

Variability in A level Results for Individual Schools/Colleges 2012-2014



A level results for England, Wales and Northern Ireland have been relatively stable in recent years, with only very small changes in the overall percentages of students achieving A*-A grades. But we know that individual schools and colleges may see variation in the proportion of students achieving particular grades from one year to the next. This can be due to many different factors, including differences in the ability mix of the students, different teaching approaches, changes in teaching staff or teaching time, and changes to qualifications.

We have looked at the year on year variation in the proportion of students achieving A*-A in five large-entry A levels in the summer results published by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). We have looked only at schools and colleges with 20 or more students in both years: smaller cohorts are likely to be less stable and to show more variation.

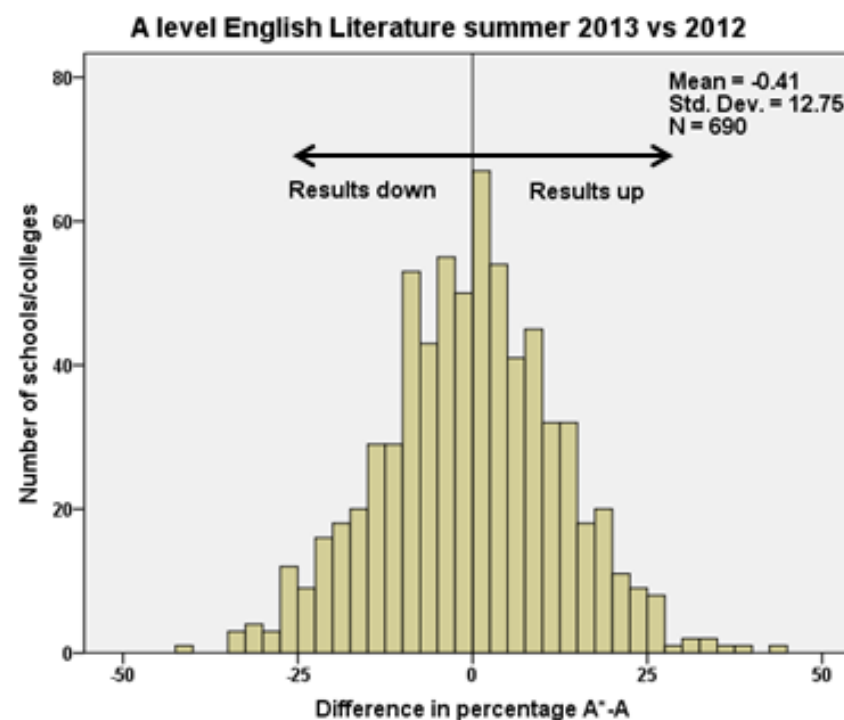
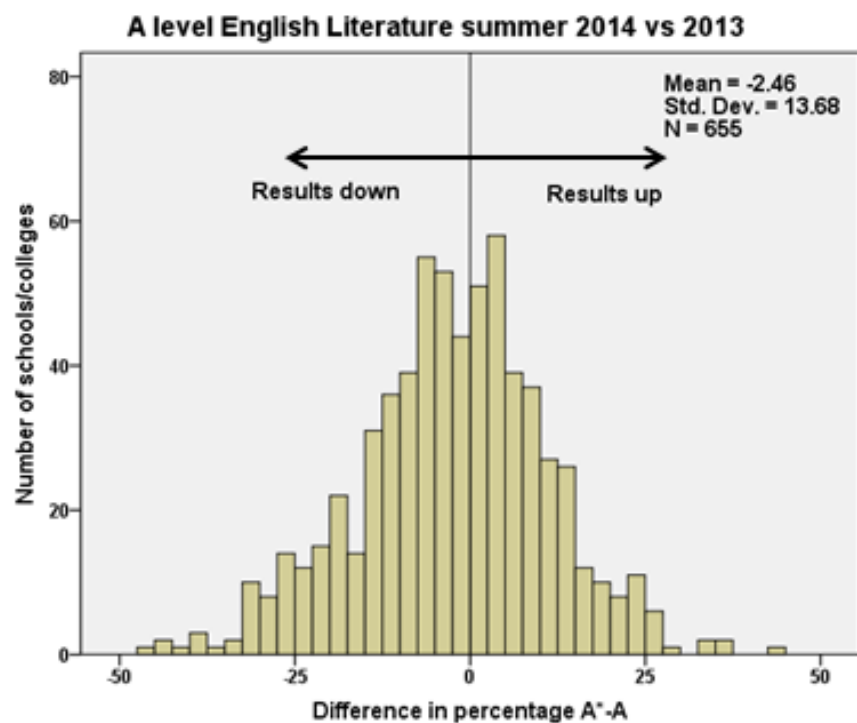
We have plotted the variation seen in each of several hundred schools. Each bar represents the number of schools with a particular level of variation, measured in intervals of five percentage points. For example, the two bars either side of zero represent schools that had either a drop of up to 5 percentage points or an increase of up to 5 percentage points. The higher the peaks in the middle, the greater the stability from one year to the next.

We wrote to all schools and colleges in June 2014¹ to say that we expected individual school/college results this summer to be more variable because the changes to A levels (and to GCSEs) would have different impacts in different schools and in different subjects.

¹ See open letter to schools and colleges at <http://ofqual.gov.uk/news/summer-2014-open-letter-schools-colleges/>

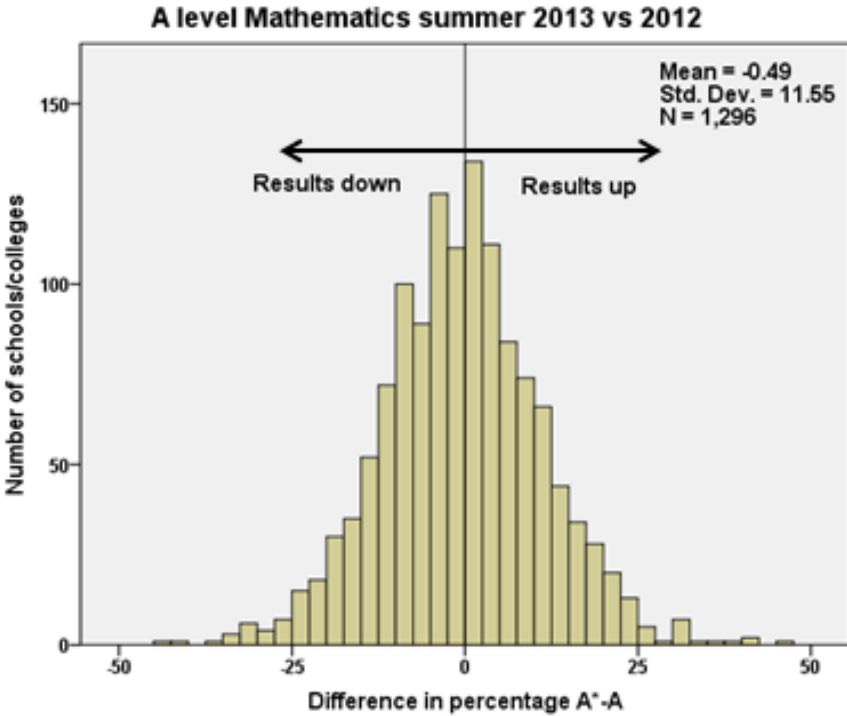
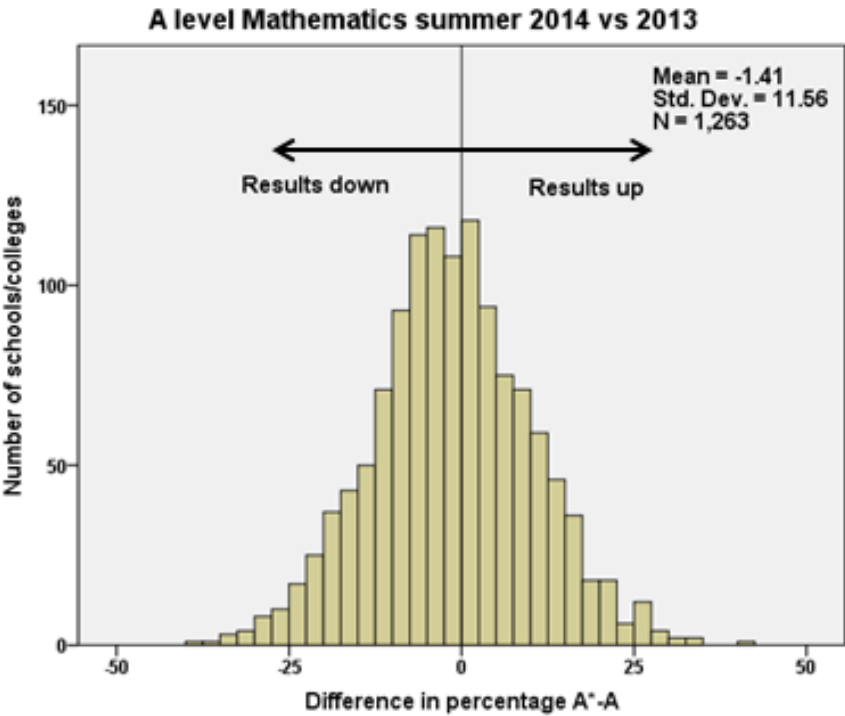
Now that JCQ have published the A level results for 2014² we have been able to look at the variation, school by school, and compare it with the variation seen last summer. The evidence suggests that the variation at school level has been very similar to that seen in previous years.

A level English Literature

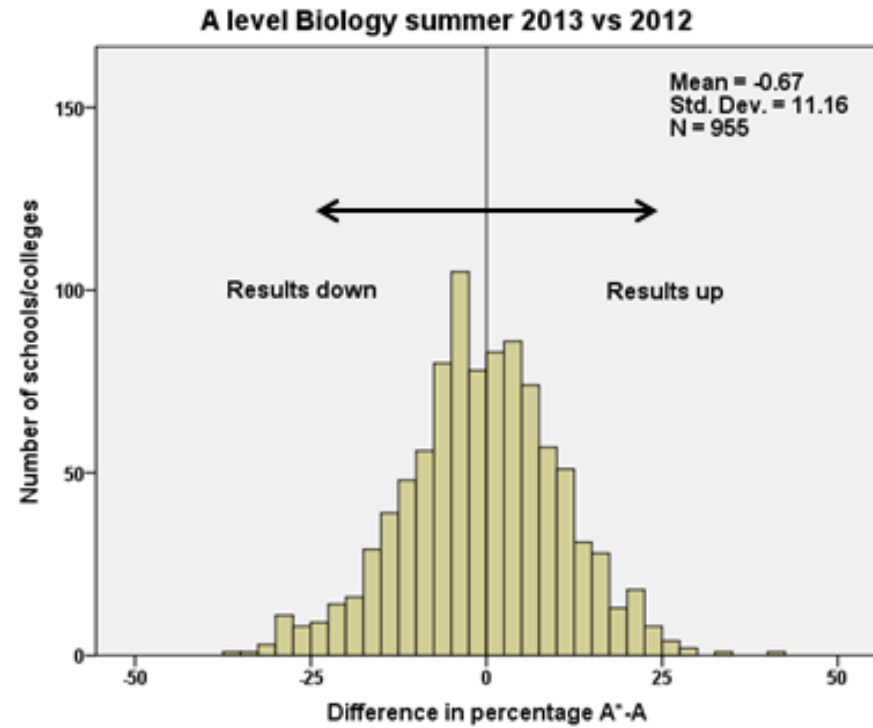
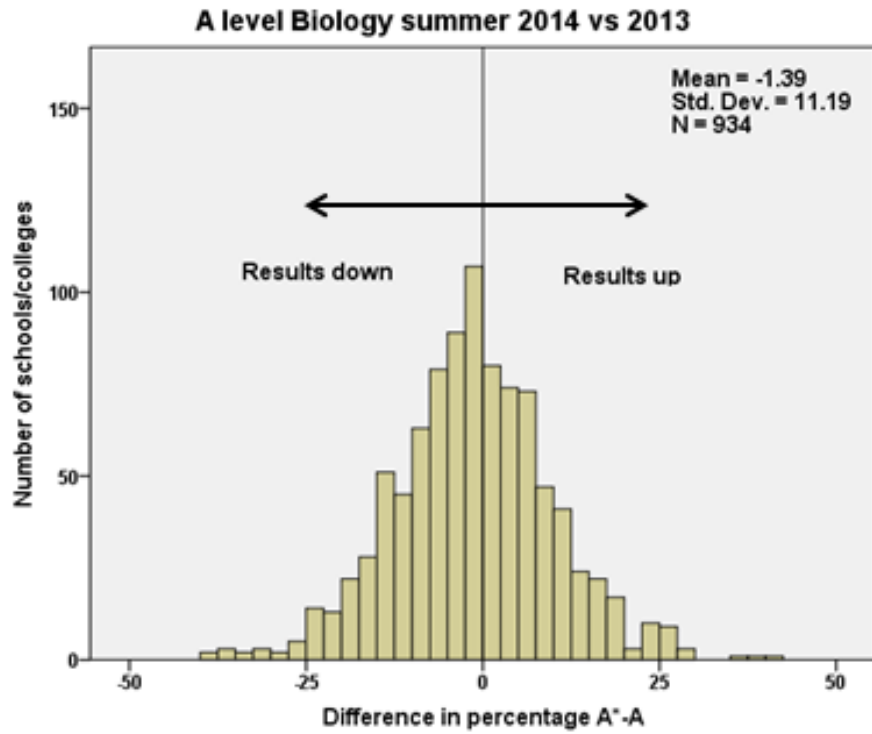


² See <http://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results/a-levels>

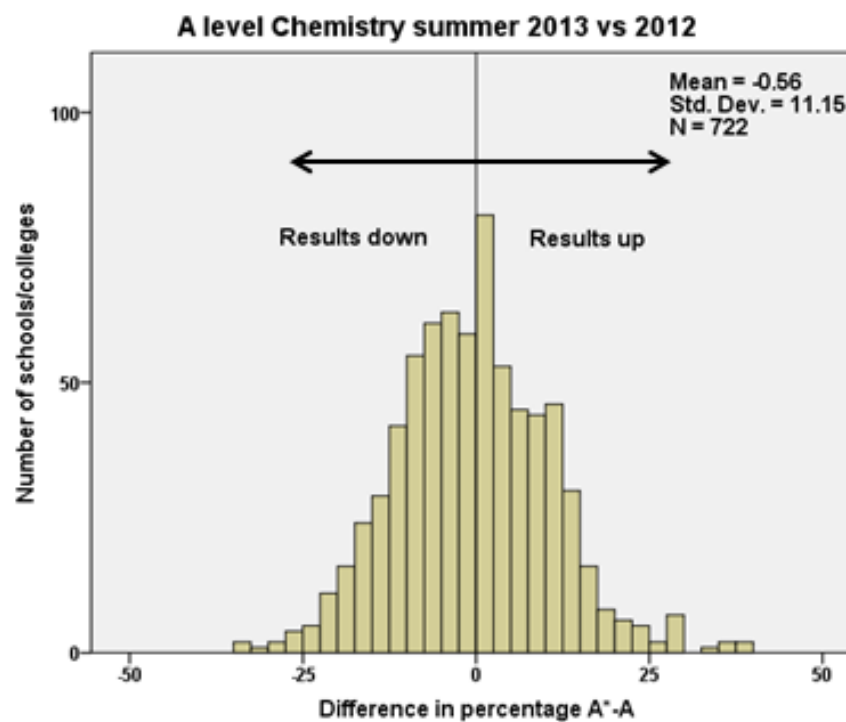
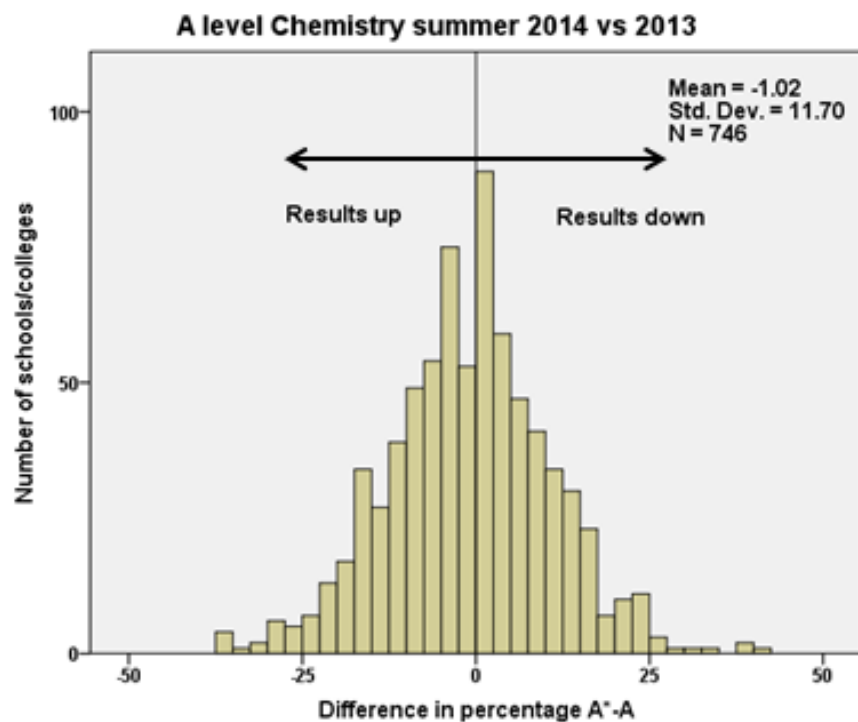
A level Mathematics



A level Biology

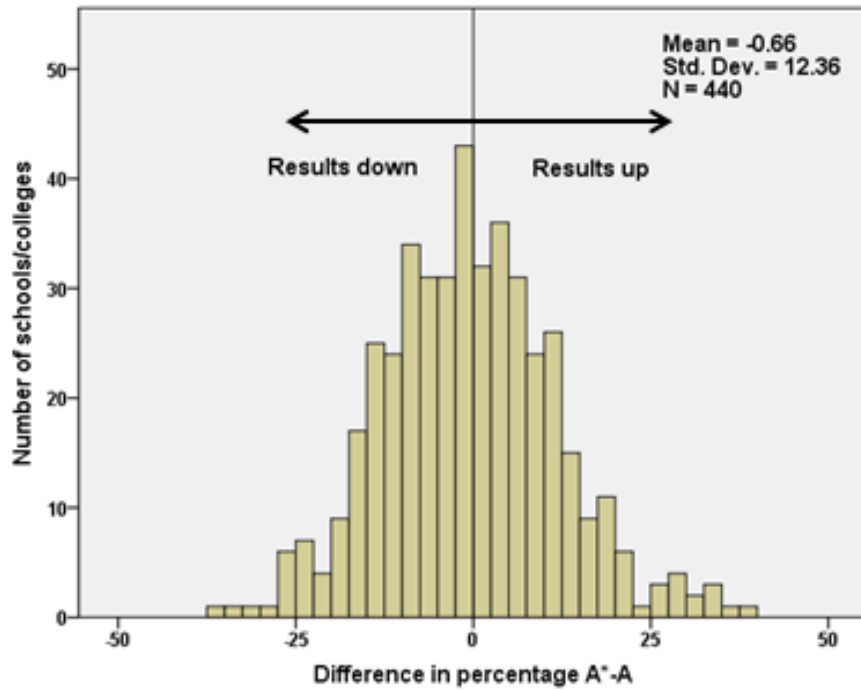


A level Chemistry

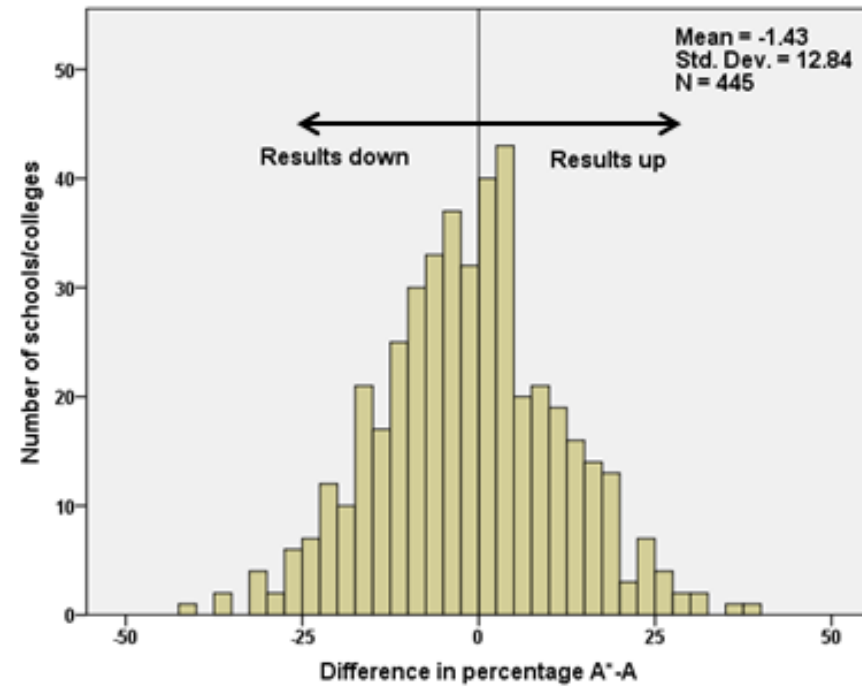


A level Physics

A level Physics summer 2014 vs 2013



A level Physics summer 2013 vs 2012



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