

Educational Attainment of Young People by Age 19, 2006/07

This Statistical Release presents analysis obtained by matching together datasets of school, further education, work-based learning and vocational awards data for a complete picture of attainment. As this analysis is being published for the first time as experimental statistics, we welcome feedback on the content of this release. Contact details can be found at the bottom of this page.

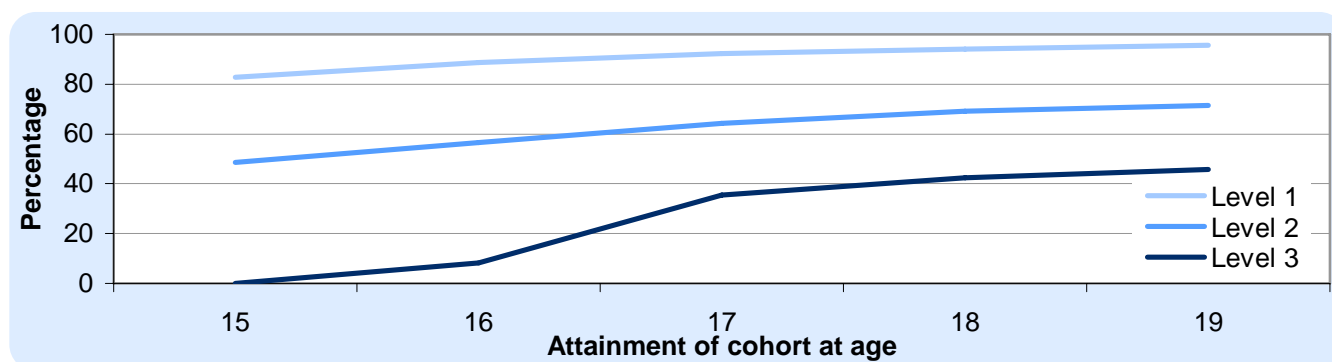
Attainment at each age includes attainment throughout the whole academic year. The definition of age used throughout this release is academic age (age as at 31 August prior to the start of the academic year).

The methodology used to produce these results is based on similar work done in England. A key difference to note is that results for England use age at the **end** of the academic year. For example, results for 19 year olds in this release are equivalent to results for 20 year olds in England. More information on level thresholds, data sources, definitions and methodology is in the notes at the end of this release.

Key results for persons aged 19 in 2006/07

- 96 per cent had attained the level 1 threshold, 71 per cent had level 2 and 46 per cent had level 3.
- Level 2 attainment increased by 23 percentage points between ages 15 and 19. Level 3 attainment increased by 10 percentage points between ages 17 and 19.
- Level 1 and 2 attainment at each age from 15 to 18 was generally higher for subsequent cohorts.
- The proportion of females achieving each level was higher than for males at all ages, although the size of this gap decreased as age increased.
- Most of level 1 and 2 attainment by age 15 was through academic qualifications, while for post-16 it was vocational. Most of level 3 attainment by age 19 was through level 3 general qualifications.
- Generally for all levels, post-16 attainment through vocational routes was slightly higher for males than for females.

Chart 1: Attainment by level and age for persons aged 19 in 2006/07



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Attainment tables at levels 1, 2 and 3

Cohorts of young people are referred to by the academic year in which they are of academic age 19 (for example, the cohort aged 19 in 2006/07 were born in the period 1st September 1986 – 31st August 1987).

Table 1: Proportion of young people attaining the level 1 threshold, by cohort and age

Young people aged	15	16	17	18	19	Cohort size
19 in 2006/07 (a)	82.8	88.6	92.4	94.1	95.6	38,800
19 in 2007/08	85.5	92.6	95.8	97.1		39,700
19 in 2008/09	86.1	93.6	96.3			39,000
19 in 2009/10	87.0	93.8				39,400
19 in 2010/11	86.7					39,800

- For those aged 19 in 2006/07, the proportion achieving level 1 increased by 13 percentage points between the ages of 15 and 19, up to 96 per cent at age 19. The largest increase was at age 16 (6 percentage points).
- Generally, attainment at each age was higher when compared with previous cohorts (except for a 0.3 per cent decrease at age 15 for the cohort aged 19 in 2010/11).

Table 2: Proportion of young people attaining the level 2 threshold, by cohort and age

Young people aged	15	16	17	18	19	Cohort size
19 in 2006/07 (a)	48.6	56.7	64.2	69.0	71.4	38,800
19 in 2007/08	50.9	59.5	67.6	71.4		39,700
19 in 2008/09	51.8	60.4	67.6			39,000
19 in 2009/10	53.4	61.5				39,400
19 in 2010/11	54.8					39,800

- For those aged 19 in 2006/07, the proportion achieving level 2 increased by 23 percentage points between the ages of 15 and 19, up to 71 per cent at age 19. The largest increase was at age 16 (8 percentage points).
- Attainment at each age was similar or higher when compared with previous cohorts.

Table 3: Proportion of young people attaining the level 3 threshold, by cohort and age

Young people aged	15	16	17	18	19	Cohort size
19 in 2006/07 (a)	0.0	8.2	35.5	42.5	45.7	38,800
19 in 2007/08	0.1	9.1	37.4	43.1		39,700
19 in 2008/09	0.1	10.1	34.0			39,000
19 in 2009/10	0.1	9.1				39,400
19 in 2010/11	0.1					39,800

- For those aged 19 in 2006/07, the proportion achieving level 3 increased by 10 percentage points between the ages of 17 and 19, up to 46 per cent at age 19.
- When comparing attainment at each age with previous cohorts, level 3 did not see the same pattern of increases compared with previous cohorts, as for levels 1 and 2.
- Level 3 attainment at age 17 decreased by 3 percentage points for the cohort aged 19 in 2008/09, compared with the previous cohort.

(a) Figures for the cohort that were 19 in 2006/07 exclude a small number of awards attained by 15 year olds at Further Education institutions and there is also an undercount due to an issue with the data quality of schools data. See section 6 of the notes at the end of this release

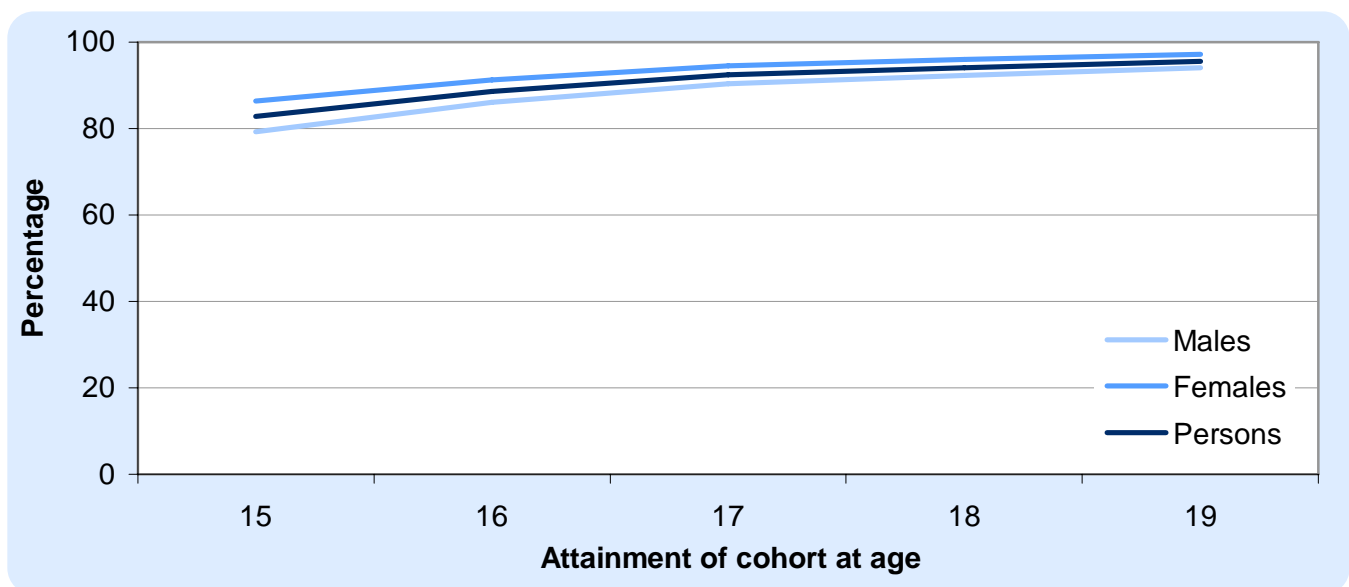
Further analysis of attainment by gender, age and qualification type

The proportion of females achieving each level was higher than for males at all ages. The difference between male and females attainment was smallest for level 1. The difference between male and female attainment at all levels decreased slightly as age increased.

By age 15, 81 and 48 per cent of the cohort achieved level 1 and 2 (respectively) through GCSEs only and this figure increased only a little by age 19. Post-16, vocational routes accounted for most of the increases in level 1 and 2. Post-16 in general, slightly higher proportions of males than females achieved level 1 and 2 through vocational routes.

Most of level 3 attainment by age 19 was through level 3 general qualifications (AS/ A-Levels, AVCEs or Advanced GNVQs). Level 3 attainment for females was 11 percentage points higher than for males for these qualifications, compared with 8 percentage points for all qualifications. However, level 3 attainment for males through Modern Apprenticeships was 3 percentage points higher than for females.

Chart 2: Attainment at level 1 by gender and age, persons aged 19 in 2006/07



- 86 per cent of 15 year old females achieved level 1 compared with 79 per cent for males (gap of 7 percentage points).
- By age 19, the gap had decreased to 3 percentage points. 97 per cent of females had achieved level 1 compared with 94 per cent of males.

(a) Figures for this cohort exclude a small number of awards attained by 15 year olds at Further Education institutions and there is also an undercount due to an issue with the data quality of schools data. See section 6 of the notes at the end of this release

Table 4 shows the type of qualifications achieved to reach level 1 post-16, by gender.

Table 4: Attainment at level 1 by qualification type and gender, persons aged 19 in 2006/07

	<i>Per cent</i>		
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Persons</u>
Achieved level 1 by age 15 (a)	79.3	86.4	82.8
Attainment post-16	14.7	10.7	12.8
GCSEs (less than 5)	0.9	0.7	0.8
NVQ Level 1	4.5	2.9	3.7
VRQ Level 1	5.6	4.2	4.9
Level 2+ qualifications	3.6	2.9	3.2
Combination of qualifications	0.1	0.0	0.1
Achieved level 1 by age 19	94.1	97.1	95.6
Number achieving level 1 by age 19	18,500	18,500	37,100

- Post-16 attainment at level 1 was 13 per cent with most of this attainment through VRQ Level 1, NVQ Level 1 and level 2 qualifications or higher.
- Post-16 attainment at level 1 by males was higher than for females for all qualification types.

Table 5 shows the type of qualifications achieved to reach level 1, by age 15 and post-16.

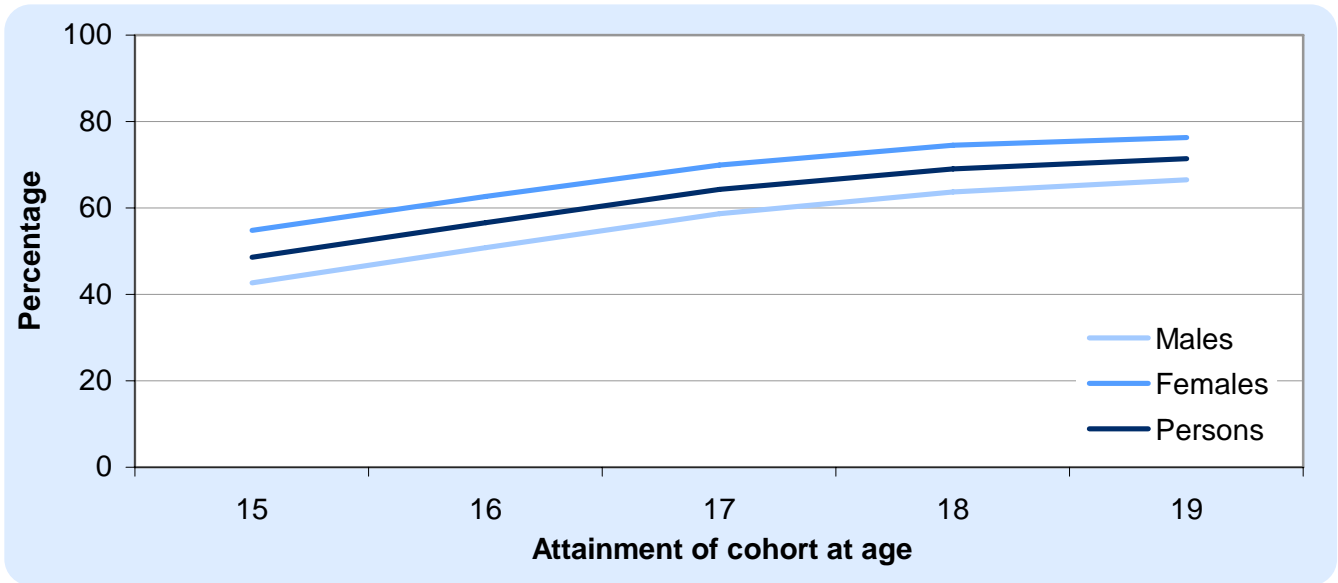
Table 5: Attainment at level 1 by qualification type and age, persons aged 19 in 2006/07

	<i>Per cent</i>		
	<u>Achieved level 1 by age 15 (a)</u>	<u>Achieved level 1 post-16</u>	<u>Achieved level 1 by age 19</u>
GCSEs (less than 5)	81.4	0.8	82.2
NVQ Level 1	0.2	3.7	3.9
VRQ Level 1	0.2	4.9	5.1
Level 2+ qualifications	0.7	3.2	4.0
Combination of qualifications	0.2	0.1	0.3
Proportion achieving level 1	82.8	12.8	95.6
Number achieving level 1	32,100	4,900	37,100

- 81 per cent of the cohort achieved level 1 through GCSEs only by age 15 and 1 per cent achieved level 1 through GCSEs only post-16.
- Attainment at level 1 through qualifications other than GCSEs only was 1 per cent by age 15, increasing to 12 per cent post-16.

(a) Figures for this cohort exclude a small number of awards attained by 15 year olds at Further Education institutions and there is also an undercount due to an issue with the data quality of schools data. See section 6 of the notes at the end of this release

Chart 3: Attainment at level 2 by gender and age, persons aged 19 in 2006/07



- 55 per cent of 15 year old females achieved level 2 compared with 43 per cent for males (gap of 12 percentage points).
- By age 19, the gap had decreased slightly to 10 percentage points. 76 per cent of females had achieved level 2 compared with 67 per cent of males.

Table 6 shows the type of qualifications achieved to reach level 2 post-16, by gender.

Table 6: Attainment at level 2 by qualification type and gender, persons aged 19 in 2006/07

	<i>Per cent</i>		
	Males	Females	Persons
Achieved level 2 by age 15 (a)	42.7	54.8	48.6
Attainment post-16	23.9	21.5	22.7
5 GCSEs	1.0	0.8	0.9
GNVQs / combination of GCSEs & GNVQs	7.8	6.2	7.0
Foundation Modern Apprenticeship	4.5	4.7	4.6
NVQ Level 2	5.2	3.5	4.4
VRQ Level 2	1.5	1.6	1.5
Level 3 qualifications	3.6	4.3	4.0
Combination of qualifications	0.3	0.4	0.3
Achieved level 2 by age 19	66.6	76.3	71.4
Number achieving level 2 by age 19	13,100	14,600	27,700

(a) Figures for this cohort exclude a small number of awards attained by 15 year olds at Further Education institutions and there is also an undercount due to an issue with the data quality of schools data. See section 6 of the notes at the end of this release

- Post-16 attainment at level 2 was 23 per cent, with 7 per cent of this attainment through GNVQs or combination of GCSEs & GNVQs, and 4 to 5 per cent from each of Foundation Modern Apprenticeship, NVQ Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications.
- The difference between post-16 attainment at level 2 for males and females was largest for each of NVQ Level 2, and GNVQs or combination of GCSEs & GNVQs (males 2 percentage points higher than females).

Table 7 shows the type of qualifications achieved to reach level 2, by age 15 and post-16.

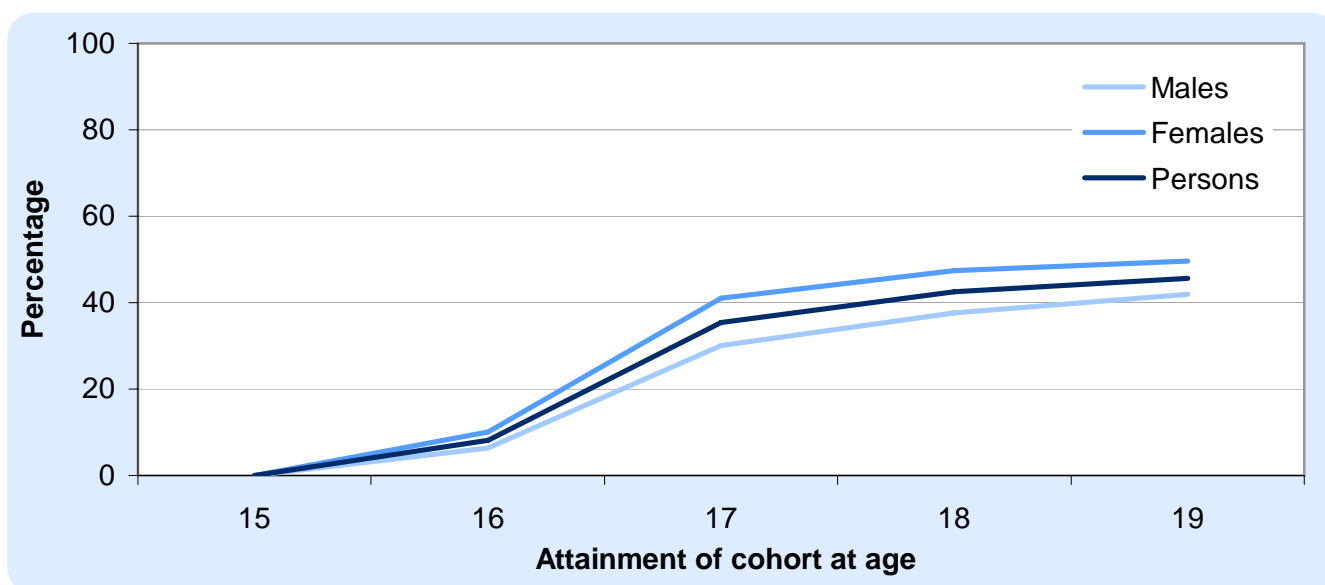
Table 7: Attainment at level 2 by qualification type and age, persons aged 19 in 2006/07

	<i>Per cent</i>		
	Achieved level 2 by age 15 (a)	Achieved level 2 post-16	Achieved level 2 by age 19
5 GCSEs	47.8	0.9	48.7
GNVQs / combination of GCSEs & GNVQs	0.1	7.0	7.1
Foundation Modern Apprenticeship	0.1	4.6	4.7
NVQ Level 2	0.1	4.4	4.5
VRQ Level 2	0.4	1.5	1.9
Level 3 qualifications	0.2	4.0	4.1
Combination of qualifications	0.0	0.3	0.4
Proportion achieving level 2	48.6	22.7	71.4
Number achieving level 2	18,900	8,800	27,700

- 48 per cent of the cohort achieved level 2 through GCSEs only by age 15 and 1 per cent achieved level 2 through GCSEs only post-16.
- Attainment at level 2 through qualifications other than GCSEs only was 1 per cent by age 15, increasing to 22 per cent post-16.

(a) Figures for this cohort exclude a small number of awards attained by 15 year olds at Further Education institutions and there is also an undercount due to an issue with the data quality of schools data. See section 6 of the notes at the end of this release

Chart 4: Attainment at level 3 by gender and age, persons aged 19 in 2006/07



- 41 per cent of 17 year old females achieved level 3 compared with 30 per cent for males (gap of 11 percentage points).
- By age 19, the gap had decreased to 8 percentage points. 50 per cent of females had achieved level 3 compared with 42 per cent of males.

Table 8 shows the type of qualifications achieved to reach level 3 by age 19, by gender.

Table 8: Attainment at level 3 by qualification type and gender, persons aged 19 in 2006/07

	<i>Per cent</i>		
	Males	Females	Persons
AS/A-Levels, AVCEs or Advanced GNVQs (a)	27.6	38.7	33.1
Modern Apprenticeship	4.5	1.6	3.1
NVQ Level 3	2.0	1.9	2.0
VRQ Level 3	7.6	7.2	7.4
International Baccalaureate	0.1	0.1	0.1
Combination of qualifications	0.0	0.1	0.1
Achieved level 3 by age 19	41.9	49.6	45.7
Number achieving level 3 by age 19	8,200	9,500	17,700

(a) AVCE: Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education. GNVQ: General National Vocational Qualification

- Most of the attainment at level 3 by age 19 was through level 3 general qualifications (33 per cent through AS/ A-Levels, AVCEs or Advanced GNVQs) and VRQ Level 3 (7 per cent).
- Attainment at level 3 through level 3 general qualifications was 11 percentage points higher for females than males.
- Attainment at level 3 through Modern Apprenticeships was 3 percentage points higher for males than females.

Notes

1. Background

The Annual Population Survey (APS) is currently used to estimate the highest qualification level of the population in Wales for monitoring of progress towards Assembly targets. However due to problems with small survey samples and mis-reporting of qualifications held it is not appropriate to use these data for individual years of age and statistics for small age bands such as 19-21 can be subject to large margins of error.

This project aims to improve estimates by matching together datasets of school, further education and work-based learning awards to gain a complete picture of attainment. Advantages of this approach include the ability to monitor attainment at a local level and track progress of individuals over time. This method has been used successfully in England for the past five years.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000835/index.shtml>

Uses of these data

Qualification levels of young people from the APS are currently used to monitor progress towards existing Assembly targets, such as those in the Learning Country: Vision into Action, Wales: A Vibrant Economy and Local Authority targets on qualification levels for 19-21 year olds. There are also targets for the proportion of pupils leaving school with no qualifications that are currently measured by other methods. These data can be used instead of, or in conjunction with, APS figures to monitor more effectively those performance indicators and targets.

These data will provide baseline measures for monitoring the impact of the 14-19 Learning Pathways policy, which will see a widening of scope in terms of the qualifications taken and is likely to lead to less traditional routes being followed. It is intended that this will be possible for both national and local practitioners and policy makers.

While these data have been obtained through matching together of pupil-level records, it is only appropriate to use aggregates of these data. It is not appropriate to use the matched data for individual pupils.

2. Definitions

Academic age: Age as at 31st August prior to the start of the academic year. For example, young people aged 19 on 31st August 2006 have academic age 19 in the academic year 2006/07.

Cohort size: This is the size of the cohort at age 14 for schools in Wales, including those living in England and attending a school in Wales. This does not include pupils living in Wales but attending a school in England. For more information on the data source, see section 3 of these notes.

Cohort: Throughout this release, the cohorts of young people are referred to by the academic year in which they are of academic age 19. For example, young people aged 19 in 2006/07 were 19 on 31st August 2006 and were born in the time period 1st September 1986 – 31st August 1987.

Post-16: This is defined as between the ages of 15 and 19 in this release.

Level thresholds: Thresholds represent a volume, or 'size' of qualifications at a specific level on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Three thresholds have been established:

- Level 1 – a volume of qualifications at Level 1 equivalent to the volume of 5 GCSEs at Grade D-G
- Level 2 – a volume of qualifications at Level 2 equivalent to the volume of 5 GCSEs at Grade A*-C
- Level 3 – a volume of qualifications at Level 3 equivalent to the volume of 2 A-Levels

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) assign level 1, 2 and 3 widths to all qualifications. Examples of such widths are shown in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Example QCA widths at levels 1, 2 and 3

Qualification	Level 1 width	Level 2 width	Level 3 width
GSE A-Level (A-E)	80	80	50
GSE AS-Level (A-E)	40	40	25
GCSE (A*-C)	20	20	0

A total width of 100 or more is required to achieve each level. Further explanation of the level thresholds and discounting can be found at

<http://wales.gov.uk/docrepos/40382/40382313/statistics/data-collection/403821101/points-score-e.pdf?lang=en>.

Lists of qualifications approved for use in Wales and the widths at levels 1, 2 and 3 are below:

Age 16-18: <http://wales.gov.uk/statsdocs/schools/datacollection/quals1618.xls>

Pre-16: <http://wales.gov.uk/statsdocs/schools/datacollection/qualspre16.xls>

Level 3 general qualifications: AS/A-Levels, AVCEs (Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education) and Advanced GNVQs (General National Vocational Qualification).

3. Sources of data

Key Stage 4 and post-16 school examination results (KS4/5) – 2002/03 to 2006/07

These data were collected by the Welsh Assembly Government from awarding organisations for the school performance exercises from 2003 to 2007 and have been checked by schools. The figures include any exam re-grades, rescinds and missing qualifications where evidence was provided within the allotted time period.

Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) – 2003/04 to 2006/07

The LLWR was introduced in 2004 as a unified data collection system which would enable further education, work-based learning and community learning to be funded and monitored on a consistent basis. Prior to this, data were collected through separate systems.

Vocational Qualifications – 2003/04 to 2006/07

Information on National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) has been taken from the National Information System for Vocational Qualifications (NISVQ) held by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). The NISVQ collects candidate level information on awards of all types of accredited vocational qualifications from awarding bodies. In recent years, there has been an increase in the coverage of Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) due to an increase in the number of awarding bodies reporting information.

Denominator: Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC & STATS1) – 2001/02 to 2005/06

PLASC is an electronic collection of pupil and school level data provided by all maintained sector primary, secondary, nursery and special schools in January each year. PLASC replaced the STATS1 school level data collected from secondary schools in 2003. The denominator is the size of the cohort aged 14, as measured in PLASC or STATS1. See section 4 of these notes for the reasons why this data source was used for denominators used in percentage calculations.

4. Methodology

The awards datasets were matched together and to the pupil data using statistical fuzzy matching routines. These routines use identifiers such as names, date of birth, home postcode and unique pupil number. Information on the success rates for matching can be found in section 6 of these notes. Indicators were produced to calculate attainment from each dataset and combined to give overall levels.

Discounting of academic qualifications

Academic qualifications have been discounted to ensure that they are not counted twice in the levels of attainment. Discounting was applied by qualification level and subject, within and across academic years. For example, a pupil achieves AS-Level English in 2005/06 (level 3 width 25) then A-Level English in 2006/07 (level 3 width 50). The contribution of these qualifications to level 3 is 25 in 2005/06 and 50 in 2006/07 (not 75).

Academic data from the LLWR

Since the KS4/5 datasets do not contain full coverage of academic attainment at FE colleges, these data were supplemented by academic attainment data from the LLWR. To assign QCA widths to the academic LLWR records some of the grade values needed to be recoded. 69 per cent of these records had their grade recoded, although the majority of academic LLWR records were Key Skills units. Of the records with recoded grades, 97 per cent were simply changed from PASS to P. The other three per cent required various transformations of grades (for example R(B) to B, and * to A*).

Choice of denominator

A review was undertaken in England as to whether the denominator should be the size of the cohort at age 14 in PLASC, or the mid year estimate of population (MYE) at age 14. It was decided that the size of the PLASC cohort at age 14 should be used and the same methodology has been used for Wales in this release. The benefits of this method include that the cohort size is fixed (once known) and is not revised, and these cohort sizes are census counts and not estimates. Further information can be found on p39-43 of report 38 at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/methods_quality/quality_review/education.asp.

Accounting for migration

Attainment levels are subject to under or over-estimation, depending on whether there is net outward or inward migration. It is assumed that learners with level 3 attainment but no prior attainment are migrants into Wales. These learners have been excluded from level 1 and 2 attainment but included in level 3 attainment. They are excluded from level 1 and 2 attainment as it is assumed that they are balanced out by learners who attain level 1 or 2 in Wales but then leave Wales and attain level 3. Further information can be found in section 3 of report 38 (link to website given above).

5. Plans for publication of local authority and DCELLS Area data

Before [StatsWales](#) tables of levels by local authorities and DCELLS Area are published later this year, relevant personnel will be consulted for their views on the data quality, methodology and fitness for purpose of local authority estimates.

6. Key quality information

Our statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.

These statistics are published for the first time and have been classified as experimental statistics. Experimental statistics are new official statistics undergoing evaluation. They are published in order to involve users and stakeholders in their development and as means to build in quality at an early stage. Full explanatory notes on experimental statistics can be found at

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=173>. We welcome comments on this release so please send these to post16ed.stats@wales.gsi.gov.uk or call 029 2082 5378.

Further details of the methodology used and the quality of these statistics will be published in a technical report later in the year.

Issue with data quality in 2002/03

Up to and including 2006/07, school performance information has been published using a set of aggregate school level data and not by using the individual matched pupil data as in this release. While producing this release it has become clear that there are quality issues with the pupil level data for 2002/03 which mean that the published national figures cannot be replicated. Data for later years are of better quality due to the ongoing improvements made to our quality assurance procedures.

From 2008/09 onwards school performance information will only be collected at pupil level and the data will be subjected to the same quality assurance procedures as other pupil level data collections e.g. PLASC, KS1-3 and attendance.

Also for 2002/03, data for further education institutions from the Individualised Student Record (ISR) was not included. This was due to the small number of achievements that would be added to the overall attainment figures at levels 1 and 2. This has led to a small undercount of attainment levels for the cohort of 19 year olds in 2006/07. From 2003/04, this data was obtained from the LLWR.

Success rates for the matching of datasets

Tables 10 and 11 show the success rates for matching each dataset against pupil records, and the percentages of successful matches considered to be strong. Unmatched records are the result of under-matching (due to data quality) and new candidates. Matches not termed strong are not necessarily mismatches. Typically, they do not match on date of birth but on other fields instead.

Table 10: Percentage matched to pupil records, by dataset and year

Academic year	KS4/5	NISVQ	LLWR
2002/03	99.9	N/A	N/A
2003/04	98.4	99.8	99.6
2004/05	99.9	99.3	99.7
2005/06	99.8	98.8	99.4
2006/07	99.9	98.8	99.3
All years	99.6	99.0	99.4

Table 11: Percentage of matches considered to be strong, by dataset and year

Academic year	KS4/5	NISVQ	LLWR
2002/03	94.9	N/A	N/A
2003/04	98.7	94.7	96.5
2004/05	98.1	95.7	96.8
2005/06	98.4	95.9	97.0
2006/07	98.6	95.2	97.1
All years	98.0	95.5	97.0

Qualifications excluded from level thresholds – 2006/07 data only

In 2006/07, wider level thresholds were introduced (see the Key Quality section of this release <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/schools2008/hdw20080107/?lang=en>). These wider thresholds include more vocational qualifications, such as BTECs, ASDANs and Key Skills. These

additional vocational qualifications have not been included for this release but they will be included in future editions. Data for 2006/07 will also be revised for the next edition of this release.

Qualifications excluded from level thresholds – all years

A small number of qualifications were excluded from the academic indicators but will be included in future editions. Estimates show that this has led to very small under-estimates of attainment at levels 1 and 2. Other reasons for under and over-estimates of attainment at levels 1-3 are given below.

Sources for under-estimates of attainment levels

- Mis-matches (records matched when they should not have been)
- Net inward migrants with prior attainment that is not counted
- Death of young people who may have gone on to achieve levels 1-3
- Attainment in England not included for those studying at both Welsh and English institutions.

Sources for over-estimates of attainment levels

- Under-matching (records not matched when they should have been)
- Net outward migration or death of young people who have already achieved levels 1-3

Quality assurance of the results

Table 12 shows comparisons of matched academic data against pupil exam results (the latest of these releases is at <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/schools2008/hdw200811261/?lang=en>).

Table 12: Comparison of matched academic data against published KS4 results for 15 year olds

Level 1

Academic year	Matched data (a)	Published Key Stage 4 results	Actual difference	Percentage difference
2002/03	32,095	32,321	-226	-0.7
2003/04	33,407	33,448	-41	-0.1
2004/05	32,787	32,803	-16	-0.0
2005/06	33,409	33,424	-15	-0.0
2006/07 (b)	33,893	33,904	-11	-0.0
All years	165,591	165,900	-309	-0.2

Level 2

Academic year	Matched data (a)	Published Key Stage 4 results	Actual difference	Percentage difference
2002/03	18,859	19,412	-553	-2.8
2003/04	20,175	20,172	3	0.0
2004/05	20,108	20,092	16	0.1
2005/06	20,866	20,902	-36	-0.2
2006/07 (b)	21,423	21,433	-10	-0.0
All years	101,431	102,011	-580	-0.6

(a) Includes matched KS4 data only. Does not include data from LLWR or NISVQ

(b) Comparisons for 2006/07 use the older definition of level thresholds (used pre-2006/07) and not the wider definition of level thresholds

Comparisons with other data sources

Comparisons with similar data in England should be made with caution due to slight differences in methodology.

- As explained in this section of the release, some qualifications have been excluded for this release. However, these qualifications are included in England.
- Data for Wales use standard QCA widths for all qualifications, as explained in section 2 of these notes. However, data for England use different widths for some qualifications.
- Attainment levels for Wales use age at the start of the academic year while levels for England use age at the **end** of the academic year. For example, attainment at age 19 in Wales is equivalent to attainment at age 20 in England.

Comparisons have been made at levels 2 and 3 (data for level 1 not published in England) using the following data:

- Wales: At age 19 for the cohort aged 19 in 2006/07
- England: At age 20 for the cohort aged 19 in 2006

These comparisons show that level 2 and 3 attainment in Wales is around 3 and 4 percentage points lower than in England, respectively. Due to the qualifications excluded for this data in Wales, it is likely that the differences in attainment between Wales and England are smaller than this.

Table 13 shows comparisons of attainment for 19 year olds in Wales against qualification levels from the Annual Population Survey.

Table 13: Comparison of matched data against the Annual Population Survey for 19 year olds

	<i>Per cent</i>		
	Matched data: 19 in 2006/07	19 year olds from the APS (2005-7 average)	Difference
Level 1	95.6	91.0	4.6
Level 2	71.4	72.6	-1.3
Level 3	45.7	47.3	-1.6

Further information

StatsWales contains further data for the 5 cohorts in this release, including by qualification type.

<http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/>

The latest release of English data from the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000835/index.shtml>

National Statistics Quality Review (report 38) into similar methodology used in England

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/methods_quality/quality_review/education.asp.