Uptake of level 3 qualifications in English schools 2008-2012

Statistics Report Series No.59

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to investigate changes over time in the uptake of different level 3 qualifications in English schools. This should give an overall picture, rather than focussing on one or two qualifications (e.g. A levels).

Uptake of a subject is usually defined as the percentage of students (who take the qualification in at least one subject) taking a particular subject (either in the current, or a previous year). For example, the percentage of A level students taking an A level in English. However, as this report looks at multiple qualifications this definition has changed to the percentage of all students (at the end of KS5) taking a particular subject in a particular qualification.

Data

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 qualifications and subjects in schools and colleges in England. The Key Stage 5 (KS5) extract of the NPD was used, consisting of all students who were at the end of KS5 (i.e. in year 13).

One of the main purposes of this report was to look at changes to patterns of uptake over time, so three separate years were chosen to be analysed: 2007/08, 2009/10 and 2011/12. It is also of interest to investigate patterns of uptake in different types of school, so most of the analyses were broken down into the following school types: comprehensive, academy, FE/tertiary college, grammar, independent, secondary modern and sixth form college. Table 1 presents the number of (year 13) students in each school type in each year.

Table 1: Number and percentage of different school types (2007/08-2011/12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School type</th>
<th>2007/08</th>
<th></th>
<th>2009/10</th>
<th></th>
<th>2011/12</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students (n)</td>
<td>Students (%)</td>
<td>Students (n)</td>
<td>Students (%)</td>
<td>Students (n)</td>
<td>Students (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Academy</td>
<td>2,199</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>6,756</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>66,918</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive</td>
<td>117,715</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>127,992</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>83,170</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FE/Tertiary College</td>
<td>75,605</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>99,378</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>92,389</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>21,414</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>22,495</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>11,011</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>35,112</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>36,760</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>37,289</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Modern</td>
<td>4,040</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>5,277</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3,734</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Form College</td>
<td>61,864</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>70,566</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>74,839</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be noted that over the period investigated a large number of schools (mainly comprehensives) converted to become city academies. This explains the large increase in the number of students in academies and the decrease in the number in comprehensives and grammar schools (particularly between 2009/10 and 2011/12).

There were a large number of different qualifications recorded in the KS5 extract of the NPD in all three years, but not all of these were included in this report. To make the analyses more manageable only KS5 qualifications that are worth at least the same as an A level were included. Table 2 lists the qualifications and in which years they were available. Thus,
apart from the Diploma and the Pre-U (which were not available in 2007/08) all these qualifications were available in all three years.

Table 2: List of qualifications included in report and availability by year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Years available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied A level</td>
<td>2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied AS level¹</td>
<td>2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
<td>2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>2009/10, 2011/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCR National</td>
<td>2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>2009/10, 2011/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VRQ</td>
<td>2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only students in year 13 in the three years considered were included in this report, but any level 3 qualifications that these students took in previous years were counted (once only, so retakes were ignored).

Results

Overall volumes

Tables 3 to 5 summarise the volume of level 3 qualifications taken by students in year 13 in each of the three years. This is broken down by the size of the qualification in terms of A level equivalence, with an overall total volume \(=\) sum of (number taken \(\times\) equivalent size) for each qualification type. Thus A levels were available as a single size only, whereas BTECs, OCR Nationals and VRQs were equivalent to various A level sizes, including 1.25, 1.5, 1.75, 2.25, 2.5, 2.75 and 3.25. The International Baccalaureate (IB) was recorded in the NPD as 5 A levels in 2007/08 and 5.5 A levels in 2009/10 and 2011/12.

In each year there were some equivalent sizes with very few entries and these have been excluded from the tables (although not from the total volumes calculation).

¹ This is a double qualification so it is equivalent in size to 1 A level. Other AS levels are not included in this report as they are only equivalent in size to half an A level.
Table 3: Number of level 3 qualifications taken by students in year 13 in 2007/08, by type and A level equivalent size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>1.25</th>
<th>1.75</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Total volume</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>741,971</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>741,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
<td>14,607</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,877</td>
<td>16,432</td>
<td>44,234</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>185,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VRQ</td>
<td>1,653</td>
<td>2,034</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>8,216</td>
<td>682</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied A level</td>
<td>32,059</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11,607</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>55,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,420</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCR Nat</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied AS level (double)</td>
<td>9,816</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11,607</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>55,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Number of level 3 qualifications taken by students in year 13 in 2009/10, by type and A level equivalent size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>1.25</th>
<th>1.5</th>
<th>1.75</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2.75</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>5.5</th>
<th>Total volume</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>773,913</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>773,913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
<td>38,299</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,751</td>
<td>23,858</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60,048</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>270,973</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VRQ</td>
<td>1,387</td>
<td>3,085</td>
<td>974</td>
<td>8,799</td>
<td>3,437</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>34,963</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied A level</td>
<td>31,145</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7,578</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>46,747</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,748</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCR Nat</td>
<td>3,721</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,959</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13,193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied AS level (double)</td>
<td>6,844</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6,844</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>1,626</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,626</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Number of level 3 qualifications taken by students in year 13 in 2011/12, by type and A level equivalent size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>1.25</th>
<th>1.5</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2.75</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>5.5</th>
<th>Total volume</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>746,841</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>746,841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
<td>49,283</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>23,685</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>61,253</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>281,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VRQ</td>
<td>4,993</td>
<td>5,188</td>
<td>2,705</td>
<td>1,642</td>
<td>3,606</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>38,919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied A level</td>
<td>25,406</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>5,090</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCR Nat</td>
<td>6,917</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,217</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13,343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied AS level (double)</td>
<td>5,954</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5,954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,070</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>2,780</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,780</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures 1 and 2 show the change in total volumes over time (excluding Pre-U and Diplomas because of their very small volumes). A levels and BTECs are presented in a separate graph because their volumes were much greater than the other qualifications.
The numbers of A levels taken changed relatively little over the period. There was a large increase in the volume of BTECs taken (up from 185,208 A level equivalents in 2008 to 281,704 in 2012). The volume of VRQs and OCR Nationals also increased substantially over the period whilst there was a significant decline in Applied A levels.

Tables 6 to 8 present uptake of the different qualifications, by students in each school type, and overall. These show that A levels were taken by the highest percentage of students, followed by BTECs and applied A levels. However, the percentage taking A levels fell from 75.3% in 2007/08 to 66.2% in 2011/12, whilst the percentage taking BTECs increased from 21.5% to 31.7%.
Grammar and independent school students were the most likely to take A levels, whilst those in FE/tertiary colleges were the most likely to take BTECs. The percentage of students taking A levels fell significantly in FE/tertiary colleges (35.2% to 23.8%) and secondary modern schools (80.3% to 63.2%). There were large increases in the percentage of students taking BTECs in comprehensives and secondary modern schools.

Table 6: Uptake of level 3 qualifications in 2007/08, by school type (% of year 13 students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Acad</th>
<th>Comp</th>
<th>FE/TER</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Ind</th>
<th>Sec Mod</th>
<th>6th Form</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>98.5</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>75.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied A level</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied AS level</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCR Nat</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VRQ</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Uptake of level 3 qualifications in 2009/10, by school type (% of year 13 students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Acad</th>
<th>Comp</th>
<th>FE/TER</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Ind</th>
<th>Sec Mod</th>
<th>6th Form</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>97.5</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>69.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied A level</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied AS level</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCR Nat</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VRQ</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Uptake of level 3 qualifications in 2011/12, by school type (% of year 13 students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Acad</th>
<th>Comp</th>
<th>FE/TER</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Ind</th>
<th>Sec Mod</th>
<th>6th Form</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>96.1</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>66.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied A level</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied AS level</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCR Nat</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VRQ</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Combinations of qualifications taken by students

Tables 9 to 11 present the top 10 most common combinations of qualifications taken by students in each year. It is a sign of the variety of qualifications available currently that there were 77 different combinations of qualifications taken by students in 2011/12.

Table 9: Most popular combinations of level 3 qualifications taken by students in 2007/08

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>213,166</td>
<td>63.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
<td>60,363</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level-Applied A level</td>
<td>23,366</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VRQ</td>
<td>10,264</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level-BTEC</td>
<td>8,831</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level-Applied A level-Applied AS level</td>
<td>4,693</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied A level- Applied AS level</td>
<td>3,556</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied A level</td>
<td>3,209</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>2,364</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level-VRQ</td>
<td>1,235</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Most popular combinations of level 3 qualifications taken by students in 2009/10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>221,894</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
<td>88,719</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level-Applied A level</td>
<td>22,095</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VRQ</td>
<td>16,874</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level-BTEC</td>
<td>14,740</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>3,674</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level-Applied A level-Applied AS level</td>
<td>3,588</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied A level- Applied AS level</td>
<td>2,125</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCR National</td>
<td>2,066</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied A level</td>
<td>2,053</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: Most popular combinations of level 3 qualifications taken by students in 2011/12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>215,032</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
<td>99,616</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VRQ</td>
<td>18,842</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level-BTEC</td>
<td>17,970</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level-Applied A level</td>
<td>16,898</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>3,637</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level-OCR National</td>
<td>3,365</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level-Applied A level-Applied AS level</td>
<td>3,003</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCR National</td>
<td>2,060</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level-Pre-U</td>
<td>1,581</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all three years by far the most popular combination was A levels only, although the percentage of students taking this fell from 63.4% in 2007/08 to 54.2% in 2011/12.
Meanwhile the percentage taking only BTECs increased from 18% to 25.4% and the percentage taking only VRQs increased from 3.1% to 4.7%.

Appendix A presents the 5 most common combinations in each school type for each year.

**Uptake of individual subjects**

This section presents the uptake of the five most popular subjects at level 3\(^2\) – mathematics, biology, psychology, history and English literature.

In 2007/08 the individual subjects taken by IB students were not recorded in the NPD, although each student taking the overall baccalaureate was recorded. This was also before the Pre-U qualification was available, so for the popular subjects there were no recorded alternatives to A levels. Therefore uptake is not reported for 2007/08.

**Mathematics**

Tables 12 and 13 present the uptake of different mathematics qualifications.

**Table 12: Uptake of different mathematics qualifications in 2009/10**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>65,505</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>98.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB(^3)</td>
<td>747</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>66,356</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very few students took an alternative to A level in mathematics in either year. There was a small increase in Pre-U entries in 2011/12 compared with 2009/10.

**Table 13: Uptake of different mathematics qualifications in 2011/12**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>70,753</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>98.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>71,570</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very few students took an alternative to A level in mathematics in either year. There was a small increase in Pre-U entries in 2011/12 compared with 2009/10.

Tables 14 and 15 break down the uptake by different school types. IB entries were highest in independent schools, with around half of all IB entries in both years (although still only 1% of independent school students). In 2009/10 all Pre-U entries were in independent schools, and in 2011/12 all apart from 11 were.

---

\(^2\) Level 3 qualifications are dominated by A levels so these subjects were all A levels.

\(^3\) The individual subjects for the IB are available at ‘standard’ or ‘higher’ level. Only those taken at higher level are recorded here because those at standard level are worth less than an A level.
Table 14: Uptake of different mathematics qualifications, by school type, in 2009/10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>964</td>
<td>14.27</td>
<td>99.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>969</td>
<td>14.34</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>25,821</td>
<td>20.17</td>
<td>99.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>25,936</td>
<td>20.26</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FE/Tertiary College</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>4,231</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>98.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>4,285</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>8,332</td>
<td>37.04</td>
<td>99.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>8,416</td>
<td>37.41</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>13,049</td>
<td>35.50</td>
<td>96.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>13,530</td>
<td>36.81</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Modern</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>10.12</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>10.12</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Form College</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>12,047</td>
<td>17.07</td>
<td>99.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>12,089</td>
<td>17.13</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15: Uptake of different mathematics qualifications, by school type, in 2011/12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>16,531</td>
<td>24.70</td>
<td>99.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>16,625</td>
<td>24.84</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>17,774</td>
<td>21.37</td>
<td>99.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>17,819</td>
<td>21.42</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FE/Tertiary College</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>4,064</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>99.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>4,084</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>4,360</td>
<td>39.60</td>
<td>98.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>4,414</td>
<td>40.09</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>13,770</td>
<td>36.93</td>
<td>96.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>14,288</td>
<td>38.32</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Modern</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>9.78</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>9.78</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Form College</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>13,236</td>
<td>17.69</td>
<td>99.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>13,281</td>
<td>17.75</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Biology**

Tables 16 and 17 present the uptake of different biology qualifications. There were no entries for Pre-U biology in 2009/10

Table 16: Uptake of different biology qualifications in 2009/10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking biology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>51,090</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>97.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>1,409</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>52,493</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 17: Uptake of different biology qualifications in 2011/12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking biology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>52,445</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>97.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>1,458</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>53,904</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, almost all entries in biology were A levels, although there were more IB entries than in mathematics (over 1,400 in each year). There were no Pre-U entries in 2009/10 and only 2 in 2011/12.

Tables 18 and 19 break down uptake levels by school type

Table 18: Uptake of different biology qualifications, by school type, in 2009/10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking biology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>11.83</td>
<td>94.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>5.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>843</td>
<td>12.48</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive</td>
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</table>

In 2009/10 IB uptake was highest in independent schools (1.49%) and grammar schools (0.86%). Uptake was slightly higher in 2011/12 (1.62% in independent schools and 1.41% in grammar schools.)
Table 19: Uptake of different biology qualifications, by school type, in 2011/12

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Students</th>
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<th>% of all taking biology</th>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>12,999</td>
<td>19.43</td>
<td>100.00</td>
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<td>16.67</td>
<td>99.22</td>
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<td>110</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<td>3.37</td>
<td>95.79</td>
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<td>IB</td>
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<td>0.15</td>
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<td>Pre-U</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<td>A level</td>
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<td>8.46</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>8.46</td>
<td>100.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Psychology

Tables 20 and 21 present the uptake of different psychology qualifications.

Table 20: Uptake of different psychology qualifications in 2009/10

<table>
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<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking psychology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
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<td>99.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>492</td>
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<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>52,720</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
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</table>

There were very few students taking alternatives to A levels in psychology, although uptake of IB did increase slightly from 492 to 559 between 2009/10 and 2011/12. Tables 22 and 23 break down the uptake by different school types. IB uptake was highest in grammar and academy schools in both years.
Table 21: Uptake of different psychology qualifications in 2011/12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking psychology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>98.8</td>
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<tr>
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<td>559</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
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<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>42</td>
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<td>0.1</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
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Table 22: Uptake of different psychology qualifications, by school type, in 2009/10

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<th>% of all taking psychology</th>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<td>18.43</td>
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Table 23: Uptake of different psychology qualifications, by school type, in 2011/12

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<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking psychology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>0.01</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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</tr>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>100.00</td>
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</table>

History

Tables 24 and 25 present the uptake of different history qualifications.

Table 24: Uptake of different history qualifications in 2009/10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking history</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
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<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
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<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>45,254</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Over 1,000 students took the IB in history in 2009/10, but this was still just 2.5% of those taking history. This percentage fell to 2.2% in 2011/12. Tables 26 and 27 break down uptake by school type. Uptake of IB history was highest in independent and grammar schools in both years.
Table 25: Uptake of different history qualifications in 2011/12

<table>
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<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking history</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
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<td>982</td>
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<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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<td>Any</td>
<td>45,168</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 26: Uptake of different history qualifications, by school type, in 2009/10

<table>
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<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
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<th>% of all taking history</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>668</td>
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<td>96.53</td>
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<tr>
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<td>99.11</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7,243</td>
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<td>452</td>
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<td>5.77</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1.69</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>100.00</td>
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<td>Sixth Form College</td>
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<tr>
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</table>
Table 27: Uptake of different history qualifications, by school type, in 2011/12

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking history</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<td>16.21</td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>Comprehensive</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>12,758</td>
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<td>99.45</td>
</tr>
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<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
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<td>Pre-U</td>
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<td>Any</td>
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<td>15.42</td>
<td>100.00</td>
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<td><strong>FE/Tertiary College</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>96.43</td>
</tr>
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<td>IB</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>3.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A level</td>
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<td>95.56</td>
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<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>4.44</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>IB</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sixth Form College</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>98.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.14</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7,912</td>
<td>10.57</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**English Literature**

For the IB qualification there was no direct equivalent for English Literature (because it is an international qualification, which can be studied in different languages). The nearest equivalent found in the NPD was ‘Un-translated literature’; however, entries for this were found only in the 2011/12 data.

Table 28 presents the uptake of different English Literature qualifications in 2011/12.

Table 28: Uptake of different English Literature qualifications in 2011/12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking English lit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>42,756</td>
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<td>94.7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>447</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>45,128</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There were nearly 2,000 students taking the IB qualification, making it the most popular IB subject. The Pre-U was also relatively popular (taken by 447 students). The breakdown by school type (Table 29) showed the IB to be most popular in grammar schools (2.03%) and independent schools (1.88%). Almost all of the Pre-U entries were in independent schools (389 students).

Table 29: Uptake of different English Literature qualifications, by school type, in 2011/12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
<th>% of all taking English lit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Academies</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>16.04</td>
<td>96.40</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>34</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>11135</td>
<td>16.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>A level</td>
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<td>98.72</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>13247</td>
<td>15.93</td>
<td>100.00</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2704</td>
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<td>100.00</td>
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<td>90.75</td>
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<td>9.25</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
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<td>21.89</td>
<td>100.00</td>
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<td>Independent</td>
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<tr>
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<td>85.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7545</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-U</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>11.36</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>96.97</td>
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<td>Pre-U</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

**Uptake of individual subjects in other level 3 qualifications**

Finally the uptake of the most common subjects to be taken in other popular qualifications (BTECs and Applied A levels) is summarised below. These are worth reporting as they make up a substantial percentage of the volume of qualifications taken at level 3. Tables 30 to 35 present the 10 most popular subjects taken in these qualifications in the three different years.
### Table 30: Uptake of popular BTEC subjects (2007/08)

<table>
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<th>Subject</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Uptake (% of all students)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sports / Movement Science</td>
<td>11,282</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art &amp; Design</td>
<td>7,684</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Studies</td>
<td>6,648</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech &amp; Drama</td>
<td>6,237</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems / Network Management</td>
<td>6,087</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Services</td>
<td>3,890</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Film / Video / Television Production</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
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<td>Tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music Studies (General)</td>
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</table>

### Table 31: Uptake of popular BTEC subjects (2009/10)

<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Studies</td>
<td>12,271</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems / Network Management</td>
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<td>Art &amp; Design</td>
<td>10,543</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Studies</td>
<td>8,639</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Services</td>
<td>7,610</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Studies (General)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film / Video / Television Production</td>
<td>4,528</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Sciences</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
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</table>

### Table 32: Uptake of popular BTEC subjects (2011/12)

<table>
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<th>Subject</th>
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<th>Uptake (% of all students)</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Sports Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Studies</td>
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<td>Computer Appreciation / Introduction</td>
<td>11,070</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Services</td>
<td>8,913</td>
<td>2.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art &amp; Design</td>
<td>8,233</td>
<td>2.1</td>
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<td>Applied Sciences</td>
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<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>Tourism</td>
<td>4,485</td>
<td>1.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speech &amp; Drama</td>
<td>3,879</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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</table>
Table 33: Uptake of popular Applied A level subjects (2007/08)

<table>
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<td>Health &amp; Social Care</td>
<td>10,250</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel &amp; Tourism</td>
<td>2,458</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Applied Science</td>
<td>1,919</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
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<td>Applied Art &amp; Design</td>
<td>1,715</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing Arts</td>
<td>1,318</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure &amp; Recreation</td>
<td>1,179</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media: Communication &amp; Production</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>0.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applied Engineering</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 34: Uptake of popular Applied A level subjects (2009/10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Uptake (% of all students)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applied ICT</td>
<td>11,623</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Business</td>
<td>9,203</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Social Care</td>
<td>8,803</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel &amp; Tourism</td>
<td>2,371</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Science</td>
<td>2,349</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing Arts</td>
<td>1,536</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Art &amp; Design</td>
<td>1,377</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure &amp; Recreation</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media: Communication &amp; Production</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Engineering</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 35: Uptake of popular Applied A level subjects (2011/12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Uptake (% of all students)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applied ICT</td>
<td>8,021</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Social Care</td>
<td>7,759</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Business</td>
<td>6,801</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applied Science</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel &amp; Tourism</td>
<td>1,817</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performing Arts</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Art &amp; Design</td>
<td>997</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure &amp; Recreation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media: Communication &amp; Production</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Engineering</td>
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<td>&lt;0.1</td>
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</table>
### Appendix A: Most common combinations of level 3 qualifications by school type

Table A1: Most popular combinations of qualifications taken, by school type (2007/08)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% Students</th>
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<td><strong>Academy</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>1,096</td>
<td>49.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level-Applied A level</td>
<td>386</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied A level</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehensive</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>88,488</td>
<td>75.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>A level-Applied A level</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
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</tr>
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<td>A level-BTEC</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FE/Tertiary College</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
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<td>53.6</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A level-BTEC</td>
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<tr>
<td>A level-Applied A level-Applied AS level</td>
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</table>
Table A2: Most popular combinations of qualifications taken, by school type (2009/10)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% Students</th>
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</thead>
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<td>11.0</td>
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<td>Comprehensive</td>
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<td>71.2</td>
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<td>Grammar</td>
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### Table A3: Most popular combinations of qualifications taken, by school type (2011/12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academy</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A level</td>
<td>46,616</td>
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<td>A level-OCR National</td>
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<td><strong>Comprehensive</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A level</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1.9</td>
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<td>IB</td>
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<td><strong>Sixth Form College</strong></td>
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