



Department
for Education

Advanced British Standard

**Analytical annex to ‘A world-class
education system: The Advanced British
Standard consultation’**

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Introduction

This statistical annex is being published to provide transparency on the data and analysis in the 'A world-class education system: The Advanced British Standard consultation'. It provides a range of analysis to help readers understand the current 16 to 19 education system and statistics on young people in education and apprenticeships, including the number of qualifications approved for 16 to 19 funding at level 3 and below; highest study aims of young people age 16 and 17; the number and percentage of young people age 16 and 17 studying English and maths; and an international comparison of teaching hours in post-16 studies.

The methodology behind each section of the analysis is outlined at the end of the document.

Main Findings

Qualifications at level 3 and below approved for funding in the 16 to 19 offer as at November 2023

This section is included to aid the reader of the consultation document to understand the number of qualifications at level 3 or below which are funded for 16 to 19 studies and the distribution across different qualification levels and qualification types.

- There were 5,793 qualifications¹ at level 3 and below approved for funding in the 16 to 19 offer.
- GCSEs (2.4%) and A/AS levels (4.0%) only account for a small proportion of qualifications at level 3 and below approved for funding in the 16 to 19 offer. The majority of the qualifications cover: entry level qualifications (11.9%); level 1 qualifications (16.9%); other level 1/2 and level 2 qualifications (32.4%); and other level 3 qualifications (32.4%).

Qualification level/type	Number of qualifications at level 3 and below approved for funding in the 16 to 19 offer	% of qualification at level 3 and below approved for funding in the 16 to 19 offer
Entry level qualification	689	11.9
Level 1 qualification	981	16.9
GCSE	137	2.4
Other level 1/2 or level 2 qualification	1,875	32.4
A/AS level	233	4.0
Other level 3 qualifications	1,878	32.4
Total	5,793	100.0

Table 1: Number of qualifications at level 3 and below and number of qualifications approved for funding for 16 to 19 study, by qualification level

Source: [DfE – List of qualifications approved for funding](#)

¹ Excludes any qualifications which has a funding approval end date of 30/11/2023 or before

Highest study aims of young people aged 16 and 17, 2022²

This section is included to aid the reader of the consultation document to understand the size of the 16 and 17 cohort, the proportion of young people aged 16 and 17 who are in education or apprenticeships and the qualifications or apprenticeships they are working towards.

Table 2 shows the number and percentage of young people aged 16 and 17 by highest study aims at the start of the 2021/22 academic year.

- 89.6% of young people age 16 and 17 were in education or apprenticeships.
- 67.3% of young people age 16 and 17 were working towards A/AS levels, T levels or other level 3 qualifications, where 46.8% were working towards A/AS levels (of which 10.5% also taking Applied General qualifications), 19.5% working towards other level 3 qualifications only and 0.9% towards T levels.
- 13.5% of young people age 16 and 17 were working towards GCSE or other level 2 qualifications, 9.9% towards GCSEs (of which 5.8% also working towards other level 2 qualifications) and 3.6% towards other level 2 qualifications only

² Age refers to students' academic age – the age of a learner at the beginning of the 2021/22 academic year

	Number of 16 and 17 year olds	As proportion of 16 and 17 year olds (%)
Total age 16 and 17	1,317,400	100.0
Total age 16 and 17 in education³ or apprenticeships	1,179,900	89.6
Higher education	7,500	0.6
A/AS level	616,200	46.8
of which: A/AS level with Applied General	137,900	10.5
Other level 3 ⁴	257,300	19.5
T levels	12,500	0.9
GCSE	130,300	9.9
of which: GCSE also doing other level 2	76,200	5.8
Other level 2 ⁵	47,800	3.6
Level 1 and other qualifications	60,400	4.6
Apprenticeships ⁶	48,000	3.6

Table 2: Number and proportion of age 16 and 17 by highest study aim, 2022

Source: [Participation in education, training and employment age 16 to 18, Calendar year 2022 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#). Figures are rounded to the nearest 100 individuals and the nearest 0.1 percent and may not sum due to rounding

³ This includes all 16 and 17 year olds in full-time and part-time education

⁴ Other level 3 qualifications include: Applied General; Tech level and unclassified

⁵ Other level 2 qualifications include: Technical Certificate and non-Technical Certificate

⁶ Apprenticeship category excludes overlaps with full-time or part-time education and includes young people working towards Intermediate Apprenticeships and Higher/Advanced Apprenticeships

Young people aged 16 and 17 studying English and maths, by GCSE grade achieved in English and maths⁷

This section is included to aid the reader of the consultation document to understand the number and proportion of young people aged 16 and 17 who study English and maths and how the proportion of students studying English and maths changes depending on the GCSE grades achieved in these subjects.

Young people studying English⁸ at age 16 and 17

Figures for English participation at age 16 and 17 can be found in table 3.

- Based on the 524,208 young people aged 18 in 2020⁹, 36% studied English at 16 (11% at level 3, 20% at level 2 and 5% at below level 2). At age 17, 25% (10% at level 3, 12% at level 2 and 3% at below level 2) studied English.
- The analysis below shows the percentage of students achieving different GCSE grades in English at age 15¹⁰ who go on to study English at age 16:
 - 30% (37,318) of students who achieved grade 7-9 studied English, with the vast majority at level 3
 - 18% (16,789) of students who achieved grade 6 studied English (16% at level 3 and 2% studying at level 2)
 - 17% (30,371) of students who achieved grade 4-5 studied English (4% at level 3 and 13% at level 2)
 - 91% (62,557) of student who achieved grade 3 studied English (87% at level 2 and 4% at below level 2)
 - 69% (42,185) of student who achieved below grade 3 studied English (31% at level 2 and 38% at below level 2)

⁷ The total number of students in this section is different from the figures in table 2 due to a difference in methodology and the cohorts included. Table 2 is based on a snapshot of two cohorts of young people age 16 and 17 at the start of the 2021/22 academic year, whilst table 3 and 4 in this section follows a single cohort of students who reached age 18 at the start of the 2020/21 academic year and include only students who were in the state sector when they were age 15.

⁸ Includes English Language, combined English Language, English Studies, and English Literature

⁹ Based on academic age, this analysis focuses on young people who were age 18 at the beginning of the 2020/21 academic year

¹⁰ This is based on the higher of English language and English literature grade

Grade achieved in English GCSE	Below grade 3	Grade 3	Grade 4-5	Grade 6	Grade 7-9	Total¹¹
Total number of students	60,917	68,612	179,669	91,833	123,136	524,208
Total studying English at age 16	42,185	62,557	30,371	16,789	37,318	189,228
% of age 16 studying English	69%	91%	17%	18%	30%	36%
% of age 16 studying level 3 English	0%*	0%*	4%	16%	30%	11%
% of age 16 studying level 2 English	31%	87%	13%	2%	1%	20%
% of age 16 studying below level 2 English	38%	4%	0%*	0%*	0%*	5%
Total studying English at age 17	30,303	38,700	13,763	13,305	33,974	130,050
% of age 17 studying English	50%	56%	8%	14%	28%	25%
% of age 17 studying level 3 English	0%*	0%*	3%	14%	27%	10%
% of age 17 studying level 2 English	30%	54%	4%	0%*	0%*	12%
% of age 17 studying below level 2 English	19%	2%	0%*	0%*	0%*	3%

Table 3: Young people age 16 and 17 studying English, by GCSE grade achieved in English age 15

Source: Young Person's Matched Administrative Dataset, 2020/21, figures may not sum due to rounding.

* denotes a small number of students studying English at these levels but the percentage round to 0%

¹¹ Note that less than 1% of English students had a grade A*-G. These are included in the total column.

Young people studying maths at age 16 and 17

Figures for maths participation at age 16 and 17 can be found in table 4.

- Based on the 524,208 young people aged 18 in 2020¹², 43% studied maths at 16 (16% at level 3, 19% at level 2 and 8% at below level 2) and 32% at 17 (14% at level 3, 14% at level 2 and 4% at below level 2).
- The analysis below shows the percentage of students achieving different GCSE maths grades at age 15 who go on to study maths at age 16:
 - 66% (66,364) of students who achieved grade 7-9 studied maths, with the vast majority at level 3
 - 21% (12,785) of students who achieved grade 6 studied maths, with the vast majority at level 3
 - 5% (10,348) of students who achieved grade 4-5 studied maths (3% at level 3 and 2% at level 2)
 - 93% (60,660) of student who achieved grade 3 studied maths (92% at level 2 and 1% at below level 2)
 - 79% (76,781) of student who achieved below grade 3 studied maths (37% at level 2 and 42% at below level 2)

¹² Based on academic age, this analysis focuses on young people who were age 18 at the beginning of the 2020/21 academic year

Grade achieved in maths GCSE	Below grade 3	Grade 3	Grade 4-5	Grade 6	Grade 7-9	Total¹³
Total number of students	97,132	65,087	199,558	60,417	100,780	524,208
Total studying maths age 16	76,781	60,660	10,348	12,785	66,364	227,913
% of age 16 studying maths	79%	93%	5%	21%	66%	43%
% of age 16 studying level 3 maths	0%*	0%*	3%	21%	66%	16%
% of age 16 studying level 2 maths	37%	92%	2%	0%*	0%*	19%
% of age 16 studying below level 2 maths	42%	1%	0%*	0%*	0%*	8%
Total studying maths age 17	57,940	36,313	4,638	8,363	61,538	169,711
% of age 17 studying maths	60%	56%	2%	14%	61%	32%
% of age 17 studying level 3 maths	0%*	0%*	2%	14%	61%	14%
% of age 17 studying level 2 maths	38%	55%	0%*	0%*	0%*	14%
% of age 17 studying below level 2 maths	21%	1%	0%*	0%*	0%*	4%

Table 4: Young people age 16 and 17 studying maths, by GCSE achieved in maths age 15

Source: Young Person's Matched Administrative Dataset, 2020/21, figures may not sum due to rounding.

* denotes a small number of students studying maths at these levels but the percentage round to 0%

¹³ Note that less than 1% of maths students had a grade A*-G. These are included in the total column.

Post-16 teaching hours in other countries

This section is included to aid the reader of the consultation document to understand how teaching hours in 16 to 19 education in England compare with similar countries. As a reference, in England, the 16 to 19 study programme guidance states that full-time study programmes for 16 and 17 year olds are expected to be 640 hours on average for the 2023/24 academic year¹⁴.

Table 5 below shows teaching hours at post-16 (or equivalent) for selected countries with readily available data as of November 2023.

¹⁴ [16 to 19 study programmes guidance: 2023 to 2024 academic year - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-study-programmes-guidance-2023-to-2024-academic-year)

Country	Teaching hours
Canada	Nine of the 13 Canadian provinces and territories specify intended instruction hours per year for students age 17, ranging from 825 to 1,018 hours with a median of 935 hours .
Denmark	Students on general programmes receive 1,845 hours over 2 years or 2,600 to 2,770 hours over 3 years, ranging from 867 to 923 hours per year on average. Vocational students must receive a certain number of teacher-supervised hours, starting with 26 hours per week for the 40 week basic programme at the start of vocational courses, or 1,040 hours per year.
Finland	To graduate from upper secondary high school, a student must complete 150 credits worth of courses, when one credit is worth 14 hours 15 minutes of teaching. This equates to 2,137.5 hours over 3 years, or an average of 712.5 hours per year.
France	Students on general and technical programmes receive at least 1,008 hours of instruction per year. Students on vocational programmes receive 780-900 hours of instruction per year plus on-the-job training.
Italy	Students in general education receive between 891 and 1,155 hours of compulsory teaching per year, depending on the programme they follow. Those on vocational programmes receive 1,056 hours of compulsory teaching per year.
The Netherlands	The government requires 4,700 hours of instruction over 5 years for senior general secondary education (HAVO) and 5,700 hours over 6 years for pre-university students (VWO). On average this is 940 and 950 hours per year respectively, although in practice schools have freedom to allocate these between years. The minimum for vocational programmes is 1,000 hours per year.
Norway	Students on general programmes receive 2,523 hours over 3 years, while those on vocational programmes receive 1,963 hours over 2 years, an average of 841 and 981.5 hours per year respectively.
Sweden	Students in general programmes have the right to at least 2,180 teaching hours over 3 years and students in vocational programmes to at least 2,430 teaching hours, or an average of 727 and 810 hours per year respectively.
United States	38 states specify minimum instruction time per school year; all but one of these require at least 900 hours for the oldest students, with a median of 1,056 hours .

Table 5: Post-16 teaching hours in other countries

Source: please see methodology section for the various sources of information

Methodology

Qualifications at level 3 and below approved for funding in the 16 to 19 offer as at November 2023

The Department for Education approves qualifications for public funding if they meet the criteria for funding approval and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) will only fund students to undertake qualifications through a funded offer if those qualifications are approved for public funding.

In this analysis, qualifications at level 4 and above, qualifications not approved for 16 to 19 funding and qualifications not approved for funding after 30/11/2023 are excluded. The list of qualifications approved for funding can be found here: [Overview - List of Qualifications approved for funding \(education.gov.uk\)](#).

Highest study aims of young people aged 16 and 17, 2022

The analysis uses data available from the [Participation in education, training and employment age 16 to 18, Calendar year 2022](#) publication. The summary on education participation by highest qualification aims in the publication focus mainly on young people in full-time education and this analysis includes young people in part-time education as well as full-time education.

In this analysis, apprenticeship figures excludes those who are in full-time and part-time education – the published apprenticeship data already excludes those which overlaps with full-time education, but we have further excluded a small number of young people age 16 and 17 who are participating in apprenticeships and part-time education, as these students would already have been included in one of the education categories in table 2.

Young people aged 16 and 17 studying English and maths, by GCSE grade achieved in English and maths

The analysis on the number of students age 16 and 17 studying English and maths is based on analysis of the DfE Young Person's Matched Administrative Dataset (YPMAD).

Several data sources are matched together at an individual level, using personal identifiers such as name, date of birth, gender and home postcode where available:

- Pupil level [Schools Census](#) data containing information on the participation and personal characteristics of pupils in state schools, collected by DfE.
- Awarding Organisation data including that collected as part of the [Schools and Colleges Performance Tables](#) exercise, and separately from awarding organisations as part of the Vocational Qualifications Database up until 2010/11.

- [Individualised Learner Record \(ILR\)](#) database covering participation and qualifications obtained in Further Education (FE) and Work-based Learning (WBL), collected by the Education and Skills Funding Agency from learning providers.

The YPMAD records information on the highest level of attainment and qualification studied each academic year matched to individual personal characteristics, as recorded in the school census at age 15.

This analysis covers learners who were in the state sector at academic age 15. The English GCSE grade achieved age 15 is based on the grade achieved in English language and English literature, whichever is higher. For participation in this analysis, the scope of YPMAD indicators has been extended to include English Literature and Core maths, using School Census and Individualised Learner Record records.

Post-16 teaching hours in other countries

The analysis of post-16 teaching hours in other countries is a summary of the information available from various sources listed below. We have included country profiles where the information sources allow for conversions of teaching hours into annual teaching hours.

Please note that the information presented in table 5 is taken from different sources and the methodology of how teaching hours are measured may differ as a result.

Sources of information on post-16 teaching hours in other countries

Canada: [Table C.6.1 Intended instruction time in public institutions, ages 6 through 17, by age, OECD, Canada, provinces and territories, 2020/2021 \(statcan.gc.ca\)](#)

Denmark: [Bekendtgørelse af lov om de gymnasiale uddannelser \(retsinformation.dk\)](#); [Post-16 skills plan and independent report on technical education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Finland: [Teaching and learning in general upper secondary education](#)

France: [Teaching and learning in general upper secondary education \(europa.eu\)](#); [Teaching and learning in vocational upper secondary education \(europa.eu\)](#); [Order of 21 November 2018 relating to the teaching provided in courses under school status preparing for the professional baccalaureate - Légifrance \(legifrance.gouv.fr\)](#); [Order of 21 November 2018 relating to the organisation and teaching provided in training courses under school status preparing for the certificate of professional aptitude - Légifrance \(legifrance.gouv.fr\)](#)

Italy: [Teaching and learning in general upper secondary education \(europa.eu\)](#); [20100315 DPR88 regolamento istituti tecnici.pdf \(usrlazio.it\)](#); [Decreto Interministeriale](#)

[92 del 24 maggio 2018 – Regolamento attuativo istruzione professionale \(istruzione.gov.it\)](#)

The Netherlands: [Organisation of general secondary education \(HAVO, VWO\) \(europa.eu\)](#); [Post-16 skills plan and independent report on technical education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Norway: [Teaching and learning in general upper secondary education \(europa.eu\)](#);
[Teaching and learning in vocational upper secondary education \(europa.eu\)](#)

Sweden: [Teaching and learning in upper general and vocational secondary education \(europa.eu\)](#)

United States: [Table 1.1. Minimum number of instructional days and hours in the school year, minimum number of hours per school day, and school start/finish dates, by state: 2020 \(ed.gov\)](#)



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