: H		Size: 1.75 Band: I		Size: 3 Band: N	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
A*	135	25	202.5	37.5	406	75	525	105	810	150
A	120	20	180	30	360	60	472.5	87.5	720	120
B	105	15	157.5	22.5	315	45	420	70	630	90
C	90	10	135	15	270	30	367.5	52.5	540	60
D	75	5	112.5	7.5	225	15	315	35	450	30
Fail	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 3h – Five-grade structure, eg A*/A/B/C/D

Table 3i – Six-grade structure, eg A*/A/B/C/D/E vocational qualifications:

Grade	Size: 0.5 Band: D		Size: 0.75 Band: E		Size: 1 Band: F		Size: 3 Band: N	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
A*	135	25	225	45	270	50	810	150
A	126	21	202.5	37.5	246	42	738	126
B	111	17	180	30	222	34	666	102
C	99	13	157.5	22.5	198	26	594	78
D	87	9	135	15	174	18	522	54
E	75	5	112.5	7.5	150	10	450	30
Fail	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 3i – Six-grade structure, eg A*/A/B/C/D/E vocational qualifications

Table 3j – Seven-grade structure, eg Pass Pass to Distinction* Distinction*:

Grade	Size: 1.5 Band: H		Size: 1.75 Band: I		Size: 2 Band: J		Size: 2.25 Band: K		Size: 2.75 Band: M	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
D*D*	405	75	472.5	87.5	540	100	607.5	112.5	742.5	137.5
D*D	371.25	63.75	433.13	74.38	495	85	556.88	95.63	680.63	116.88
DD	337.5	52.5	393.75	61.25	450	70	506.25	78.75	618.75	96.25
DM	315	45	367.5	52.5	420	60	472.5	67.5	577.5	82.5
MM	292.5	37.5	341.25	43.75	390	50	438.75	56.25	536.25	68.75
MP	270	30	315	35	360	40	405	45	495	55
PP	247.5	22.5	288.75	26.25	330	30	371.25	33.75	453.75	41.25
Fail	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 3j – Seven-grade structure, eg Pass Pass to Distinction* Distinction*

Table 3k – Ten-grade structure, eg Pass Pass Pass to Distinction* Distinction* Distinction*:

Grade	Size: 2.75 Band: M		Size: 3 Band: N		Size: 3.25 Band: O	
	Old points	New points	Old points	New points	Old points	New points
D*D*D*	742.5	137.5	810	150	877.5	162.5
D*D*D	701.25	123.75	765	135	828.75	146.25
D*DD	660	110	720	120	780	130
DDD	618.75	96.25	675	105	731.25	113.75
DDM	591.25	87.08	645	95	698.75	102.92
DMM	563.75	77.92	615	85	666.25	92.08
MMM	536.25	68.75	585	75	633.75	81.25
MMP	508.75	59.58	555	65	601.25	70.42
MPP	481.25	50.42	525	55	568.75	59.58
PPP	453.75	41.25	495	45	536.25	48.75
Fail	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 3k – Ten-grade structure, eg Pass Pass Pass to Distinction* Distinction* Distinction*

Note that tables 3a to 3k above are also contained in the document '[16 to 19 accountability headline measures: technical guide](#)'.

Appendix A: GLH (Guided Learning Hours) and notional GLH

A range of GLH

There are a number of circumstances in which the GLH stated on the Register is not the GLH used as the basis for the size equivalence in the performance tables. If a range of GLH is provided then the mid point of the range is taken. For example, if a qualification has a minimum GLH of 120 and a maximum GLH of 130, then a value of 125 GLH is used. Or if a qualification has a minimum GLH of 490 and a maximum GLH of 519, the mid point is 504.5 which would be rounded up to 505 (so would lie in band H).

One exception to this is where minimum GLH is 0, and maximum GLH >0, in which case the GLH value is set as the maximum value rather than the mid point.

No stated GLH

If there is no single GLH value or minimum/maximum GLH value given for a qualification, a number of proxy values can be used to create a notional GLH for the purpose of the performance tables. A qualification of one of the following types is assigned the notional GLH below:

- a GCSE is assigned 120 GLH (a short course is 60 and a double is 240)
- a GCE A level is assigned 360 GLH (an AS level is 180 and a double is 720)
- a functional skills qualification is assigned 45 GLH
- a Basic Skills qualification is assigned 60 GLH
- a Free Standing Mathematics qualification is assigned 60 GLH

If the qualification does not belong to one of the types above, the following measures are used instead, in this order:

- Diploma GLH
- Qualifications Credit Framework (QCF) qualifications only: credit value \times 6.8
- QCF qualifications only: minimum credit value \times 6.8



Department
for Education

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