

# Uptake of level 3 qualifications in English schools 2008-2012

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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)

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

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

Qualification	Years available
A level	2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12
Applied A level	2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12
Applied AS level <sup>1</sup>	2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12
BTEC	2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12
Diploma	2009/10, 2011/12
IB	2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12
OCR National	2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12
Pre-U	2009/10, 2011/12
VRQ	2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12

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 x 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).

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<sup>1</sup> 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

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

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

Qualification	A level equivalent size								Total volume
	1	1.25	1.5	1.75	2	2.75	3	5.5	
A level	773,913	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	773,913
BTEC	38,299	0	0	2,751	23,858	0	60,048	0	270,973
VRQ	1,387	3,085	0	974	8,799	3,437	138	0	34,963
Applied A level	31,145	0	0	0	7,578	0	0	0	46,747
IB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,748	20,614
OCR Nat	3,721	0	0	0	1,959	0	518	0	9,193
Applied AS level (double)	6,844	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,844
Diploma	0	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	0	1,500
Pre-U	1,626	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,626

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

Qualification	A level equivalent size							Total volume
	1	1.25	1.5	2	2.75	3	5.5	
A level	746,841	0	0	0	0	0	0	746,841
BTEC	49,283	71	751	23,685	22	61,253	0	281,704
VRQ	4,993	5,188	2,705	1,642	3,606	628	0	38,919
Applied A level	25,406	0	212	5,090	0	0	0	35,904
IB	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,691	20,300
OCR Nat	6,917	0	0	2,217	0	664	0	13,343
Applied AS level (double)	5,954	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,954
Diploma	0	0	2,070	0	0	0	0	3,105
Pre-U	2,780	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,780

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.

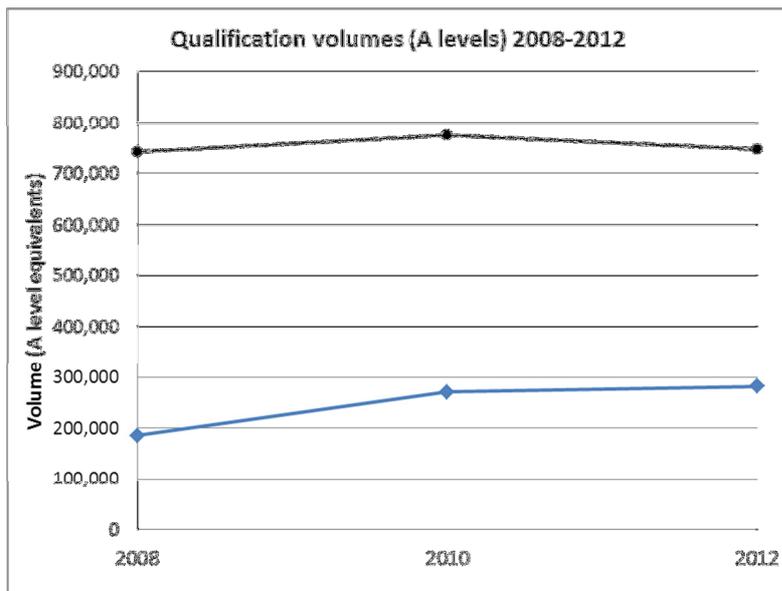


Figure 1: Volumes of A levels and BTECs taken by students 2008-2012

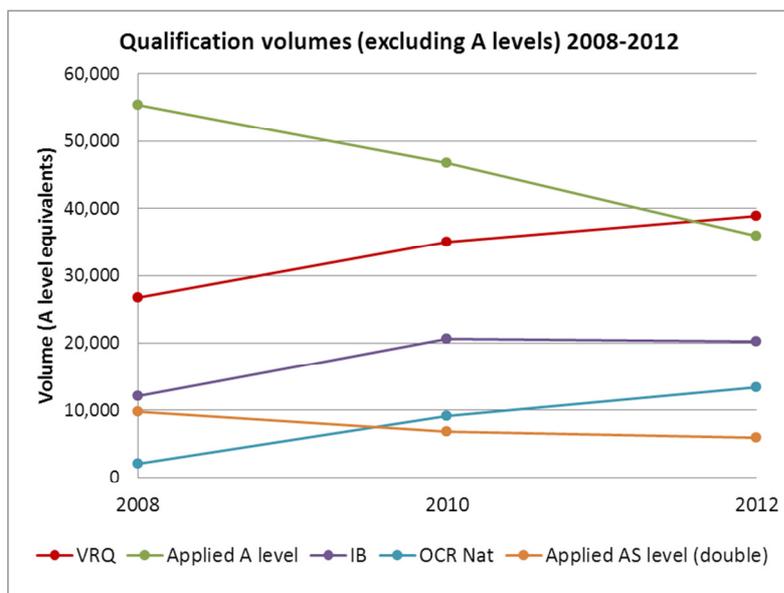


Figure 2: Volumes of level 3 qualifications (excluding A level and BTEC) taken by students 2008-2012

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)

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

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

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

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

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

### **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

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

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

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

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

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

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<sup>2</sup> – 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

Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking mathematics
A level	65,505	16.9	98.7
IB <sup>3</sup>	747	0.2	1.1
Pre-U	145	0.0	0.2
Any	66,356	17.1	100.0

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

Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking mathematics
A level	70,753	17.8	98.9
IB	613	0.2	0.9
Pre-U	218	0.1	0.3
Any	71,570	18.0	100.0

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.

<sup>2</sup> Level 3 qualifications are dominated by A levels so these subjects were all A levels.

<sup>3</sup> 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

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

Table 15: Uptake of different mathematics qualifications, by school type, in 2011/12

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

### *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

Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking biology
A level	51,090	13.1	97.3
IB	1,409	0.4	2.7
Any	52,493	13.5	100.0

Table 17: Uptake of different biology qualifications in 2011/12

Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking biology
A level	52,445	13.2	97.3
IB	1,458	0.4	2.7
Pre-U	2	0.0	0.0
Any	53,904	13.6	100.0

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

	Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking biology
Academies	A level	799	11.83	94.78
	IB	44	0.65	5.22
	Any	843	12.48	100.00
Comprehensive	A level	21,716	16.97	99.06
	IB	205	0.16	0.94
	Any	21,921	17.13	100.00
FE/Tertiary College	A level	3,398	3.42	95.16
	IB	173	0.17	4.84
	Any	3,571	3.59	100.00
Grammar	A level	6,808	30.26	97.26
	IB	193	0.86	2.76
	Any	7,000	31.12	100.00
Independent	A level	8,271	22.50	93.81
	IB	547	1.49	6.20
	Any	8,817	23.99	100.00
Secondary Modern	A level	462	8.75	100.00
	IB	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	462	8.75	100.00
Sixth Form College	A level	9,336	13.23	98.60
	IB	137	0.19	1.45
	Any	9,469	13.42	100.00

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

	Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking biology
Academies	A level	12,740	19.04	98.01
	IB	259	0.39	1.99
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	12,999	19.43	100.00
Comprehensive	A level	13,867	16.67	99.22
	IB	110	0.13	0.79
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	13,976	16.80	100.00
FE/Tertiary College	A level	3,118	3.37	95.79
	IB	137	0.15	4.21
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	3,255	3.52	100.00
Grammar	A level	3,330	30.24	95.55
	IB	155	1.41	4.45
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	3,485	31.65	100.00
Independent	A level	8,551	22.93	93.38
	IB	604	1.62	6.60
	Pre-U	2	0.01	0.02
	Any	9,157	24.56	100.00
Secondary Modern	A level	316	8.46	100.00
	IB	0	0.00	0.00
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	316	8.46	100.00
Sixth Form College	A level	10,025	13.40	98.65
	IB	137	0.18	1.35
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	10,162	13.58	100.00

### *Psychology*

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

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

Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking psychology
A level	52,215	13.4	99.0
IB	492	0.1	0.9
Pre-U	13	0.0	0.0
Any	52,720	13.6	100.0

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

Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking psychology
A level	51,326	12.9	98.8
IB	559	0.1	1.1
Pre-U	42	0.0	0.1
Any	51,927	13.0	100.0

Table 22: Uptake of different psychology qualifications, by school type, in 2009/10

	Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking psychology
Academies	A level	825	12.21	98.10
	IB	16	0.24	1.90
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	841	12.45	100.00
Comprehensive	A level	23,798	18.59	99.67
	IB	78	0.06	0.33
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	23,876	18.65	100.00
FE/Tertiary College	A level	6,247	6.29	98.21
	IB	114	0.11	1.79
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	6,361	6.40	100.00
Grammar	A level	4,062	18.06	98.47
	IB	63	0.28	1.53
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	4,125	18.34	100.00
Independent	A level	3,052	8.30	97.98
	IB	50	0.14	1.61
	Pre-U	13	0.04	0.42
	Any	3,115	8.47	100.00
Secondary Modern	A level	849	16.09	100.00
	IB	0	0.00	0.00
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	849	16.09	100.00
Sixth Form College	A level	12,894	18.27	99.17
	IB	108	0.15	0.83
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	13,002	18.43	100.00

Table 23: Uptake of different psychology qualifications, by school type, in 2011/12

	Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking psychology
Academies	A level	12047	18.00	98.82
	IB	138	0.21	1.13
	Pre-U	6	0.01	0.05
	Any	12191	18.22	100.00
Comprehensive	A level	15323	18.42	99.67
	IB	51	0.06	0.33
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	15374	18.49	100.00
FE/Tertiary College	A level	5186	5.61	97.83
	IB	109	0.12	2.06
	Pre-U	6	0.01	0.11
	Any	5301	5.74	100.00
Grammar	A level	1954	17.75	97.36
	IB	53	0.48	2.64
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	2007	18.23	100.00
Independent	A level	3331	8.93	97.43
	IB	58	0.16	1.70
	Pre-U	30	0.08	0.88
	Any	3419	9.17	100.00
Secondary Modern	A level	443	11.86	100.00
	IB	0	0.00	0.00
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	443	11.86	100.00
Sixth Form College	A level	12511	16.72	99.20
	IB	101	0.13	0.80
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	12612	16.85	100.00

### History

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

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

Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking history
A level	43,981	11.3	97.2
IB	1,140	0.3	2.5
Pre-U	133	0.0	0.3
Any	45,254	11.6	100.0

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

Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking history
A level	43,948	11.1	97.3
IB	982	0.2	2.2
Pre-U	238	0.1	0.5
Any	45,168	11.4	100.0

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

	Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking history
Academies	A level	668	9.89	96.53
	IB	24	0.36	3.47
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	692	10.24	100.00
Comprehensive	A level	20,400	15.94	99.11
	IB	184	0.14	0.89
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	20,584	16.08	100.00
FE/Tertiary College	A level	3,173	3.19	96.59
	IB	112	0.11	3.41
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	3,285	3.31	100.00
Grammar	A level	4,478	19.91	96.80
	IB	148	0.66	3.20
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	4,626	20.56	100.00
Independent	A level	7,243	19.70	92.54
	IB	452	1.23	5.77
	Pre-U	132	0.36	1.69
	Any	7,827	21.29	100.00
Secondary Modern	A level	590	11.18	100.00
	IB	0	0.00	0.00
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	590	11.18	100.00
Sixth Form College	A level	7,173	10.17	98.54
	IB	106	0.15	1.46
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	7,279	10.32	100.00

Table 27: Uptake of different history qualifications, by school type, in 2011/12

	Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking history
Academies	A level	10,603	15.84	97.76
	IB	181	0.27	1.67
	Pre-U	62	0.09	0.57
	Any	10,846	16.21	100.00
Comprehensive	A level	12,758	15.34	99.45
	IB	70	0.08	0.55
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	12,828	15.42	100.00
FE/Tertiary College	A level	2,673	2.89	96.43
	IB	99	0.11	3.57
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	2,772	3.00	100.00
Grammar	A level	2,176	19.76	95.56
	IB	101	0.92	4.44
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	2,277	20.68	100.00
Independent	A level	7,136	19.14	92.90
	IB	369	0.99	4.80
	Pre-U	176	0.47	2.29
	Any	7,681	20.60	100.00
Secondary Modern	A level	415	11.11	100.00
	IB	0	0.00	0.00
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	415	11.11	100.00
Sixth Form College	A level	7,808	10.43	98.69
	IB	104	0.14	1.31
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	7,912	10.57	100.00

### *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

Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking English lit
A level	42,756	10.8	94.7
IB	1,925	0.5	4.3
Pre-U	447	0.1	1.0
Any	45,128	11.4	100.0

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

	Qualification	Students	% of all students	% of all taking English lit
Academies	A level	10734	16.04	96.40
	IB	367	0.55	3.30
	Pre-U	34	0.05	0.31
	Any	11135	16.64	100.00
Comprehensive	A level	13078	15.72	98.72
	IB	146	0.18	1.10
	Pre-U	23	0.03	0.17
	Any	13247	15.93	100.00
FE/Tertiary College	A level	2520	2.73	93.20
	IB	183	0.20	6.77
	Pre-U	1	0.00	0.04
	Any	2704	2.93	100.00
Grammar	A level	2187	19.86	90.75
	IB	223	2.03	9.25
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	2410	21.89	100.00
Independent	A level	6455	17.31	85.55
	IB	701	1.88	9.29
	Pre-U	389	1.04	5.16
	Any	7545	20.23	100.00
Secondary Modern	A level	424	11.36	100.00
	IB	0	0.00	0.00
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	424	11.36	100.00
Sixth Form College	A level	6880	9.19	96.97
	IB	215	0.29	3.03
	Pre-U	0	0.00	0.00
	Any	7095	9.48	100.00

### ***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)

Subject	Students	Uptake (% of all students)
Sports / Movement Science	11,282	3.4
Art & Design	7,684	2.3
Business Studies	6,648	2.0
Speech & Drama	6,237	1.9
Systems / Network Management	6,087	1.8
Public Services	3,890	1.2
Film / Video / Television Production	3,768	1.1
Tourism	3,382	1.0
Learning theory	2,617	0.8
Music Studies (General)	2,581	0.8

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

Subject	Students	Uptake (% of all students)
Sports Studies	16,412	4.2
Business Studies	12,271	3.2
Systems / Network Management	11,175	2.9
Art & Design	10,543	2.7
Health Studies	8,639	2.2
Public Services	7,610	2.0
Music Studies (General)	5,409	1.4
Tourism	4,805	1.2
Film / Video / Television Production	4,528	1.2
Applied Sciences	4,222	1.1

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

Subject	Students	Uptake (% of all students)
Sports Studies	18,287	4.6
Business Studies	14,898	3.8
Health Studies	12,416	3.1
Computer Appreciation / Introduction	11,070	2.8
Public Services	8,913	2.2
Art & Design	8,233	2.1
Multimedia	7,316	1.8
Applied Sciences	6,834	1.7
Tourism	4,485	1.1
Speech & Drama	3,879	1.0

Table 33: Uptake of popular Applied A level subjects (2007/08)

Subject	Students	Uptake (% of all students)
Applied ICT	13,682	4.1
Applied Business	10,407	3.1
Health & Social Care	10,250	3.0
Travel & Tourism	2,458	0.7
Applied Science	1,919	0.6
Applied Art & Design	1,715	0.5
Performing Arts	1,318	0.4
Leisure & Recreation	1,179	0.4
Media: Communication & Production	580	0.2
Applied Engineering	236	0.1

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

Subject	Students	Uptake (% of all students)
Applied ICT	11,623	3.0
Applied Business	9,203	2.4
Health & Social Care	8,803	2.3
Travel & Tourism	2,371	0.6
Applied Science	2,349	0.6
Performing Arts	1,536	0.4
Applied Art & Design	1,377	0.4
Leisure & Recreation	991	0.3
Media: Communication & Production	529	0.1
Applied Engineering	237	0.1

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

Subject	Students	Uptake (% of all students)
Applied ICT	8,021	2.0
Health & Social Care	7,759	2.0
Applied Business	6,801	1.7
Applied Science	2,772	0.7
Travel & Tourism	1,817	0.5
Performing Arts	1,184	0.3
Applied Art & Design	997	0.3
Leisure & Recreation	751	0.2
Media: Communication & Production	419	0.1
Applied Engineering	187	<0.1

## 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)

	Combination	Students	% Students
Academy	A level	1,096	49.8
	A level-Applied A level	386	17.6
	BTEC	211	9.6
	A level-BTEC	203	9.2
	Applied A level	108	4.9
Comprehensive	A level	88,488	75.2
	A level-Applied A level	15,647	13.3
	A level-Applied A level-Applied AS level	2,456	2.1
	BTEC	2,366	2.0
	A level-BTEC	2,356	2.0
FE/Tertiary College	BTEC	42,510	53.6
	A level	21,388	28.6
	VRQ	6,411	7.7
	A level-BTEC	1,870	3.9
	A level-Applied A level	1,089	1.5
Grammar	A level	20,518	95.8
	A level-Applied A level	486	2.3
	IB	261	1.2
	A level-Applied A level-Applied AS level	40	0.2
	A level-VRQ	28	0.1
Independent	A level	32,868	93.6
	IB	986	2.8
	A level-Applied A level	518	1.5
	BTEC	332	0.9
	A level-BTEC	233	0.7
Secondary Modern	A level	1,900	47.0
	A level-Applied A level	950	23.5
	BTEC	282	7.0
	Applied A level	207	5.1
	A level-BTEC	196	4.9
Sixth Form College	A level	44,310	71.6
	BTEC	6,564	10.6
	A level-Applied A level	4,135	6.7
	A level-BTEC	2,060	3.3
	A level-Applied A level-Applied AS level	1,699	2.7

Table A2: Most popular combinations of qualifications taken, by school type (2009/10)

	Combination	Students	% Students
Academy	A level	3,081	45.6
	BTEC	1,216	18.0
	A level-BTEC	746	11.0
	A level-Applied A level	684	10.1
	Applied A level-BTEC	139	2.1
Comprehensive	A level	91,180	71.2
	A level-Applied A level	13,850	10.8
	BTEC	6,224	4.9
	A level-BTEC	5,886	4.6
	A level-Applied A level-Applied AS level	1,918	1.5
FE/Tertiary College	BTEC	56,818	57.2
	A level	22,161	22.3
	VRQ	12,282	13.4
	A level-BTEC	3,165	3.2
	A level-Applied A level	1,091	1.1
Grammar	A level	21,135	94.0
	A level-Applied A level	562	2.5
	IB	527	2.3
	A level-Pre-U	71	0.3
	A level-BTEC	48	0.2
Independent	A level	33,121	90.1
	IB	1,469	4.0
	A level-Pre-U	768	2.1
	A level-Applied A level	483	1.3
	BTEC	327	0.9
Secondary Modern	A level	2,334	44.2
	A level-Applied A level	835	15.8
	BTEC	664	12.6
	A level-BTEC	474	9.0
	Applied A level-BTEC	132	2.5
Sixth Form College	A level	46,883	66.4
	BTEC	10,650	15.1
	A level-Applied A level	4,507	6.4
	A level-BTEC	3,525	5.0
	A level -Applied A level-Applied AS level	1,210	1.7

Table A3: Most popular combinations of qualifications taken, by school type (2011/12)

	Combination	Students	% Students
Academy	A level	46,616	69.7
	A level-Applied A level	4,625	6.9
	A level-BTEC	4,361	6.5
	BTEC	4,178	6.2
	A level-OCR National	1,178	1.7
Comprehensive	A level	55,373	66.6
	A level-Applied A level	6,527	7.9
	A level-BTEC	6,427	7.7
	BTEC	5,988	7.2
	A level-OCR National	1,601	1.9
FE/Tertiary College	BTEC	55,479	60.0
	A level	18,947	20.5
	VRQ	12,150	13.2
	A level-BTEC	1,794	1.9
	BTEC-VRQ	721	0.8
Grammar	A level	10,013	90.9
	IB	401	3.6
	A level-Applied A level	236	2.1
	A level-Pre-U	131	1.2
	A level-VRQ	60	0.5
Independent	A level	32,786	87.9
	IB	1,533	4.1
	A level-Pre-U	1,090	2.9
	BTEC	490	1.3
	A level-BTEC	416	1.1
Secondary Modern	A level	1,276	34.2
	BTEC	892	23.9
	A level-BTEC	492	13.2
	A level-Applied A level	293	7.8
	A level-OCR National	109	2.9
Sixth Form College	A level	47,569	63.6
	BTEC	13,577	18.1
	A level-BTEC	4,208	5.6
	A level-Applied A level	4,037	5.4
	VRQ	1,296	1.7