

GCSE early entry: Is it a good thing?

*Evidence from national
data*



CAMBRIDGE ASSESSMENT

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Perspectives from Cambridge Assessment
20th March 2013



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
Local Examinations Syndicate

Research questions



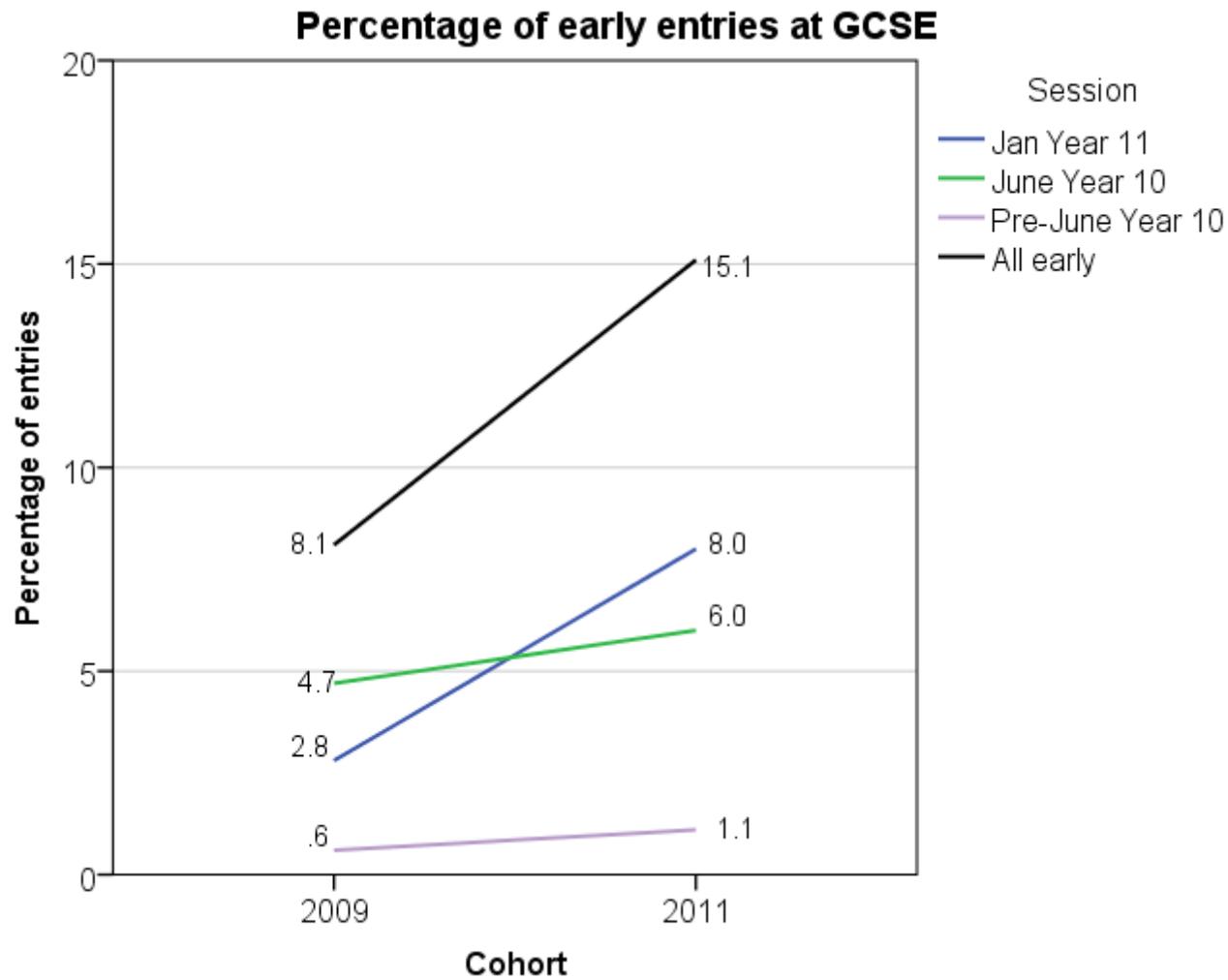
1. What are the patterns of early certification in GCSE subjects in recent years and the profile of candidates certificating early?
2. How do candidates who certificate in a GCSE prior to June of year 11 perform relative to candidates certificating in June of year 11, after accounting for prior attainment?
3. What effect does certificating in a GCSE early have on uptake and performance in the same (or a related) subject at A level, after accounting for prior attainment?

Data



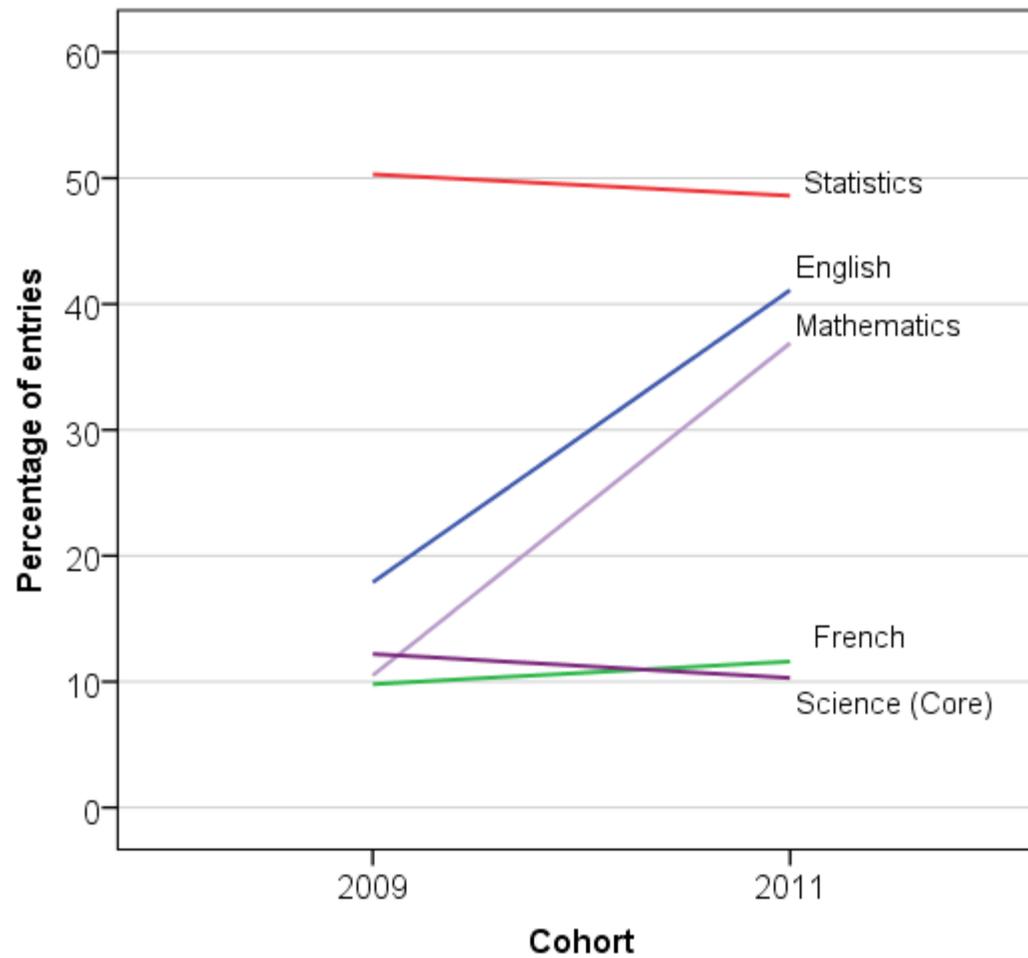
- National Pupil Database – national data for all English schools
- KS4 – all students at end of KS4
- KS5 – students aged 16-18
- Two years – 2009 and 2011

Results – entry patterns (1)



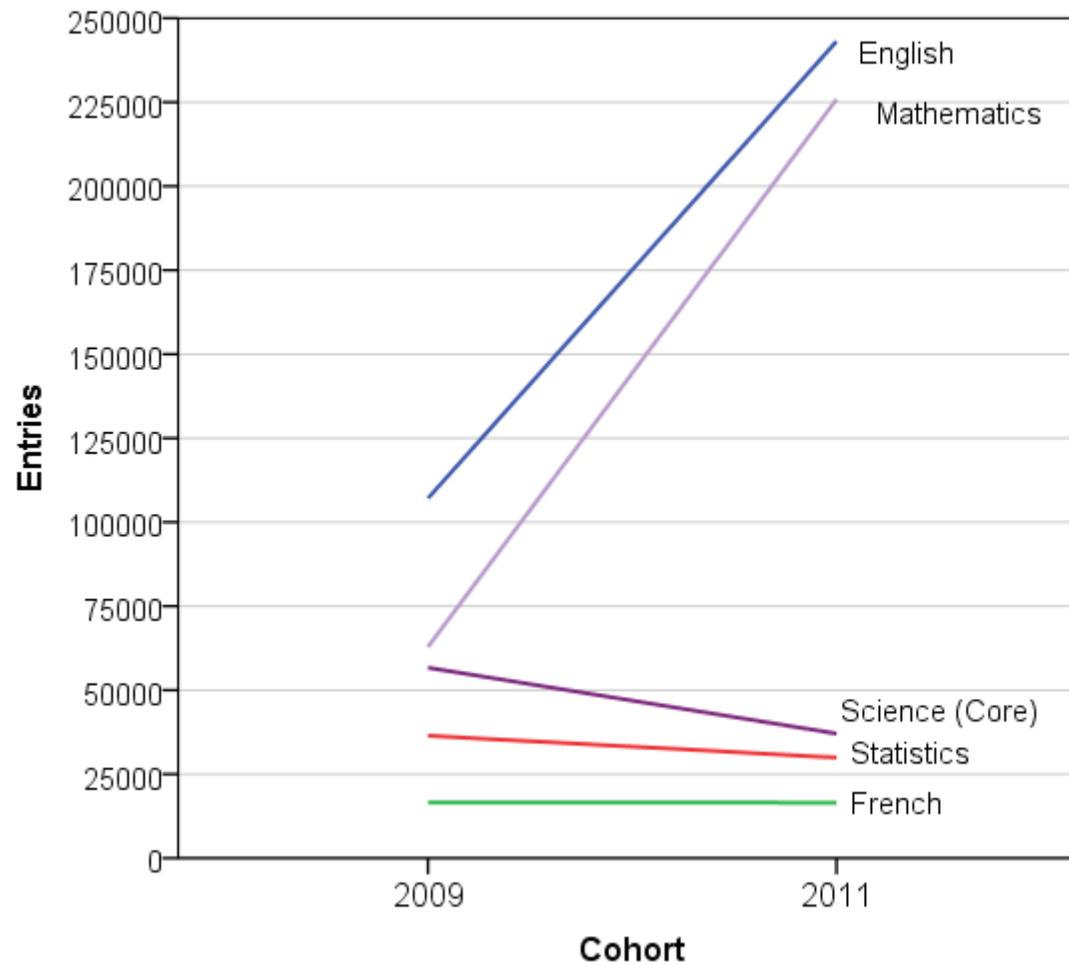
Results – entry patterns (2)

Percentage of early entries by GCSE subject



Results – entry patterns (3)

Number of early entries by GCSE subject



Results – entry patterns (4)

- Prior attainment
 - English - Early entry tend to be lower ability
 - Maths – Jan Y11 entry lower ability. June Y10 higher ability
- School type
 - Independent & Grammar less likely to enter early
 - English (2009) – 5% in ind, 19% in comps
 - English (2011) – 11% in ind, 44% in comps

Results – GCSE performance



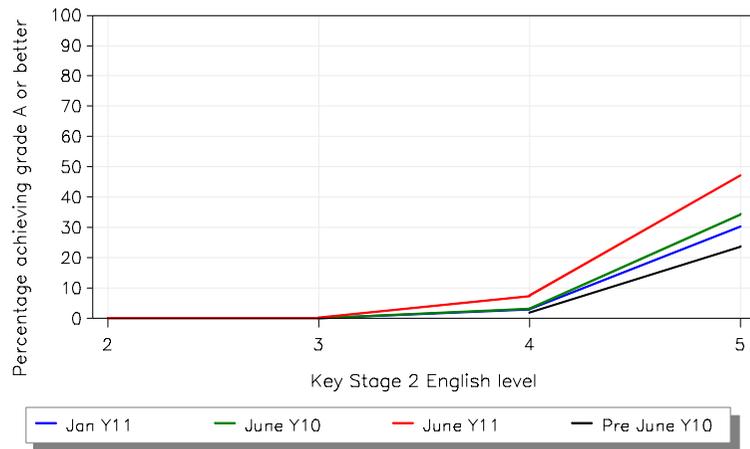
- English and Maths
- First grade and best grade separately
- Accounting for KS2 level
- % A or better, % C or better

Results – GCSE performance

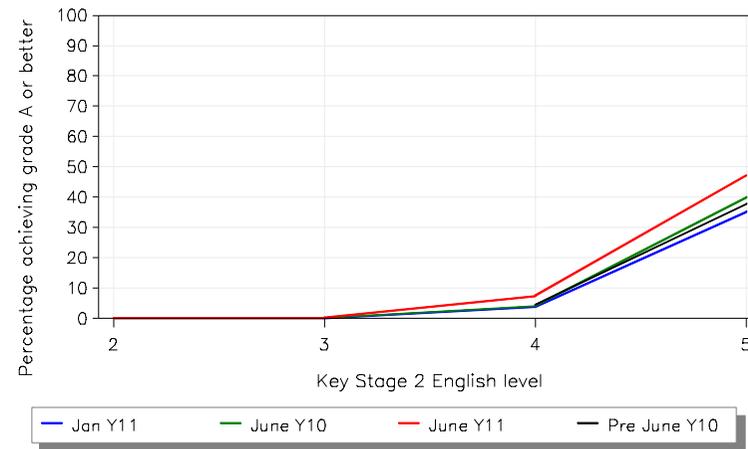


English 2009

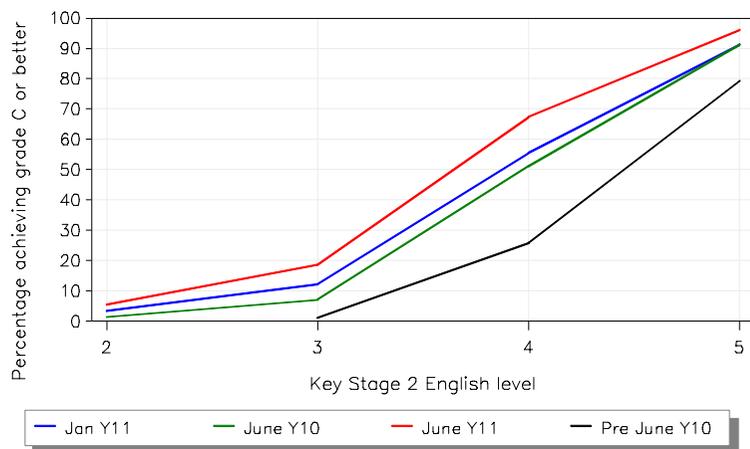
Grade A (first grade)



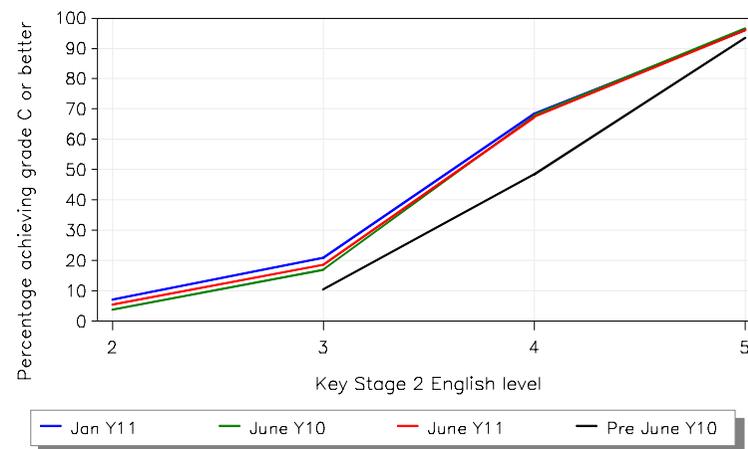
Grade A (final grade)



Grade C (first grade)



Grade C (final grade)

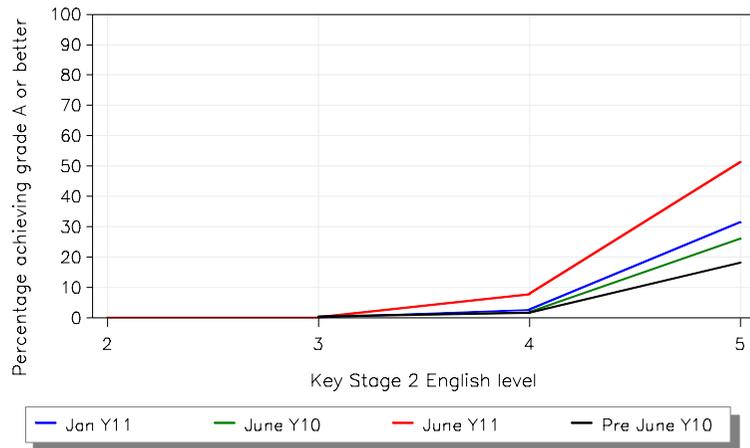


Results – GCSE performance

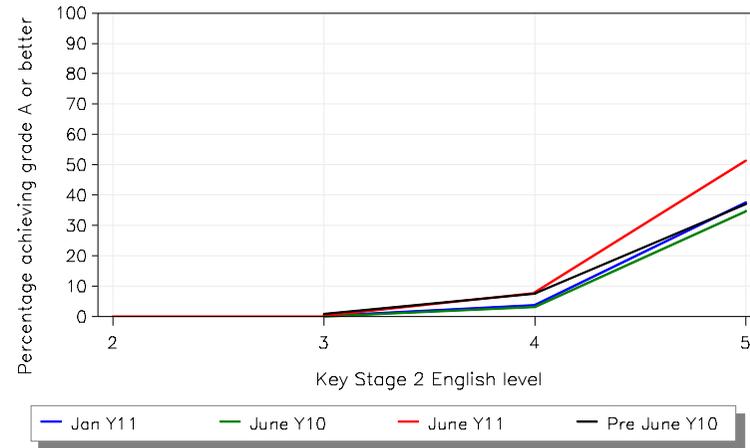


English 2011

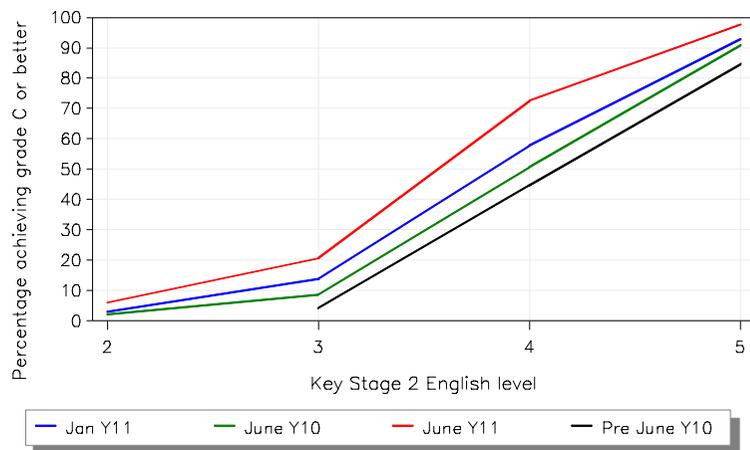
Grade A (first grade)



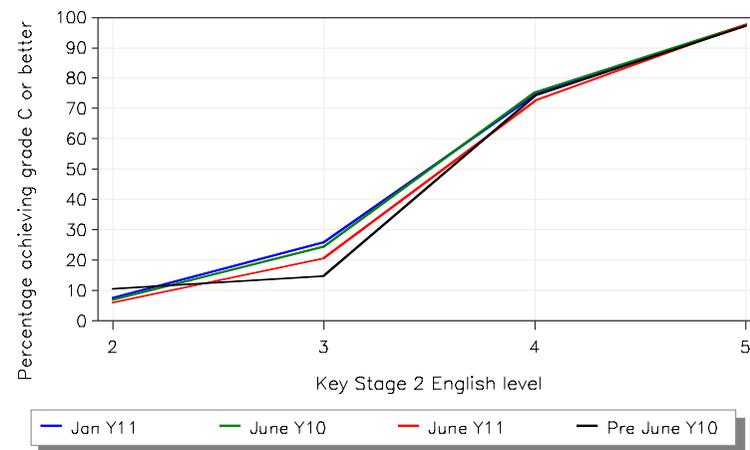
Grade A (final grade)



Grade C (first grade)



Grade C (final grade)

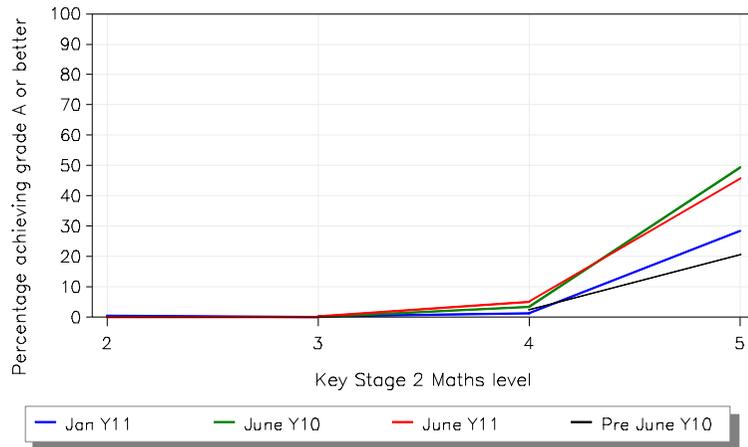


Results – GCSE performance

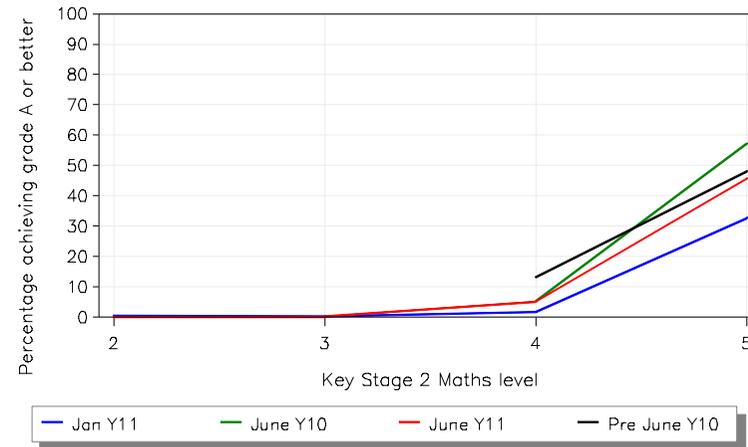


Maths 2009

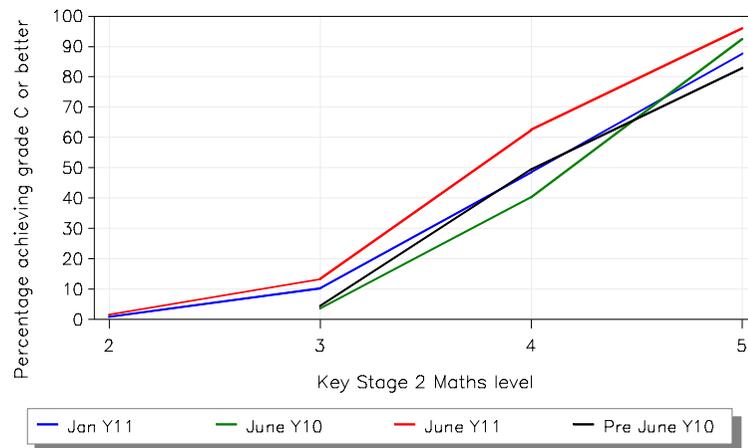
Grade A (first grade)



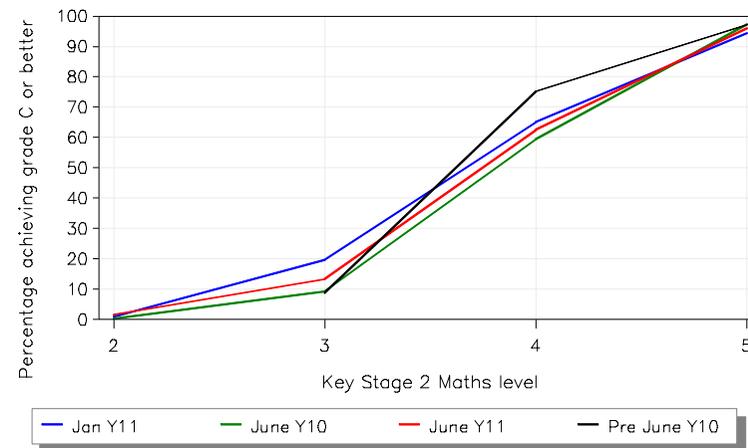
Grade A (final grade)



Grade C (first grade)



Grade C (final grade)

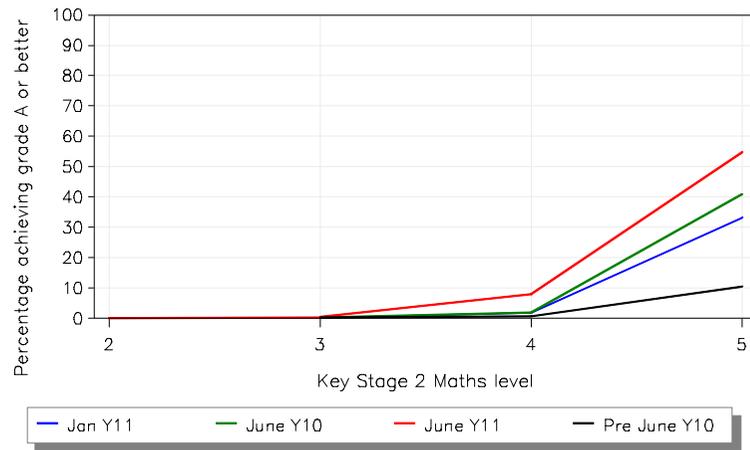


Results – GCSE performance

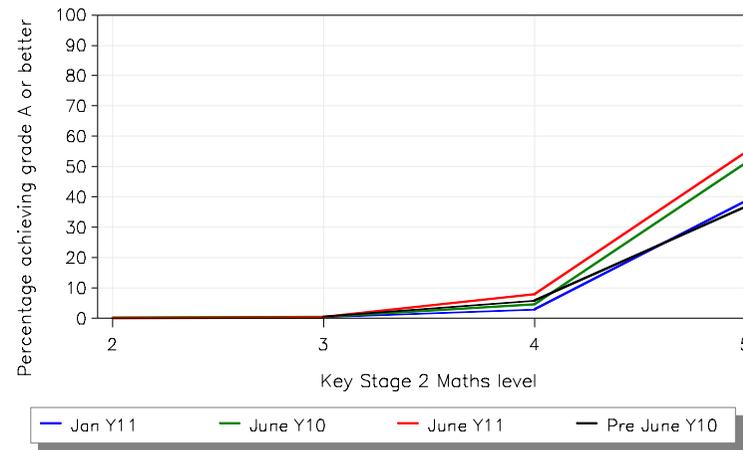


Maths 2011

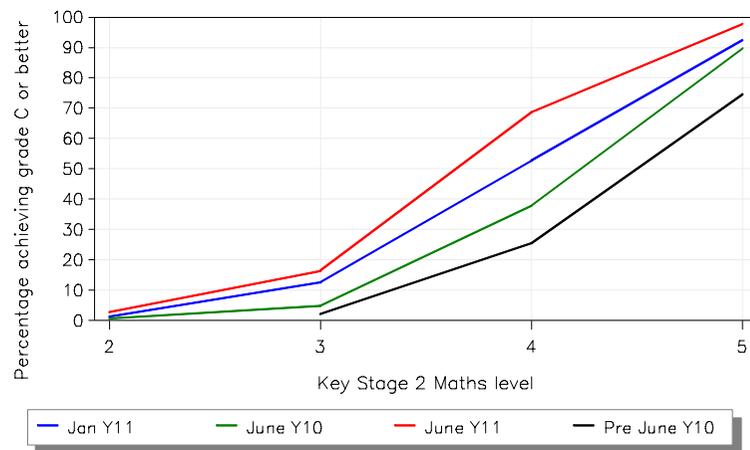
Grade A (first grade)



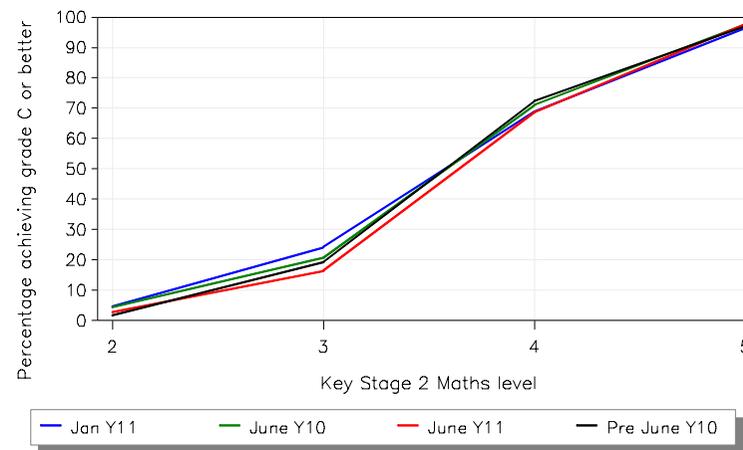
Grade A (final grade)



Grade C (first grade)



Grade C (final grade)



Results – A level uptake



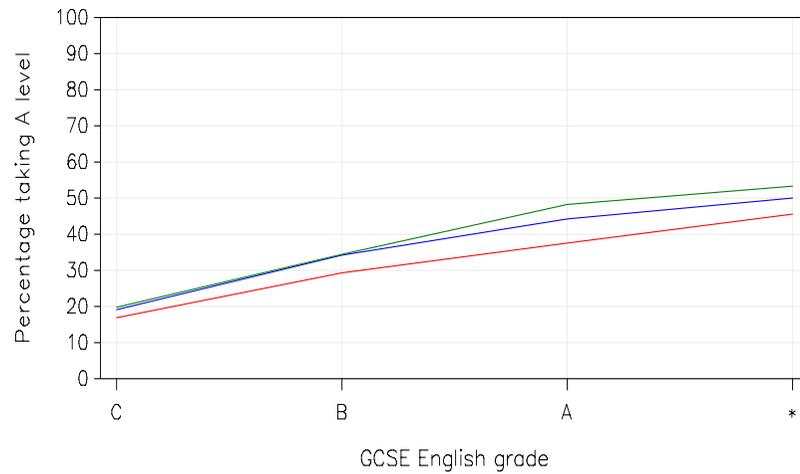
- Early certification may affect uptake
- First certification & final certification
- Any English A level & Maths
- % of A level students taking subject, by final GCSE grade and certification session
- Candidates from 2009 GCSE cohort

Results – A level uptake

Any English

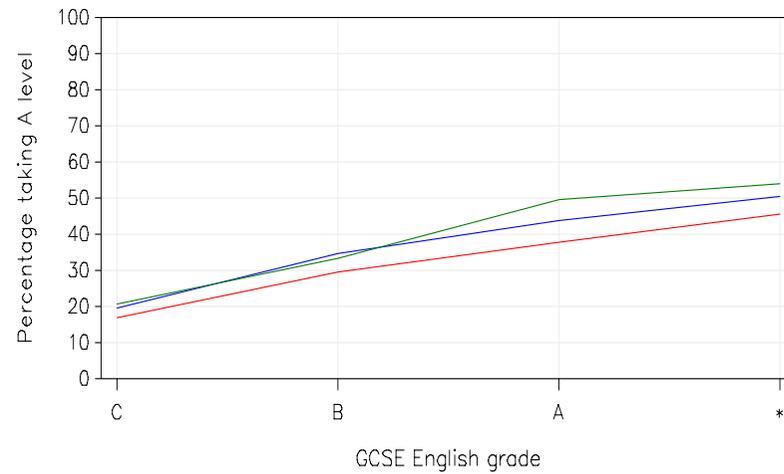


Any English A level



First certification session
 — Jan Y11 — June Y10 — June Y11

Any English A level



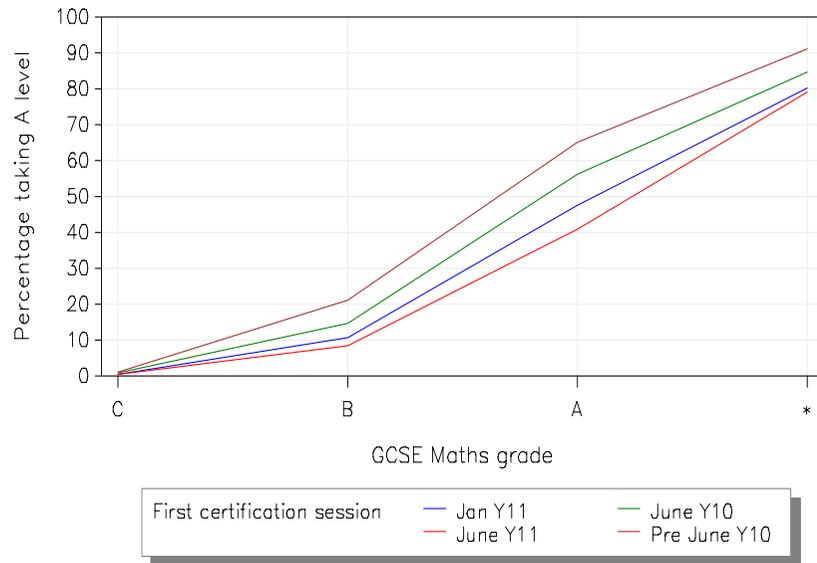
Final certification session
 — Jan Y11 — June Y10 — June Y11

Results – A level uptake

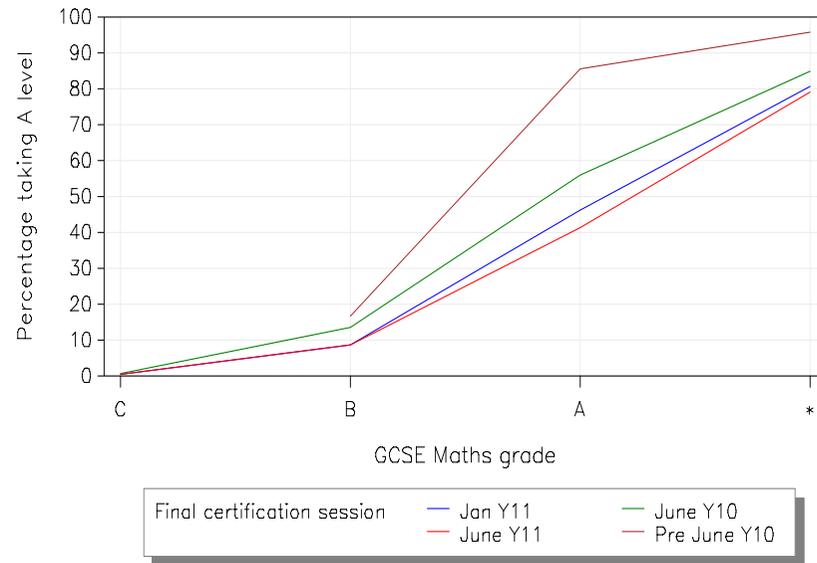
Maths



Maths A level



Maths A level



Results – A level performance



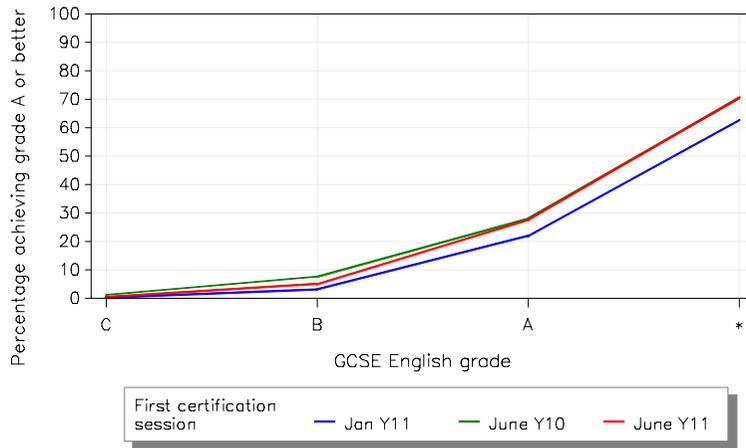
- Early certification may affect A level performance
- First certification & final certification
- All English A level & Maths
- Also science A levels
- % A or better, % C or better – by final GCSE grade and certification session.
- Candidates from 2009 GCSE cohort

Results – A level performance

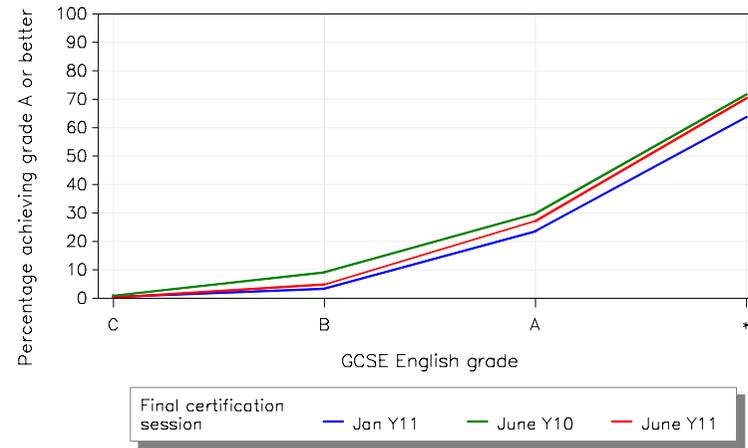
All English



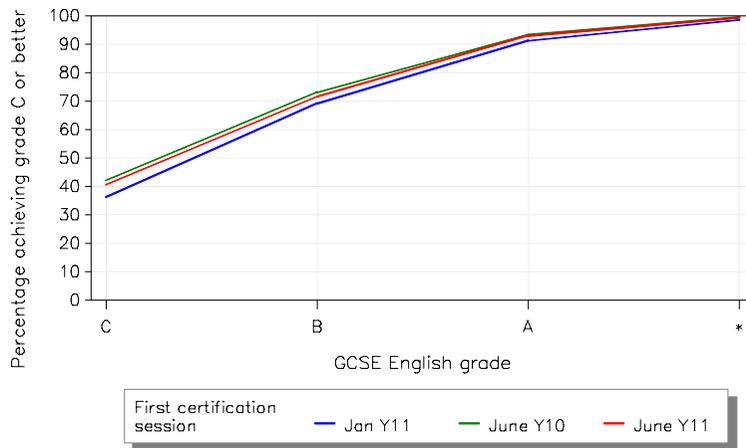
Any English A level



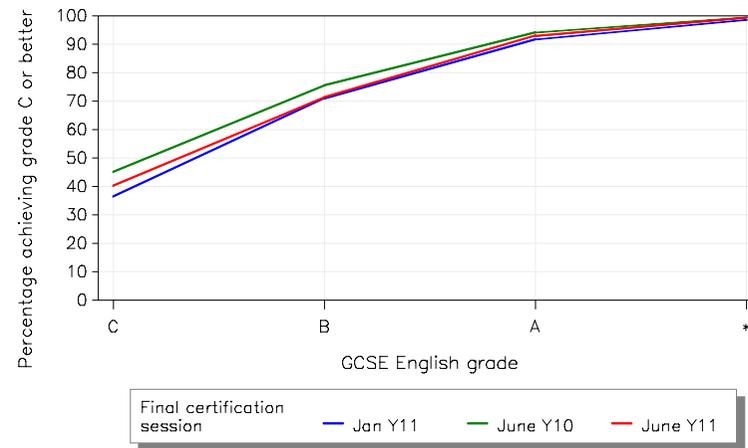
Any English A level



Any English A level



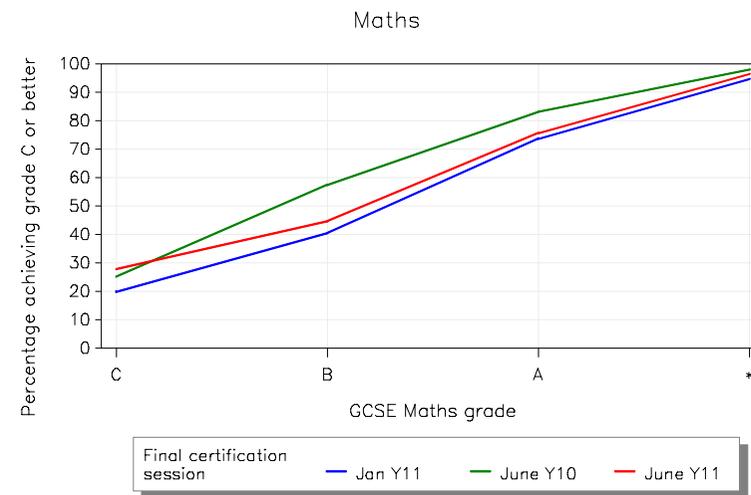
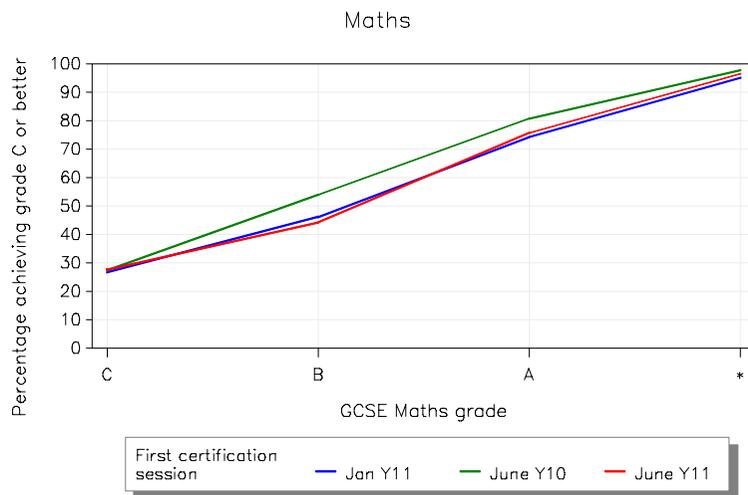
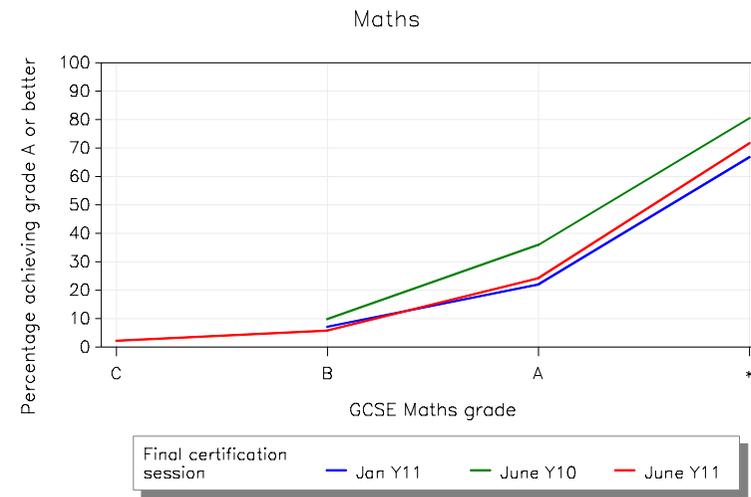
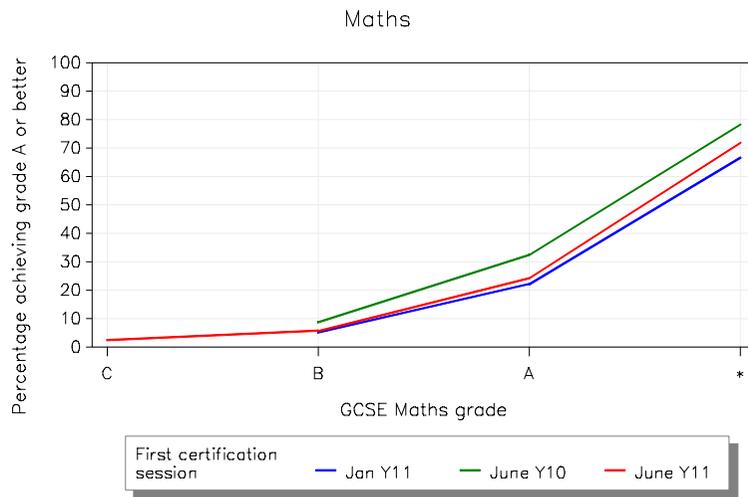
Any English A level



Results – A level performance



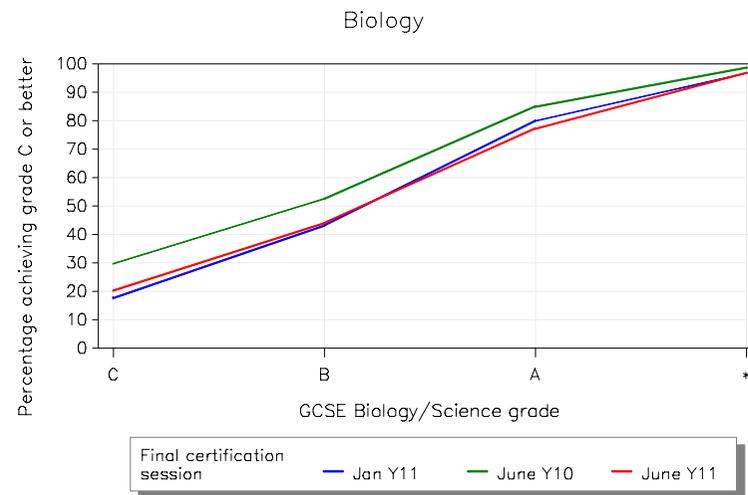
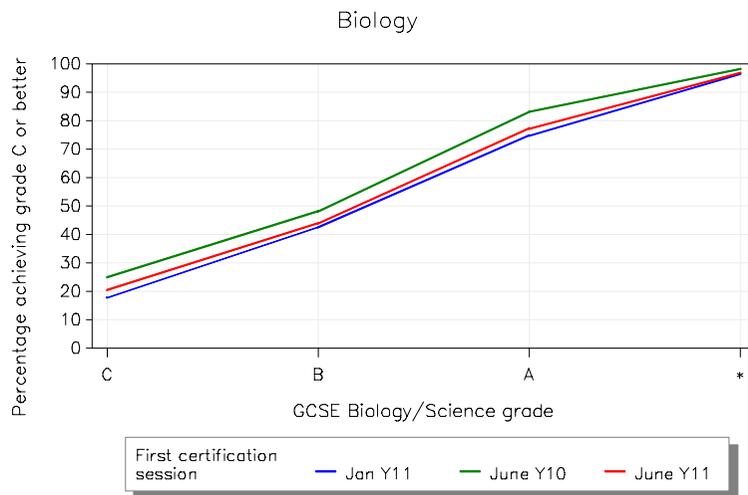
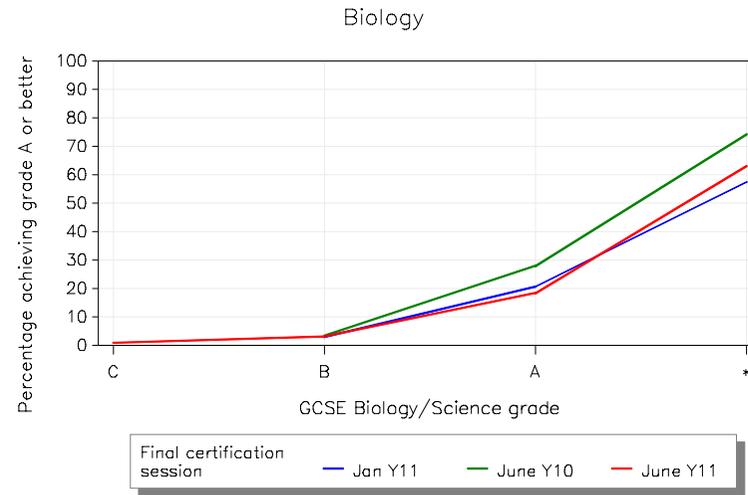
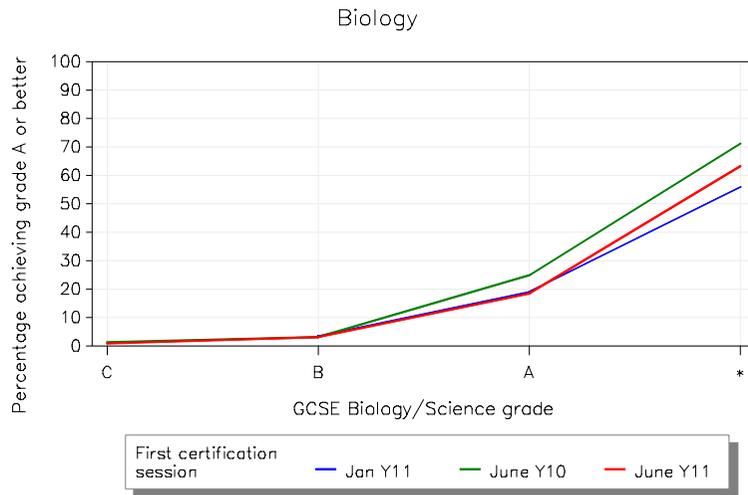
Maths



Results – A level performance



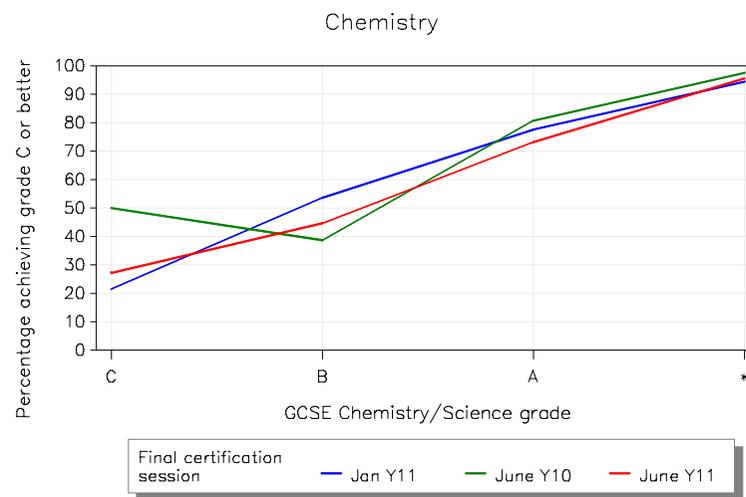
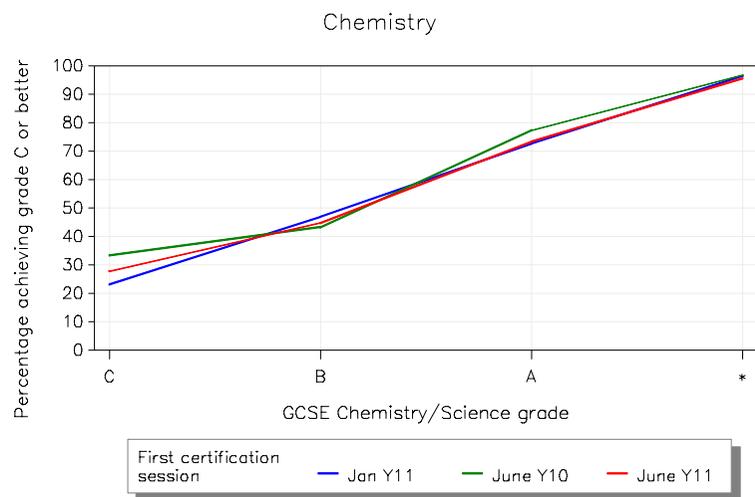
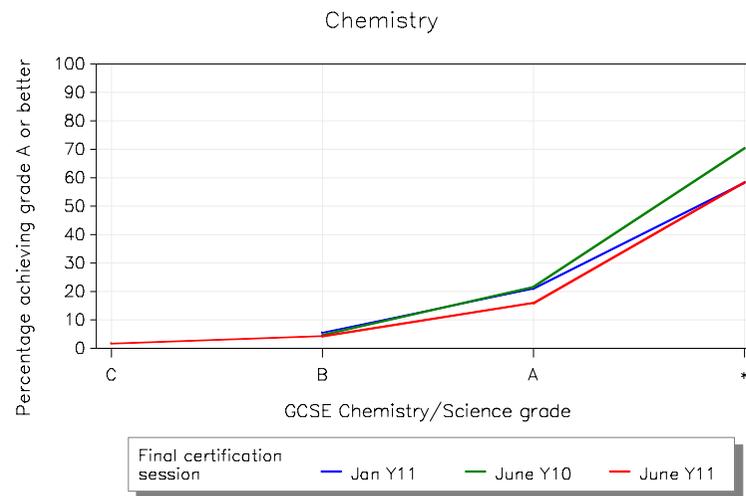
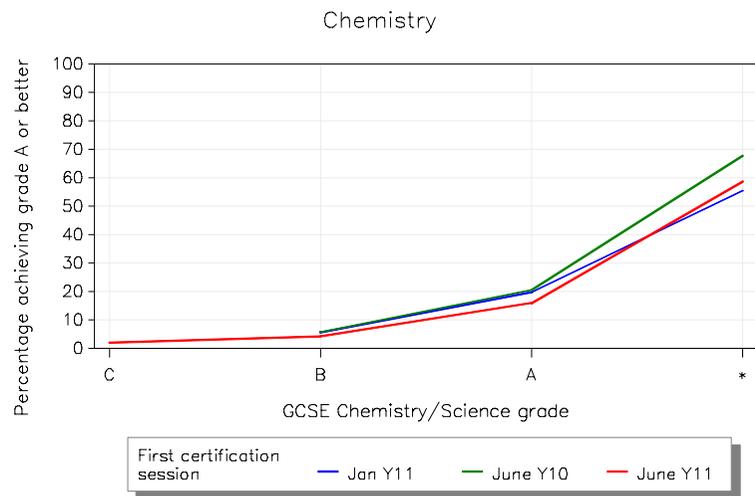
Biology



Results – A level performance



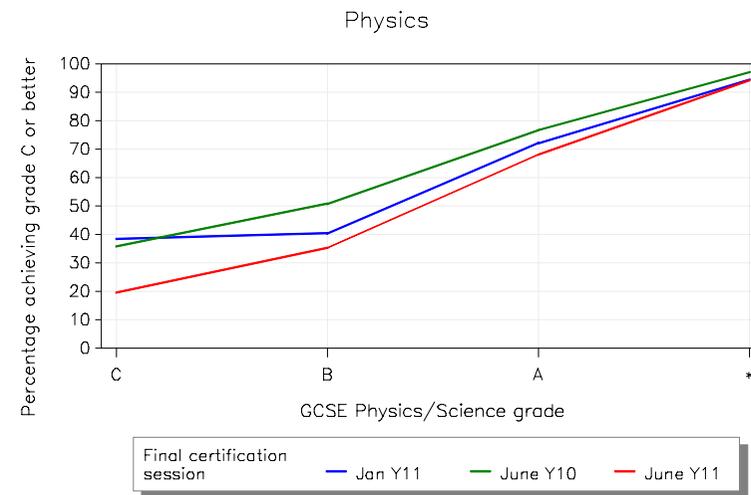
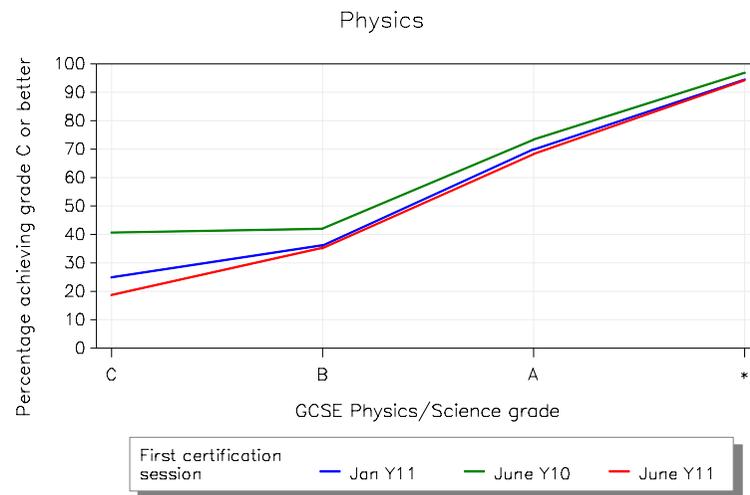
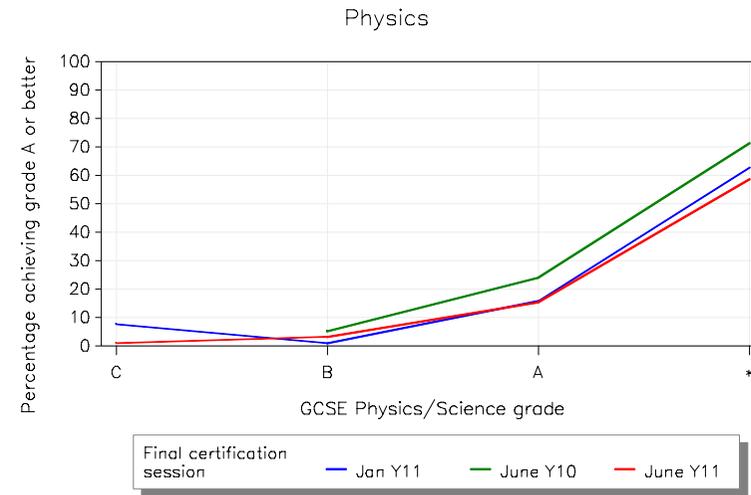
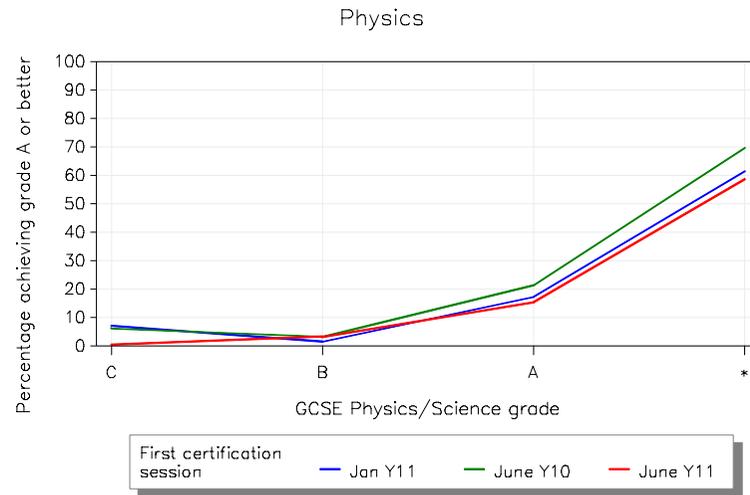
Chemistry



Results – A level performance



Physics



Summary – entry patterns



- Large increase in early entry between 2009 and 2011
- Particularly English and maths
- Fewer early entries in Independent/Grammar

Summary – impact



- GCSE performance – some evidence that early entry is detrimental to high attainers
- A level uptake – No evidence of lower uptake by early entry candidates
- A level performance – Almost no evidence of poorer performance by early entry candidates