

# EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 25 APRIL 2016

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AT KEY STAGE 5

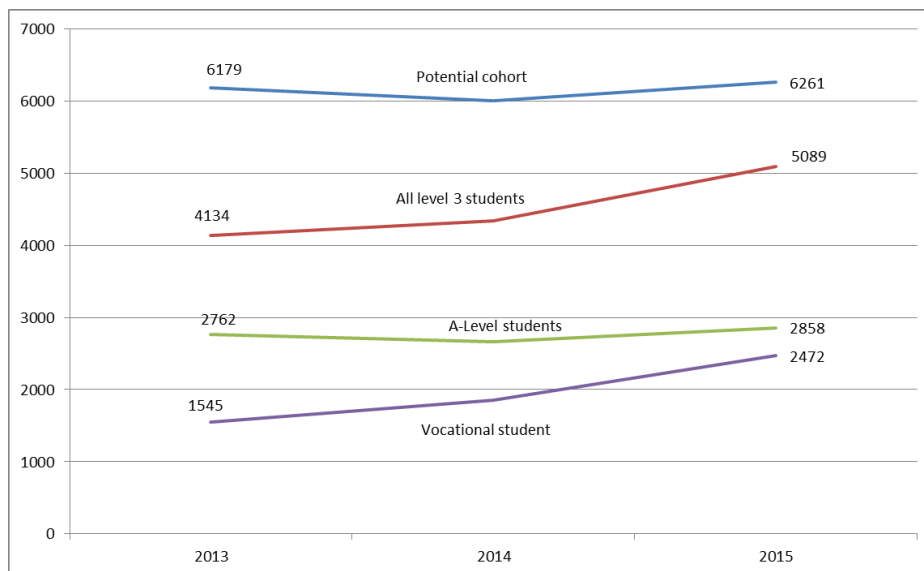
### Report by the Director for Children, Education and Families

#### Introduction

This report provides trends in Key Stage 5 attainment in Oxfordshire. This includes trends in the number of young people taking level 3 qualifications; A level subject comparisons as well as A level and vocational trends in Oxfordshire's maintained schools and colleges.

#### 1. All level 3 qualifications

Chart 1: Number of Level 3 students by cohort – Oxfordshire 2013-2015



Potential cohort covers the number of students who completed Key Stage 4 two years previously.

All level 3 students cover those students who have been entered for at least 1 substantial qualification (i.e. A level and vocational qualifications).

Vocational measures report achievements in all substantial advanced level vocational qualifications which generally focus on developing knowledge and skills in a work related context. A 'substantial' advanced level qualification is at least the size of an A level (180 guided learning hours per year), for example a BTEC Subsidiary Diploma (Level 3).

A student can be counted in both the A level and vocational cohorts and hence the total of these cohorts will slightly exceed the level 3 total.

- 1.1 The proportion of young people entering at least one substantial level 3 qualification (academic or vocational) and completing their studies has risen from 67% in 2013 to 81% in 2015.

1.2 The number entering at least one A-level has remained relatively steady but there has been a corresponding increase in the number (and proportion) of young people entered for at least one vocational qualification.

1.3 This is primarily due to the impact of the Raising the Age of Participation Legislation which was introduced in 2013. Students who left year 11 in summer 2013 had to continue in education or training for at least another year until June 2014. This is the cohort of students covered in this report. Students who left year 11 in summer 2014 or later will have to continue until at least their 18th birthday.

1.4 19% of the potential 2015 cohort did not take a level 3 qualification.

Of these:

- 7% were in apprenticeships,
- 7% were in employment without accredited training,
- 2% were in employment with accredited training
- 3% were not in education, employment or training (NEET)

## 2. A level attainment in Oxfordshire

		% of A level entries				
		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number students entered for 1+ A-Level		2901	2799	2762	2666	2858
Number of A-Level entries		8757	8473	8300	7787	8255
A*-E	Oxfordshire	98.4	98.5	98.6	98.5	98.7
	England	98.3	98.4	98.6	98.4	98.7
A*-A	Oxfordshire	23.6	23.2	23.0	23.3	23.5
	England	23.1	22.8	22.8	22.8	22.9

2.1 The number of students entered for at least one A-Level in Oxfordshire rose slightly in 2015 after slight decreases in previous years.

2.2 The average number of A-level entries per student though has decreased from 3.1 in 2012 to 2.9 in 2015. This indicates that although more young people being entered for A levels, they are taking a smaller number. This may be as a result of young people being entered for a combination of A levels and Vocational qualifications.

2.3 The proportion of entries achieving grades A\*- E (98.7%) has remained broadly constant over the last five years and is identical to the national figure. This means that out of 8255 A level entries in Oxfordshire last year, only 107 did not receive a grade.

2.4 Oxfordshire continually performs well with high attaining students at A level, with the proportion of A\*-A grades consistently above that nationally. In 2015 23.5% of Oxfordshire entries were at A\*-A grades compared with 22.9% nationally.

### 3. Subject level information

A full breakdown of A-levels by subject is provided in Annex 1 below.

3.1 The most popular subjects in Oxfordshire are mathematics (949 entries), English (928 entries), Psychology (653 entries) and Biological Sciences (613 entries).

3.2 The proportion of entries for subjects and grades in Oxfordshire follows a broadly similar pattern to that nationally, however:

- Oxfordshire has higher proportions of entries (compared to national) in the following subjects
  - Mathematics (11.5% of total entries compared with 10.2% nationally)
  - Physics (5.1% of total entries compared with 3.9% nationally)
  - Geography (5.3% of total entries compared with 4.3% nationally)
- Although this indicates a high interest in Science subjects in Oxfordshire, the proportion selecting to study Chemistry (5.5%) is lower than that nationally (5.9%).

3.3 All candidates achieved at least an E grade in French, German, Other Modern Languages, Computing and General Studies.

3.4 In Oxfordshire the subjects with the lowest pass rates were Psychology (96.8%) and Physics (96.9%). However these are popular subjects and hence are likely to have a wide spread of abilities taking them.

3.5 In Oxfordshire 59.1% of further maths grades were are A\*-A compared to 53.6% nationally.

3.6 Oxfordshire also has a noticeably higher proportion of A\*-A grades in History (27.4%) compared national figures (20.7%).

3.7 Oxfordshire has lower proportions of A\*-A grades than national in the following subject areas:

- French (27.9% compared with 33.1% nationally)
- Geography (20.5% compared with 25.0% nationally)
- Economics (19.5% compared with 26.0% nationally)
- Government/ Politics (18.4% compared with 24.0% nationally)
- Music (7.0% compared with 14.2% nationally)

### 4. School level information

Three year trends in school and college performance can be found in Annex 2.

4.1 The majority of schools offer both A level and vocational level 3 qualifications.

- 4.2 The entry requirement for sixth form study differs between schools and hence there will be a degree of variation in the prior attainment of young people at different establishments.
- 4.3 The Cherwell School, Matthew Arnold and Wood Green School consistently have over 90% of students achieving at least 3 A level passes.
- 4.4 The Oxford Academy predominantly offers vocational qualifications, with the proportion of young people achieving 3 level 3 vocational qualifications increasing to 90% in 2015. This is noticeably higher than elsewhere in the county.
- 4.5 The City of Oxford College and The Henley College also offer a high proportion of vocational qualifications. The proportion of students achieving 3 vocational qualifications at The Henley College has fallen to 71% over the last 3 years and has fluctuated at The City of Oxford College.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Education Scrutiny Committee is RECOMMENDED to note the trends in Key Stage 5 attainment in Oxfordshire.

**Report by: Jim Leivers, Director for Children, Education and Families**

**Contact officer:**

**Sarah Varnom, Strategic Lead for Education Quality**  
**[Sarah.Varnom@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.Varnom@oxfordshire.gov.uk) 01865 897795**

**Christine Malone, Strategic Lead for Education Quality**  
**[Christine.Malone@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Christine.Malone@oxfordshire.gov.uk), 07554 437500**

Subject level information (2015)

ANNEX 1

	Entries			A*-A grades			A*-E grades		
	Oxon	% of total entries		Number	% of entries		Number	% of entries	
		Oxon	England		Oxon	England		Oxon	England
All subjects	8,255	100	100	1,938	23.5	22.9	8,145	98.7	98.7
Mathematics	949	11.5	10.2	368	38.8	38.2	940	99.1	98.6
English	928	11.2	11.5	173	18.6	17.4	926	99.8	99.6
Psychology	653	7.9	7.7	109	16.7	17.0	632	96.8	98
Biological Sciences	613	7.4	7.2	157	25.6	24.9	600	97.9	98.5
History	486	5.9	6.6	133	27.4	20.7	485	99.8	99.5
Chemistry	458	5.5	5.9	133	29.0	28.8	451	98.5	98.7
Geography	434	5.3	4.3	89	20.5	25.0	430	99.1	99.4
Physics	424	5.1	3.9	115	27.1	27.3	411	96.9	97.6
Sociology	388	4.7	4.5	64	16.5	18.1	383	98.7	98.6
Art and Design	374	4.5	5.4	107	28.6	25.1	370	98.9	99.3
Business Studies	312	3.8	3.2	43	13.8	13.9	309	99	98.7
Economics	261	3.2	2.9	51	19.5	26.0	257	98.5	98.8
Religious Studies	254	3.1	2.7	44	17.3	20.3	252	99.2	98.8
Media/ Film/ Theatre Studies	196	2.4	2.9	13	6.6	10.0	194	99	99.5
Further Mathematics	176	2.1	1.5	104	59.1	53.6	172	97.7	99.1
Physical Education	158	1.9	1.7	21	13.3	15.2	156	98.7	98.4
Drama	150	1.8	1.6	13	8.7	12.2	149	99.3	99.3
Government and Politics	147	1.8	1.6	27	18.4	24.0	145	98.6	98.8
Design and Technology	126	1.5	1.5	13	10.3	13.8	124	98.4	98.4
French	111	1.3	1	31	27.9	33.1	111	100	99.5
Music	86	1.0	0.8	6	7.0	14.2	84	97.7	98.7
Spanish	76	0.9	0.8	22	28.9	30.1	75	98.7	99.5
Law	68	0.8	1.5	10	14.7	18.5	68	100	97.2
Other Comm Studies	65	0.8	1.5	14	21.5	12.7	64	98.5	99.6
German	55	0.7	0.4	24	43.6	33.0	55	100	99.5
Computing	54	0.7	0.7	10	18.5	15.3	54	100	96.6
Other modern languages	49	0.6	0.6	27	55.1	44.6	49	100	98.3
General Studies	20	0.2	2.6	0	0.0	13.8	20	100	94.4

Ordered by number of entries (most popular subject first).