

Revised entry qualification benchmarking groups for use with Table E1

UKPITG 14/04

Issue

1. It was agreed at the UK Performance Indicators Technical Group (UKPITG) meeting on 28 February 2013 that from the 2014 publication of the UK Performance Indicators (UKPIs), new entry qualification groups would be used in the benchmarks for table E1 (considering leavers from higher education in 2012/13), bringing them in line with those used to produce the other tables.
2. Since this recommendation, further analysis has been carried out using the most up to date 2012/13 DLHE data. This analysis suggests an alternative grouping of these entry qualifications would be more appropriate for table E1.

Recommendations

3. UKPITG to approve the use of revised grouping of entry qualification (see below for details) in the benchmarks for the 2014 publication of table E1.

Discussion

4. Further analysis of the entry qualification groups, previously approved by members of UKPITG, has highlighted inconsistencies within the content of the proposed new groups.
5. Since table E1 uses additional benchmark factors (ethnicity and gender) compared with other tables with the UKPIs, fewer entry qualification categories are used in order not to significantly increase the total number of categories. For this reason, a grouped up version of the categories used to produce the benchmarks for table T1 were proposed.
6. There is a large overlap between students holding A levels / Highers with grade combinations lower than CCC / CCCCC who have a total tariff score (based on all tariff bearing qualifications) over 200 points. In tables T1, these students would fall into distinct benchmark groups. The entry qualification groups for T1 were chosen with specific intention to make the most appropriate distinctions between students with high A level or Scottish Higher achievement and other students who have a similar tariff score but from achievement in a wider range of grades or qualifications, and to ensure that benchmarks provide truly meaningful information for institutions and other users. If these categories are combined for table E1, the top entry qualification groups would be inflated and include a very broad range of students.
7. This method would therefore cause inconsistencies since, for example, a student holding A levels with grades BCD and a tariff score of over 320 points (achieved from a wider set of qualifications) would fall in the top entry qualification group, yet a student holding identical qualifications but with grades BCC would fall into a lower group. If all students with over 320 points were to be included in the top group, regardless of their grades, an additional 12% would go into this pot.

8. Under the original proposal, if students are only included in the top group if they don't hold any of the other listed grade combinations, the top group would increase by 2% and the next two groups by around 5% each. In most cases, the bottom three tariff groups would decrease by around 3 to 4%.
9. Following this analysis, it is proposed that it is not appropriate to group students holding specific combinations of grades of A levels and Highers with students holding the equivalent number of tariff points based on all of their qualifications held. Grouping up the grade and tariff categories independently could still retain the same number of distinct categories and also even up the group sizes.
10. New proposal for entry qualification groups for use with table E1 which retains the same number of groups:

Description	Proposed groupings for table E1	Group sizes based on 2011/12 data for the population of E1a	Revised proposal for use with table E1	Group sizes based on 2011/12 data for the population of E1a*
A levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers with tariff points over 320 and grades ABB and above & International Baccalaureate	ABB (320pts), AAC (320pts), AAB (340pts), AAA (360pts), AAAA (480pts), BACC (Diploma only), >320	64600 (27.8%)	ABB (320pts), AAC (320pts), AAB (340pts), AAA (360pts), AAAA (480pts), BACC (Diploma only),	60595 (26.1%)
			>320, >290, >260	
A levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers and IB certificate with tariff points up to 320 and grades BBB and above	>290, >260, ABC/BBB (300pts), ACC/BBC (280pts)	40665 (17.5%)	ABC/BBB (300pts), ACC/BBC (280pts)	28905 (12.5%)
A levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers and IB certificate with tariff points up to 260 and grades CCC and above	>230, BCC/CCC (240pts)	24340 (10.5%)	BCC/CCC (240pts)	13240 (5.7%)
			>230, >200	19010 (8.2%)
A levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers and IB certificate with tariff points up to 230	>200	7910 (3.4%)		
A levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers and IB certificate with tariff points up to 200	>160	9095 (3.9%)	>160, >100, >0	19390 (8.4%)
A levels / AS levels / Scottish Highers and IB certificate with tariff points up to 160	>100, >0	10295 (4.4%)		
A levels and equivalents with unknown / not applicable tariff points	EQUIV3	21760 (9.4%)	EQUIV3	21760 (9.4%)
Access	ACCESS,	9140	ACCESS,	9140

	FOUND (FE level)	(3.9%)	FOUND (FE level)	(3.9%)
Vocational or BTEC	GNVQ/NVQ, BTEC	12585 (5.4%)	GNVQ/NVQ, BTEC	12585 (5.4%)
Higher education qualification	HEPG, HEFD, HEOUG, FOUND (HE level)	23570 (10.2%)	HEPG, HEFD, HEOUG, FOUND (HE level)	23570 (10.2%)
Other, including none and unknown	NONE, OTHERS, UNKNOWN	8180 (3.5%)	NONE, OTHERS, UNKNOWN	8180 (3.5%)

*Similar figures apply for 2012/13, but may not be included in this paper prior to the DLHE statistical first release on 26 June 2014.

Further information

13. For further information contact Suzie Dent (Phone: 01242 211109; e-mail: suzie.dent@hesa.ac.uk).