

Uptake of international GCSE subjects 2014

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Introduction

This report looks at the uptake of international GCSE¹ subjects in England in 2014, as a follow-up to our previous report for 2012 (Sutch, 2013). The data for these analyses were taken from the National Pupil Database (NPD). This is a database held by the Department for Education, consisting of results for all students in all subjects in schools and colleges in England, as well as pupil and school background characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity and level of deprivation.

For the analysis of uptake at international GCSE the Key Stage 4 (KS4) extract of the NPD was used, consisting of all students who were at the end of KS4 in 2014 (i.e. in Year 11). Uptake in this report is defined as the percentage of these students taking an international GCSE in the subject, and includes exams taken by these students in previous years.

International GCSEs are offered in England by AQA, Edexcel, Cambridge International Examinations and WJEC. Some international GCSE syllabuses have been approved for teaching in state schools; these are more formally known as Level 1/Level 2 Certificates (and are identified as such in the NPD) and are regulated by Ofqual. **In this report, only regulated international GCSEs are presented, as data on unregulated international GCSEs is no longer available from the National Pupil Database.**

Table 1 presents a breakdown of the number of international GCSEs taken by students, split by gender.

Table 1: Number of regulated international GCSEs taken, by gender (% of KS4 students)

Number of international GCSEs	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number of students	%	Number of students	%	Number of students	%
0	218025	70.0	222142	74.1	440167	72.0
1	56103	18.0	48411	16.1	104514	17.1
2	29758	9.6	23827	7.9	53585	8.8
3	4949	1.6	3946	1.3	8895	1.5
4	1162	0.4	795	0.3	1957	0.3
5	854	0.3	443	0.1	1297	0.2
6	317	0.1	110	0	427	0.1
7	235	0.1	144	0	379	0.1
8	100	0	45	0	145	0.0
9	7	0	6	0	13	0.0
Number of students	311510	100.0	299869	100.0	611379	100.0
At least one international GCSE	93485	30.0	77727	25.9	171212	28.0

Uptake of international GCSEs in this report is presented by different student classifications: gender, school type, deprivation level, prior attainment and school gender. In the following tables the numbers of students in each of the classifications are presented. Note that the totals in these tables are in some cases less than the total number of students; this is due to differences in data availability.

¹ IGCSE® is the registered trade mark of Cambridge International Examinations.

School type

There are several different types of school where students study at KS4. For this report these were classified into five groups. Table 2 presents the number of KS4 students attending each school type, and the percentage in each group taking international GCSEs.

Table 2: Uptake of regulated international GCSEs by school type

School type	Number of students	Percentage taking international GCSE
Academy	238164	29.3
Comprehensive	288787	24.4
Grammar	10384	31.1
Independent	50183	34.2
Secondary Modern	14914	41.9

Pupil attainment

Students were classified by their attainment at KS4, using combined results from GCSEs and regulated international GCSEs. Grades were converted into scores (A* = 8, A= 7, B= 6 etc) and a mean score was calculated for each student, which was then used to divide students up into three approximately equally sized attainment groups: low, medium and high. Table 3 presents the number in each group as well as the mean, minimum and maximum value of the mean score for each group.

Table 3: Uptake of regulated international GCSEs by attainment

Pupils' attainment group	Number of students	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Percentage taking international GCSE
Low	204116	0.00	4.38	3.10	35.2
Medium	203049	4.38	5.67	5.05	25.7
High	202640	5.69	8.00	6.60	23.2

Deprivation level

The level of deprivation a student experiences was measured by the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI). This is a measure of the proportion of children in a very small geographical area (Lower Layer Super Output Area or LSOA) who live in families that are income deprived. It varies between 0 and 1, with 0 representing minimum deprivation and 1 maximum deprivation.

It should be noted that there was some missing data for this measure (almost 9% of students had no record). Students who did have a measure of deprivation were divided up into three equally sized groups. Table 4 presents the number of students and the mean, minimum and maximum IDACI values in each group.

Table 4: Uptake of regulated international GCSEs by deprivation level

Pupils' deprivation group	Number of students	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Percentage taking international GCSE
Low	184957	0.00	0.10	0.06	21.6
Medium	184934	0.10	0.26	0.17	27.7
High	184953	0.26	0.99	0.43	33.6

School gender

The school gender variable was determined by the female ratio (number of females over the total number of students) in the school. If this ratio was greater than 0.95, the school was considered to be a "Girls" school. If the female ratio was less than 0.05, then the school was designated a "Boys" school. The rest of the schools were considered "Mixed" schools. Table 5 shows the numbers of students attending the different types of schools.

Table 5: Uptake of regulated international GCSEs by school gender

School gender	Number of students	Percentage taking international GCSE
Boys school	31278	39.5
Girls school	46703	25.3
Mixed school	524451	27.2

Number of regulated international GCSEs taken

The number of international GCSEs taken by students in each of the classifications is presented in Tables 6 to 9. For example, Table 7 shows that 13.4% of students with low attainment took two regulated international GCSEs, compared with 5.3% of students with high attainment.

Table 6: Number of regulated international GCSEs taken by school type (% of KS4 students)

Number of international GCSEs	School type				
	Academy Comprehensive		Grammar	Independent	Secondary Modern
	%	%	%	%	%
0	70.7	75.6	68.9	65.8	58.1
1	17.6	16.3	10.7	16.6	20.5
2	9.2	7.5	6.4	9.8	19.6
3	1.6	0.5	8.3	5.2	1.3
4	0.4	0.0	1.8	1.4	0.1
5	0.2	0.0	2.6	0.7	0.5
6	0.1	.	0.2	0.3	.
7	0.1	.	0.5	0.1	.
8	0.0	.	0.6	0.0	.
9	0.0	.	0.1	.	.
Number of students	238164	288787	10384	50183	14914

Table 7: Number of regulated international GCSEs taken by attainment (% of KS4 students)

Number of international GCSEs	Attainment group		
	Low	Medium	High
	%	%	%
0	64.8	74.3	76.8
1	21.0	17.1	13.2
2	13.4	7.5	5.3
3	0.7	0.8	2.8
4	0.1	0.1	0.8
5	0.0	0.1	0.6
6	0.0	0.0	0.2
7	.	0.0	0.2
8	.	0.0	0.1
9	.	.	0.0
Number of students	204116	203049	202640

Table 8: Number of regulated international GCSEs taken by deprivation level (% of KS4 students)

Number of international GCSEs	Deprivation group		
	Low %	Medium %	High %
0	78.4	72.3	66.4
1	14.2	17.4	20.0
2	5.1	8.8	12.4
3	1.5	1.0	0.8
4	0.3	0.2	0.2
5	0.3	0.2	0.1
6	0.1	0.0	0.0
7	0.1	0.1	0.0
8	0.1	0.0	0.0
9	0.0	0.0	.
Number of students	184957	184934	184953

Table 9: Number of regulated international GCSEs taken by school gender (% of KS4 students)

Number of international GCSEs	School gender		
	Boys school %	Girls school %	Mixed school %
0	60.5	74.7	72.8
1	18.4	14.4	17.0
2	10.4	5.8	8.8
3	5.5	3.4	1.0
4	1.5	0.7	0.2
5	2.0	0.6	0.1
6	0.8	0.1	0.0
7	0.7	0.2	0.0
8	0.3	0.1	0.0
9	0.0	0.0	.
Number of students	31278	46703	524451

Uptake of individual regulated international GCSE subjects

In the following tables the uptake of individual regulated international GCSE subjects is presented, broken down into the classifications outlined above.

Table 10: Uptake of regulated international GCSE subjects by gender (% of KS4 students)

Subject	Boys	Girls	All
Applied Business	0.06	0.04	0.05
Art & Design	0.03	0.04	0.03
Biology	2.06	1.61	1.84
Business Studies:Single	0.14	0.07	0.11
Chemistry	1.98	1.57	1.78
Chinese	0.00	0.02	0.01
English Language	22.95	19.87	21.44
English Language & Literature	0.08	0.09	0.08
English Literature	9.97	8.66	9.32
English for Speakers of other Languages	0.32	0.21	0.26
French	0.48	0.45	0.47
Geography	0.81	0.45	0.63
German	0.27	0.20	0.23
Hindi	0.01	0.00	0.00
History	1.25	0.64	0.95
Information & Communications Technology	0.63	0.36	0.50
Italian	0.01	0.01	0.01
Mathematics	1.79	1.60	1.69
Modern Greek	.	0.00	0.00
Music	0.07	0.04	0.06
Physics	2.19	1.46	1.84
Preparation for Work	0.58	0.52	0.55
Science: Double Award	0.26	0.32	0.29
Spanish	0.23	0.25	0.24

Table 11: Uptake of regulated international GCSE subjects by school type (% of KS4 students)

Subject	Academy	Compre- hensive	Grammar	Independent	Secondary Modern
Applied Business	0.08	0.03	.	0.08	.
Art & Design	0.02	0.03	.	0.11	0.01
Biology	2.02	0.24	13.42	8.39	0.55
Business Studies:Single	0.15	0.02	0.23	0.30	.
Chemistry	2.05	0.17	13.06	8.26	0.55
Chinese	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.06	0.01
English Language	24.35	20.47	15.05	8.96	39.51
English Language & Literature	0.04	0.07	.	0.43	.
English Literature	10.12	8.81	9.87	5.33	22.08
English for Speakers of other Languages	0.15	0.26	0.50	0.78	0.07
French	0.26	0.19	3.43	2.66	0.21
Geography	0.43	0.07	0.02	4.96	0.54
German	0.17	0.08	2.91	1.01	0.18
Hindi	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	.
History	0.65	0.19	0.63	7.18	0.36
Information & Communications Technology	0.45	0.40	0.93	1.28	0.09
Italian	0.00	.	.	0.10	.
Mathematics	1.76	1.29	5.05	3.10	0.81
Modern Greek	.	.	.	0.00	.
Music	0.00	.	0.04	0.69	.
Physics	2.05	0.20	10.53	9.25	0.51
Preparation for Work	0.44	0.60	.	0.07	1.45
Science: Double Award	0.39	0.17	2.15	0.23	0.32
Spanish	0.09	0.07	1.09	1.73	0.41

Table 12: Uptake of regulated international GCSE subjects by attainment (% of KS4 students)

Subject	Low attainment	Medium attainment	High attainment
Applied Business	0.05	0.06	0.05
Art & Design	0.04	0.03	0.03
Biology	0.31	0.77	4.46
Business Studies:Single	0.07	0.09	0.17
Chemistry	0.13	0.69	4.55
Chinese	0.00	0.00	0.02
English Language	32.11	20.54	11.65
English Language & Literature	0.03	0.05	0.17
English Literature	13.72	8.51	5.75
English for Speakers of other Languages	0.37	0.26	0.17
French	0.10	0.26	1.04
Geography	0.12	0.28	1.50
German	0.03	0.12	0.55
Hindi	0.01	0.00	0.00
History	0.26	0.47	2.12
Information & Communications Technology	0.24	0.46	0.80
Italian	0.00	.	0.03
Mathematics	1.54	1.31	2.23
Modern Greek	.	.	0.00
Music	0.00	0.00	0.17
Physics	0.17	0.69	4.68
Preparation for Work	0.82	0.52	0.32
Science: Double Award	0.19	0.33	0.36
Spanish	0.04	0.11	0.57

Table 13: Uptake of regulated international GCSE subjects by deprivation group (% of KS4 students)

Subject	Low	Medium	High
Applied Business	0.05	0.05	0.05
Art & Design	0.03	0.01	0.03
Biology	1.92	1.18	0.71
Business Studies:Single	0.11	0.07	0.06
Chemistry	2.00	1.11	0.57
Chinese	0.00	0.01	0.00
English Language	16.11	23.18	28.93
English Language & Literature	0.03	0.07	0.06
English Literature	6.24	9.72	13.43
English for Speakers of other Languages	0.04	0.13	0.43
French	0.45	0.27	0.11
Geography	0.33	0.22	0.16
German	0.29	0.17	0.04
Hindi	0.00	0.00	0.01
History	0.53	0.34	0.30
Information & Communications Technology	0.59	0.41	0.28
Italian	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mathematics	1.35	1.48	1.85
Modern Greek	.	.	.
Music	0.00	0.00	.
Physics	2.00	1.11	0.57
Preparation for Work	0.50	0.48	0.79
Science: Double Award	0.34	0.36	0.21
Spanish	0.14	0.10	0.08

Table 14: Uptake of regulated international GCSE subjects by school gender (% of KS4 students)

Subject	Boys school	Girls school	Mixed school
Applied Business	.	.	0.06
Art & Design	0.08	.	0.03
Biology	10.11	5.03	1.08
Business Studies:Single	0.62	0.06	0.07
Chemistry	10.47	5.49	0.97
Chinese	0.00	0.06	0.00
English Language	19.20	15.08	22.12
English Language & Literature	.	.	0.10
English Literature	9.63	5.49	9.72
English for Speakers of other Languages	0.24	0.13	0.27
French	2.28	1.27	0.30
Geography	3.70	1.13	0.40
German	1.27	0.58	0.15
Hindi	0.01	0.01	0.00
History	7.25	1.57	0.53
Information & Communications Technology	1.45	0.30	0.45
Italian	.	0.05	0.01
Mathematics	3.64	2.32	1.51
Modern Greek	.	.	0.00
Music	0.57	0.18	0.02
Physics	12.24	4.95	0.97
Preparation for Work	.	0.15	0.57
Science: Double Award	0.76	0.85	0.22
Spanish	0.96	0.79	0.15

Reference

Sutch, T. (2013). *Uptake of IGCSE subjects 2012*. Statistics Report Series No. 63. Cambridge: Cambridge Assessment.