



Department  
for Education

# **The European Baccalaureate**

**Information for admissions officers of  
universities and other higher education  
providers**

**August 2020**

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## Summary

The aim of this document is to summarise the key elements of the European Baccalaureate (EB) to assist admissions officers at universities and other institutions of higher education in the United Kingdom.

The report firstly offers a general overview of the EB programme in the [Introduction](#) section. It then looks to compare the EB and UK A level, both in terms of the overall qualification and in the key subject areas of English and mathematics. Findings include broad comparability guidance, relevant contextual information to inform admissions decisions, as well as grade comparison recommendations.

## Who is this publication for?

This guidance is for:-

- Admissions officers at universities and other providers of higher education in the United Kingdom
- Parents of students taking the EB
- Potential graduate employers.

## Introduction

The European Baccalaureate is the school-leaving examination for pupils who attend one of the European Schools located across the European Union (EU). There are currently around 27,000 pupils in the system as a whole and approximately 2,000 take the final examination each year, of which a significant amount apply to UK universities. The European Schools were established to educate the children of parents working in EU institutions but also educate other children.

A broad curriculum is followed throughout the secondary phase. Pupils take subjects such as history and geography in their second language from Year 3 (Year 9 in the English system). Although the schools are open to the whole ability range, children must pass each year and meet clear academic criteria. If not, they must repeat the year and ultimately leave the school if they fail the same year twice.

## The Schools

The European Schools were established in 1957 to educate the children of employees of EU institutions such as the European Commission, such as the European Patent Office and European Central Bank. Children of these employees are entitled to a place in a European School. In addition, a number of organisations have contracts with the European Schools which guarantee entry. The children of European School teachers are also entitled to a place. Children outside the above categories may also be admitted (as fee-paying pupils) where schools have capacity.

There are currently 13 European Schools, in six EU countries, which are administered by the European Schools Board of Governors. In addition, a growing number of Accredited European Schools have been or are in the process of being established, the first of which are now taking the European Baccalaureate. They are administered and financed by the national education systems of the individual EU Member States and fully accredited by the European Schools Board of Governors.

All European Schools follow the same structure and are subject to pedagogical inspections and audits by inspectors mandated by the Office of the Secretary-General of the European Schools every two years. Programmes and evaluation processes are identical, including the final European Baccalaureate examinations.

See **Appendix 1** for a full list of all European Schools.

## The Pupils

Pupils are educated from age 4-19 in the European Schools at Nursery (age 4 - 5), Primary (aged 5-11) and Secondary level (aged 11-18). Each school has a number of language

sections. All pupils are enrolled in a language section which is usually that of their mother tongue or of their first foreign language (L2) if they have a mother tongue for which there is no language section in the particular school.

They start lessons in a second language from Primary 1 (age 6) and must continue with their second language until they complete the European Baccalaureate. In years 3 to 7 (age 13 to 17) of the Secondary cycle, pupils must also study history and geography in their second language. Pupils start their third language from Secondary 1 (age 11).

## **The Curriculum**

In the secondary school, pupils are taught in 45 minute periods with a minimum of 31 and usually a maximum of 35 periods per school week.

The secondary school curriculum is divided into three stages.

### **Year 1 to 3**

Pupils follow a broad academic curriculum including languages 1, 2 and 3, mathematics, integrated science, religion/ethics and sport. History and geography are taught in language 1 in years 1 and 2 and in language 2 from year 3 onwards.

### **Year 4 and 5**

Pupils continue to follow a broad curriculum during these two years which includes a large number of compulsory subjects.

They must take mathematics for 4 or 6 periods per week and languages 1, 2 and 3 (all taught in the language concerned). Biology, chemistry and physics are studied for 2 periods per week each. History and geography are studied for 2 periods each in the pupil's second language. At least two option subjects must be chosen from, for example, language 4, economics, Latin, Greek, art, music and IT.

At the end of year 5 pupils are awarded an overall year grade in each subject based on coursework assessment and two sets of examinations, the second of which is harmonised across language sections.

If a pupil leaves a European School at the end of year 5, equivalent to year 11 in English schools, they will receive an S5 certificate, commonly known as a 'leaving certificate'. This is not considered equivalent to a GCSE because the certificate is not subject to external assessment and moderation.

## Year 6 and 7

These two years lead to the European Baccalaureate. Pupils study 10 or more subjects and are examined by means of written and oral examinations and by continuous assessment, which includes internal exams.

There is a core of compulsory subjects which include language 1 (mother tongue), language 2 (first foreign language), mathematics, history, geography, philosophy, religion/ethics and sport. In addition, if no science subject is taken as an option subject, pupils must also take a course of two lessons per week in biology.

Pupils must take a minimum of two option subjects of four lessons per week and may take as many as four. These subjects may include each of the separate sciences, social sciences, Latin, art, music, philosophy and languages 3 and 4. Mathematics can be taken as a three-lesson or five-lesson per week course. Additional advanced courses of three lessons per week may be taken in mathematics, language 1 and language 2.

Pupils may also choose **complementary courses** of two lessons per week such as practical science, introductory economics, art, music and theatre.



# The European Baccalaureate

## Qualification at a glance

**Table 1: European Baccalaureate at a glance**

<i>Awarding body</i>	European Schools ( <i>Schola Europaea</i> )
<i>Duration</i>	Two years of upper secondary study
<i>Streams / subject levels</i>	Advanced-level language and mathematics courses are available
<i>Subjects</i>	Pupils typically study at least 11 subjects
<i>Compulsory examinations</i>	Five written examinations, including two languages and mathematics; and three oral examinations, comprising two languages or one language in addition to a subject taught in a different language
<i>Assessment</i>	Internal and external assessment
<i>Access to higher education</i>	Widely accepted for access to undergraduate study
<i>Grading scale</i>	Overall grade: 0-100 (high), pass mark of 60 Individual subjects: 0-10 (high), pass mark of 6  Overall grade from 2021: 0-100 (high), pass mark of 50 Individual subjects from 2021: 0-10 (high), pass mark of 5
<i>Notable features of certificate / transcript</i>	Language 1 (L1) typically denotes the mother tongue; language 2 (L2), language 3 (L3), and language 4 (L4) typically denote the first, second and third foreign language, respectively

## Aims and learning outcomes

The objectives of the European Schools are twofold: to impart relevant knowledge and skills in the context of formal education, and to foster pupils' personal development. The syllabus is designed to offer a multicultural and multilingual learning experience, which promotes the richness of European culture. Against this background, the European Baccalaureate programme provides a broad upper secondary curriculum that encompasses the study of language, humanities and sciences alike. Students are expected to develop competence in multiple languages; as such, subjects are taught both in the mother tongue and foreign language. Award holders are prepared for higher education study.

## Entry and duration

The EB is a two-year programme, which encompasses the last two years of secondary education, referred to as 's6' and 's7'. This upper secondary or 'orientation' cycle follows on from a 'pre-orientation' cycle in secondary years 4 and 5.

## Structure and content

The EB programme offers a broad, multilingual curriculum, delivered over 31-35 weekly periods. Pupils study a core compulsory curriculum, supplemented by a minimum of two four-period optional subjects. Further complementary subjects are also available. Language 1 (mother tongue), language 2 (first foreign language) and mathematics may be studied at an advanced level.

The table below outlines the curriculum structure and the subject choices available in the EB programme:

**Table 2: European Baccalaureate curriculum, including number of weekly periods (p) allocated to each subject**

Compulsory subjects	Optional subjects	Complementary subjects <sup>1*</sup>
Language 1 (L1) - 4p	Ancient Greek - 4p	Biology Lab - 2p
Language 2 (L2) - 3p	Latin - 4p	Chemistry Lab - 2p
Mathematics 3 or Mathematics 5 - 3p or 5p	Biology - 4p	Physics Lab - 2p
Religion or ethics - 1p	Chemistry - 4p	ICT - 2p
Physical education - 2p	Physics - 4p	Sociology - 2p
Biology <sup>2*</sup> - 2p	Geography - 4p	Intro. Economics - 2p
Geography - 2p	History - 4p	Art - 2p
History - 2p	Economics - 4p	Music - 2p
Philosophy - 2p	Philosophy - 4p	Language 5 (L5) - 2p
	Other national language (ONL) - 4p	
	Language 3 (L3) - 4p	
	Language 4 (L4) - 4p	
	Art - 4p	
	Music - 4p	
	Advanced L1 - 3p	

<sup>1</sup> \*Precise offering varies depending on the school.

<sup>2</sup> Biology is compulsory unless a science is studied as an optional subject.

The table above illustrates the broad nature of the EB programme, which requires pupils to study a wide variety of subjects throughout the upper secondary cycle. By contrast, the A level is a more specialised qualification, for which pupils typically study any combination of three or four subjects.

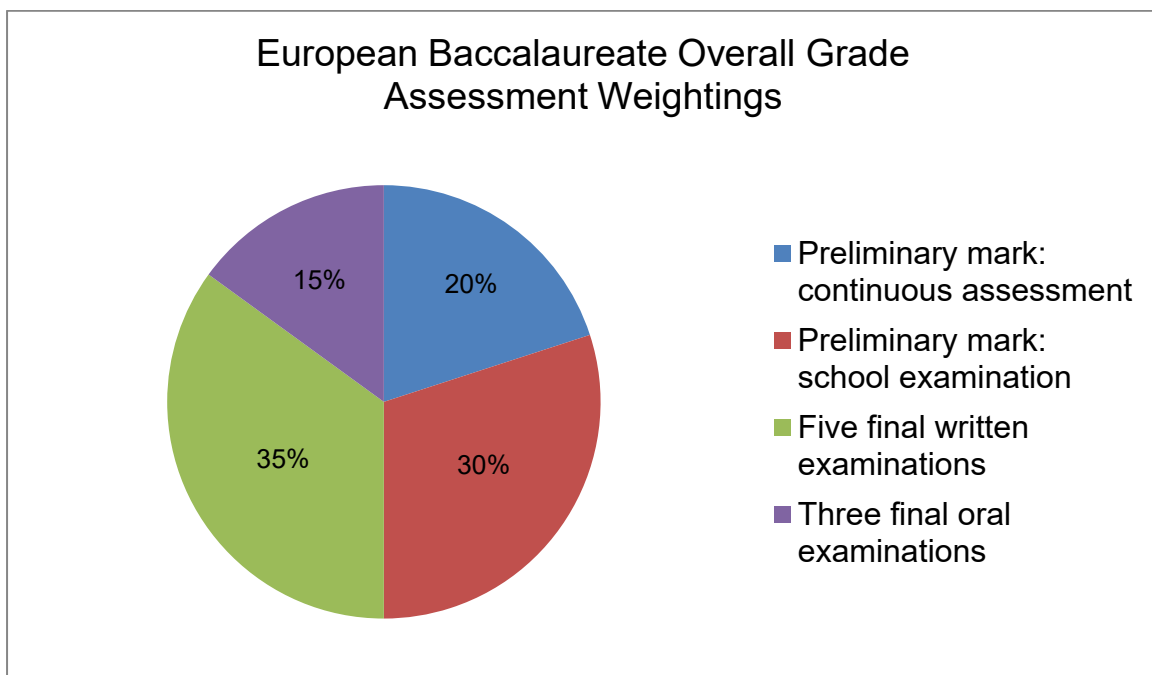
## Assessment and grading

Assessment consists of the following:

1. Preliminary mark based on class marks and pre-Baccalaureate examinations
2. Five final written examinations including language 1, language 2 and mathematics
3. Three final oral examinations in language 1, language 2 or a subject taught through language 2.

The extent to which each element contributes to the overall grade is summarised in the table below:

**Figure 1: Weighting of European Baccalaureate assessment components**



The overall mark is given as a percentage; a minimum of 60% is currently required to receive a full EB Diploma. Individual subjects are marked out of 10, with a pass mark of 6. Subject grades take into account internal assessment and final examination grades, where relevant.

## New grading scale from 2021

It should be noted that the EB grading system is due to be reformed with a view to harmonising the assessment process within and across schools. Notably, the individual subject pass mark will be lowered from a grade of 6 to a grade of 5, though the standard required to achieve the pass mark remains unchanged. The final, overall pass mark will similarly be reduced from 60% to 50%. Moreover, the S7 (final year) preliminary mark will henceforth be expressed to one decimal point and the final mark to two decimal points. The first cohort to be affected will graduate in 2021.

The general 0-10 scale and overall percentage mark will nonetheless be retained.

Grade comparison guidance in relation to the A level informed by grade distribution analysis will be available once the first cohort has graduated under the new system and the relevant data published. However, the table below illustrates the relationship between the new numerical grades and corresponding descriptors:

*Table 3: European Baccalaureate grading scale from 2021*

<b>S7 Final Subject Mark</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
9.00-10.00	Excellent
8.00-8.99	Very good
7.00-7.99	Good
6.00-6.99	Satisfactory
5.00-5.99	Sufficient (pass)
3.00-4.99	Failed (weak)
0.00-2.99	Failed (very weak)

## Overall grade comparisons

The table below indicates the recommended overall grade comparisons between the EB and the A level, informed by grade distribution data, as outlined in the [Grade comparisons methodology](#) section.

*Table 4: European Baccaureate and A level overall / combined grade comparisons*

A level grades	Comparable overall EB grades from 2021 (projected)
A*A*A*	91.78-100.00
A*A*A	89.68-91.77
A*AA	87.55-89.67
AAA	85.15-87.54
AAB	83.21-85.14
ABB	81.08-83.20
BBB	78.66-81.07
BBC	76.06-78.65
BCC	73.61-76.05
CCC	70.48-73.60
CCD	68.30-70.47
CDD	65.86-68.29
DDD	63.71-65.85
DDE	61.58-63.70
DEE	59.90-61.57
EEE	57.88-59.89
DE	54.64-57.87
EE	50.00-54.63

## Single subject grade comparisons

The table below indicates the recommended single subject grade comparisons between the EB and the A level. This is informed by grade distribution data, as outlined in the [Grade comparisons methodology](#) section, and pertains to all subjects combined. The guidance may therefore be used in relation to any individual subject.

Single subject grade comparison recommendations in relation to specific English and mathematics courses may be found in the relevant subject sections below.

*Table 5: European Baccalaureate and A level single subject grade comparisons*

A level grades	Comparable EB grades from 2021 (projected)
A*	9.50-10.00
A	8.75-9.49
B	7.84-8.74
C	6.76-7.83
D	5.74-6.75
E	5.00-5.73

## Certification and progression

Upon successful completion, students are awarded the EB Diploma, conferred by the European Schools. An example of the certification received is included below.

Figure 2: European Baccalaureate example final certificate



## European Baccalaureate Certificate

### The Board of Governors of the European Schools,

*Having regard to the Regulations for the European Baccalaureate signed at Luxembourg on 11 April 1984,*

*Having regard to the Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools signed at Luxembourg on 21 June 1994,*

*to which Regulations and Convention have acceded the Governments of*

The Kingdom of Belgium,  
The Federal Republic of Germany,  
The French Republic,  
The Italian Republic,  
The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg,  
The Kingdom of the Netherlands,  
The Kingdom of Denmark,  
The Republic of Ireland,  
The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,  
The Hellenic Republic,  
The Kingdom of Spain,  
The Portuguese Republic,  
The Republic of Austria,  
The Republic of Finland,

The Kingdom of Sweden,  
The Republic of Cyprus,  
The Republic of Estonia,  
Hungary,  
The Republic of Latvia,  
The Republic of Lithuania,  
The Republic of Malta,  
The Republic of Poland,  
The Slovak Republic,  
The Republic of Slovenia,  
The Czech Republic,  
The Republic of Bulgaria,  
The Republic of Romania,  
The Republic of Croatia

*Having regard to its decision of 28/03/2017, appointing the Examining Board and fixing the dates of the examinations,*

*Having regard to the results achieved in those examinations, on a proposal from the Examination Board, has awarded the pupil*

*Born on                      in*

*the European Baccalaureate, with an overall mark of 83,17 out of 100.*

*Brussels, 06/07/2017.*

*The Secretary-General of the European Schools*

Giancarlo MARCHEGGIANO

Figure 3: European Baccalaureate example transcript



**EUROPEAN BACCALAUREATE**

Name, first name:

Born on in

Class: MA S7 ENA

SUBJECTS	(Language) (Hours each week)	Preliminary mark	Written papers	Oral examinations	Final mark
Art 4 periods	(EN 4.00)	9.38			9.38
Physical Education	(-- 2.00)	8.17			8.17
Geography 4 periods	(FR 4.00)	8.62	8.00		8.36
History 2 periods	(FR 2.00)	9.29			9.29
Language 1	(EN 4.00)	7.80	8.25	7.00	7.84
Language 2	(FR 3.00)	8.70	7.85	9.00	8.45
Language 3	(ES 4.00)	9.24	9.05		9.16
Mathematics 5 periods	(EN 5.00)	7.08	7.68		7.33
Ethics *	(EN 1.00)				
Philosophy 2 periods	(EN 2.00)	8.59		9.75	8.86
Physics	(EN 4.00)	6.56			6.56

\* The marks of Ethics/Religion are not considered for the calculation of the European Baccalaureate preliminary and final marks.

After due weighting of the various elements which make up the final mark, the candidate has been awarded the European Baccalaureate with an overall average mark of 83.17 out of 100.

Brussels, 06/07/2017.

The Secretary-General of the European Schools



Giancarlo MARCHEGGIANO

The EB is officially recognised as a qualification granting access to higher education in all European Union member states, as well as in a number of other countries.



# English language 1

## Overview

Language 1 (L1) denotes the mother tongue or dominant language. It is taught throughout the European Schools primary and secondary programmes, and is subject to a compulsory written and oral examination upon completion of the EB cycle. The programme requires engagement with a range of literary works, which are considered against the backdrop of a broader literary theme. Upon successful completion, award holders should be able to read and write complex texts; analyse sophisticated literary features; and demonstrate detailed understanding of social, cultural and historical context.

## Comparability guidance

	<i>L1 English</i>
<i>Comparability</i>	Broadly comparable to A level English.
<i>Notes / further guidance</i>	<p>L1 satisfies a broad requirement for A level English, and may, at institutional discretion, be suitable preparation for a degree in English specifically.</p> <p>This programme offers less in-depth exploration of texts than the A level, but this should be seen in the context of the broader nature of the EB.</p> <p>Students would supplement their study of English with the compulsory study of geography, history, philosophy and a foreign language, through which pupils would further develop their interdisciplinary knowledge and critical thinking skills. This combination of subjects offers a broad grounding in the humanities.</p>

## Grade comparisons

*Table 6: EB L1 English and A level English literature grade comparisons*

<b>A level English literature grade</b>	<b>Comparable EB L1 grades from 2021 (projected)</b>
A*	9.09-10.00
A	8.46-9.08
B	7.68-8.45
C	6.70-7.67
D	5.63-6.69
E	5.00-5.62

# Advanced English language 1

## Overview

An Advanced Language 1 (L1A) course is also offered, which a minority of pupils choose to pursue. The L1A stream enables students to dedicate more time to particular areas of interest, in turn honing their analytical, creative and critical-thinking skills. Pupils study a named text in detail, and supplement this with an exploration of other related works. Two substantial pieces of individual project work should also be submitted.

Candidates who have chosen to follow the L1A programme will sit the relevant advanced rather than basic subject examinations.

## Comparability guidance

	<i>L1A English</i>
<i>Comparability</i>	Comparable to A level English.
<i>Notes / further guidance</i>	Suitable preparation for undergraduate study of English itself.

## Grade comparisons

*Table 7: EB L1A English and A level English literature grade comparisons*

<b>A level English literature grade</b>	<b>Comparable EB L1A grades from 2021 (projected)</b>
A*	9.41-10.00
A	8.99-9.40
B	8.24-8.98
C	7.51-8.23
D	6.76-7.50
E	5.00-6.75

# English language 2

## Overview

The EB Language 2 (L2) course denotes the first foreign language and typically relates to English, French or German. The stated learning outcomes include the ability to understand explicit and implicit content; analyse relatively complex literary and non-literary texts; and demonstrate fluency in oral interactions. Students should be familiar with an extended range of concrete and abstract vocabulary, and develop insight into the culture of the target language countries. Literary study is undertaken against the backdrop of a broader theme. The European Schools align s7 L2 study with level C1 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale.

### Proficient user

**C1** Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.

The final written examination is compulsory, while the oral examination remains optional. Pupils who do not elect to take the final oral assessment must instead pass a history or geography examination conducted through the medium of English.

## Comparability guidance

	<i><b>L2 English</b></i>
<i>Comparability</i>	Comparable to at least the standard of an A level modern foreign language course.
<i>Meets minimum CEFR B2 threshold for undergraduate admission?</i>	Yes, where a pass grade has been attained.
<i>Notes / further guidance</i>	May be used to fulfil an institution's general English language requirements.

## Grade comparisons

*Table 8: EB L2 English and A level modern foreign language grade comparisons*

<b>A level modern foreign language grade</b>	<b>Comparable EB L2 grades from 2021 (projected)</b>
A*	9.21-10.00
A	8.39-9.20
B	7.56-8.38
C	7.41-7.55
D	5.91-7.40
E	5.00-5.90

# Advanced English language 2

## Overview

An Advanced Language 2 (L2A) course is also offered, which a minority of students choose to pursue. This stream aims to impart an extensive knowledge of abstract vocabulary and offer a deeper insight into the culture of the target language countries. Students are required to complete a research project and demonstrate profound understanding of the literature studied. The European Schools align s7 L2A study with level C1+ on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale.

### Proficient user

**C1** Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.

Candidates who have chosen to follow the L2A programme will sit the relevant advanced rather than basic subject examinations.

## Comparability guidance

	<i>L2A English</i>
<i>Comparability</i>	Comparable to at least the standard of an A level modern foreign language course.
<i>Meets minimum CEFR B2 threshold for undergraduate admission?</i>	Yes, where a pass grade has been attained.
<i>Notes / further guidance</i>	May be used to fulfil an institution's general English language requirements.

## Grade comparisons

*Table 9: EB L2A English and A level modern foreign language grade comparisons*

<b>A level modern foreign language grade</b>	<b>Comparable EB L2A grades from 2021 (projected)</b>
A*	9.19-10.00
A	8.54-9.18
B	7.60-8.53
C	6.93-7.59
D	6.30-6.92
E	5.00-6.29

# English language 3

## Overview

The EB Language 3 (L3) course denotes the second foreign language. It may relate to any of the official EU languages, with the exception of Irish and Maltese. The study of L3 is compulsory in secondary years 1-5, but optional in s6-s7. Students are expected to develop a wide range of vocabulary, including that related to abstract concepts; demonstrate knowledge of complex grammatical structures; and offer insight into the culture of the target language. Two complete works of literature should be studied and reasonable fluency attained. The European Schools align s7 L3 study with level B1+ level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale.

### Independent user

**B1** Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

Upon completion of the upper secondary cycle, students who have pursued an L3 programme choose to sit either the written or the oral examination, which are similar in format.

## Comparability guidance

	<i>L3 English</i>
<i>Comparability</i>	Comparable to the standard of an A level modern foreign language course
<i>Meets minimum CEFR B2 threshold for undergraduate admission?</i>	Learning outcomes largely align with B2, where a pass grade has been attained; European Schools officially align the programme with CEFR level B1+.

*Notes / further guidance*

EB students have the choice between a written or oral examination. Students' listening and speaking skills will not therefore be subject to a final assessment unless the optional oral examination is taken; conversely, only those who opt for the written examination will be assessed in written production.

May be used to fulfil an institution's general English language requirements, at institutional discretion, and depending on the undergraduate programme in question.

## Grade comparisons

*Table 10: EB L3 English and A level modern foreign language grade comparisons*

<b>A level modern foreign language grade</b>	<b>Comparable EB L3 grades from 2021 (projected)</b>
A*	9.28-10.00
A	8.59-9.27
B	8.05-8.58
C	7.34-8.04
D	6.50-7.33
E	5.00-6.49



# English language 4

## Overview

The EB Language 4 (L4) course denotes the third foreign language. It may relate to any of the official EU languages, with the exception of Irish and Maltese. Pupils may take up an L4 from secondary year 4, but the subject is optional in s6-s7. The EB L4 programme is designed to impart an extended range of vocabulary and grammatical structures, as well as cultural knowledge of the target language countries. Students engage with topics that are largely familiar, everyday and of personal interest. The course also entails some exposure to literary texts. The European Schools align s7 L4 study with level A2+ on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale.

### Basic user

**A2** Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

Upon completion of the upper secondary cycle, students who have pursued an L4 programme choose to sit either the written or the oral examination, which are similar in format.

## Comparability guidance

	<i>L4 English</i>
<i>Comparability</i>	Comparable to the standard of an AS level modern foreign language course.
<i>Meets minimum CEFR B2 threshold for undergraduate admission?</i>	No

*Notes / further  
guidance*

EB students have the choice between a written or oral examination. Students' listening and speaking skills will not therefore be subject to a final assessment unless the optional oral examination is taken; conversely, only those who opt for the written examination will be assessed in written production.

Other evidence of English language proficiency is recommended.

## **Grade comparisons**

Grade comparison recommendations have not been included for the EB L4 English course, owing to insufficient data.

# Elementary (3-period) mathematics

## Overview

The study of either elementary (3-period) or standard (5-period) mathematics course is compulsory, and both programmes are subject to mandatory final written examinations. The elementary mathematics course is specifically intended for pupils who do not intend to pursue higher level studies where mathematics plays an important role. Its purpose is to help pupils to understand the scientific and technological world surrounding them without putting too much emphasis on the theoretical aspects of mathematics.

## Comparability guidance

	<i>Elementary (3-period) mathematics</i>
<i>Comparability</i>	Broadly comparable to AS level mathematics.
<i>Notes / further guidance</i>	<p>Provides an upper secondary level mathematics project, pitched at GCE AS level, to develop students' mathematics skills in real-world contexts. This course helps to prepare students for higher education degrees in a range of subjects where mathematics is not an explicit component, but where an understanding of mathematics application in everyday life may nonetheless be of benefit to the student.</p> <p>This course covers topics such as sequences, functions, statistics, probability, and integration, likewise covered in AS level mathematics.</p>

## Grade comparisons

Table 11: EB 3-period mathematics and AS level mathematics grade comparisons

AS level mathematics grade	Comparable EB 3-period mathematics grades from 2021 (projected)
A	7.06-10.00
B	6.33-7.05
C	5.76-6.32
D	5.33-5.75
E	5.00-5.32

## Standard (5-period) mathematics

### Overview

The study of either elementary (3-period) or standard (5-period) mathematics course is compulsory, and both programmes are subject to mandatory final written examinations. The standard mathematics course is specifically intended for pupils who need mathematics in their higher level studies. The course therefore offers a solid foundation in, and a good general knowledge of, mathematics.

### Comparability guidance

	<i>Standard (5-period) mathematics</i>
<i>Comparability</i>	Broadly comparable to A level mathematics.
<i>Notes / further guidance</i>	<p>Provides an upper secondary level mathematics programme, pitched at GCE A level mathematics standard. It provides a solid grounding in mathematics, and constitutes suitable preparation for degrees with a mathematics component such as economics, accounting, psychology as well as STEM subjects.</p> <p>The course covers topics found in the GCE A level mathematics programme including, but not limited to, complex numbers, logarithms, geometry, sequences, functions, and probability.</p>

### Grade comparisons

*Table 12: EB 5-period mathematics and A level mathematics grade comparisons*

<b>A level mathematics grade</b>	<b>Comparable EB 5-period mathematics grades from 2021 (projected)</b>
A*	8.84-10.00
A	7.68-8.83
B	6.69-7.67
C	5.88-6.68
D	5.34-5.87
E	5.00-5.33

# Advanced mathematics

## Overview

Those who opt for 5-period mathematics may choose to supplement their studies with an additional advanced mathematics course, comprising a further three weekly periods. The programme's purpose is to prepare pupils for higher education studies in which mathematics plays an important and fundamental role. The advanced mathematics track is assessed through a compulsory oral examination, worth 50% of the marks, and internal assessment such as end-of-semester examinations.

## Comparability guidance

	<i>Advanced mathematics</i>
<i>Comparability</i>	Broadly comparable to A level further mathematics.
<i>Notes / further guidance</i>	<p>Provides an in-depth upper secondary level mathematics programme, pitched at GCE A level further mathematics standard.</p> <p>Students study a range of maths topics, found in A level mathematics and A level further mathematics including, but not limited to, matrices, vectors, complex numbers, hyperbolic functions, further algebra and functions, integration and differentiation.</p> <p>The course culminates in an oral examination.</p> <p>Taken in conjunction with 5-period mathematics, this programme would provide suitable preparation for degrees with a strong mathematics focus, such as those in the STEM subjects.</p>

## Grade comparisons

*Table 13: EB advanced mathematics and A level further mathematics grade comparisons*

A level mathematics grade	Comparable EB 5-period mathematics grades from 2021 (projected)
A*	9.06-10.00
A	8.33-9.05
B	7.38-8.32
C	6.60-7.37
D	5.60-6.59
E	5.00-5.59

## Grade comparisons methodology

UK NARIC who worked on this guidance with the Department for Education uses overall and individual subject pass grade distribution data to inform grade comparison recommendations. The statistical data in question should relate to two qualifications which serve the same function and are of a comparable standard. Levels of comparability are determined by the organisation's International Comparisons database.

In the case of the EB, UK NARIC considers this award comparable to the overall A level standard. Both awards grant direct access to higher education. Grade comparisons can therefore be drawn between the proportion of A level students obtaining each grade or grade combination, and the proportion of students obtaining each EB grade.

Comparing grade distributions enables stakeholders to visualise both where an individual sits within their own cohort, and what a comparable level of achievement would be in the counterpart qualification. Where, for example, the top 3.5% of students obtained the highest mark in the UK A level, the grade(s) achieved by the top 3.5% of students in the overseas qualification could be considered broadly comparable.

The methodology necessarily assumes that a pass grade in one system would constitute a pass mark in the other. Fail grades are excluded from the analysis. Since there is no overall grade or grade combination pass mark for the A level, the methodology also assumes that grades of EE would constitute the minimal requirement for entry to higher education within England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Moreover, it should be noted that overall performance A level data typically refers to combinations of three grades, on the basis that this is the typical requirement of UK higher education institutions. Where students have completed more than three A levels, their three highest grades are taken into account.

The grade distribution data presented should serve as informed guidance. As no two qualifications are the same, the wider context should always be considered. This includes the total number of subjects taken, the curriculum followed, the grading system applied, and any broader differences in grading culture. It should, for example, be acknowledged that the A level is of a more fundamentally specialised nature than the EB. Against that background, A level and EB grades, particularly those relating to individual subjects, should be considered as comparable rather than equivalent. Individual applicants should always be considered on their own merits.

Nonetheless, the English and mathematics grade comparison guidance presented here has been accompanied by a robust analysis of subject content, assessment

methods and learning outcomes. Where a particular EB course has been deemed broadly comparable to a given A or AS level subject, the respective distributions have been compared. L2, L2A and L3 distributions have therefore all been compared to data for the A level modern foreign language, as the A level represents the closest counterpart award in each instance. Grade comparisons in relation to EB L4 English have not, however, been included, owing to insufficient L4 distribution data.

It should also be noted that comparisons to A level modern foreign language (MFL) grades have been informed by grade distributions for French specifically, reflecting the subject used for content, assessment and learning outcome analysis.

The complete distributions are represented in a graphical format in the [Grade distribution charts](#) section. For simplicity of presentation, an A level grade combination of, for example, BBB, would correspond to any combination of A level grades that would average out to this combination in terms of UCAS tariff points. BBB would therefore also encompass grades of ABC, A\*BD or A\*AE.

Grade distribution data is centrally held for both the A level and the EB, and therefore representative of the entire cohort. A level data been sourced from the National Pupil Database within England's Department for Education, the Northern Ireland Department of Education Government, and the Welsh Government in the case of the overall / grade combination statistics; and from the Joint Council for Qualifications in the case of the single subject distributions. The European Schools provided the EB data.

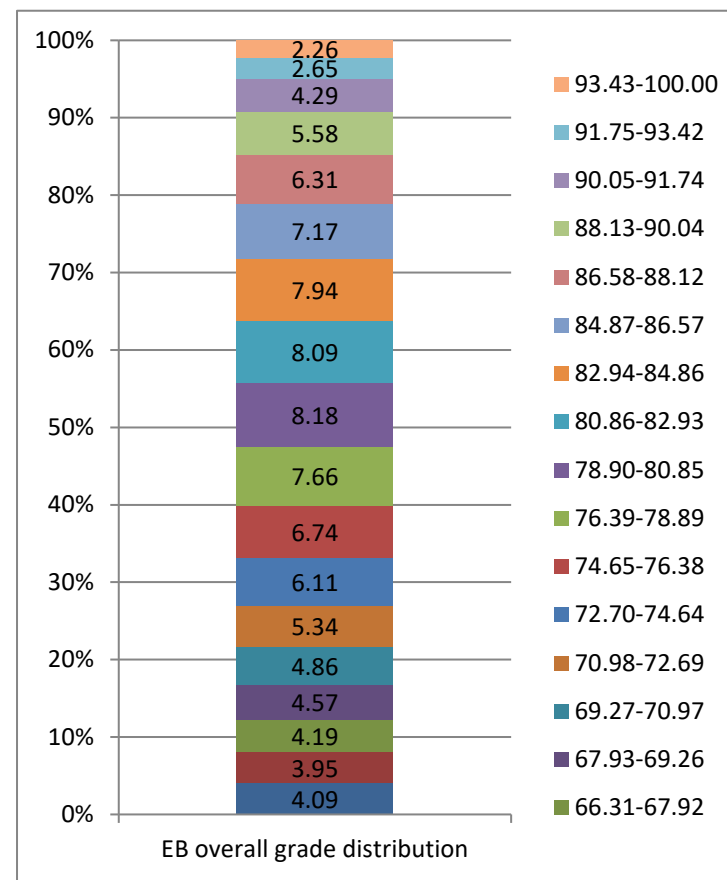
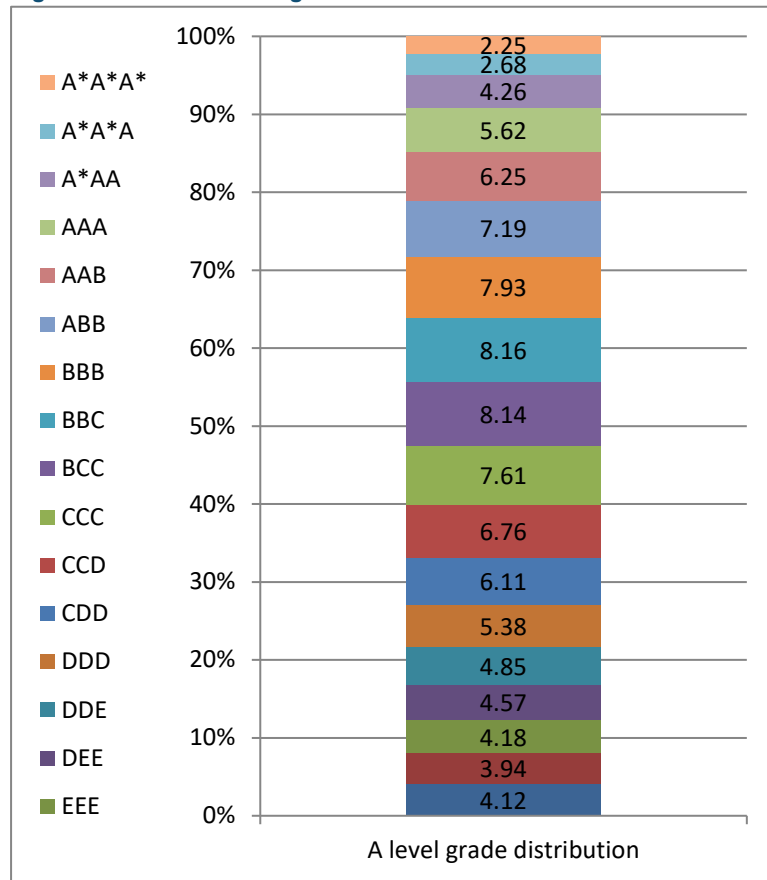
As the most recently available A level combination data relates to 2018, and in the interests of drawing the most direct comparison possible, all data presented pertains to this year. Centrally held grade distribution data would not be expected to differ significantly from one year to the next. However, it should be noted that the cohort graduating in 2021 will do so under a reformed grading system, in which the individual subject pass mark will be lowered from 6 to 5 and the overall pass mark lowered from 60% to 50%. As such, the 2018 distribution data has been extrapolated to forecast likely grade comparisons from 2021 onwards. The resulting projections should ideally be updated once grade distribution data in relation the new system becomes available.

# Grade distribution charts

The following charts offer a visual representation of the respective A level and EB grade distributions. This data has been used to inform the grade comparison recommendations, as outlined in the methodology.

## Overall grade

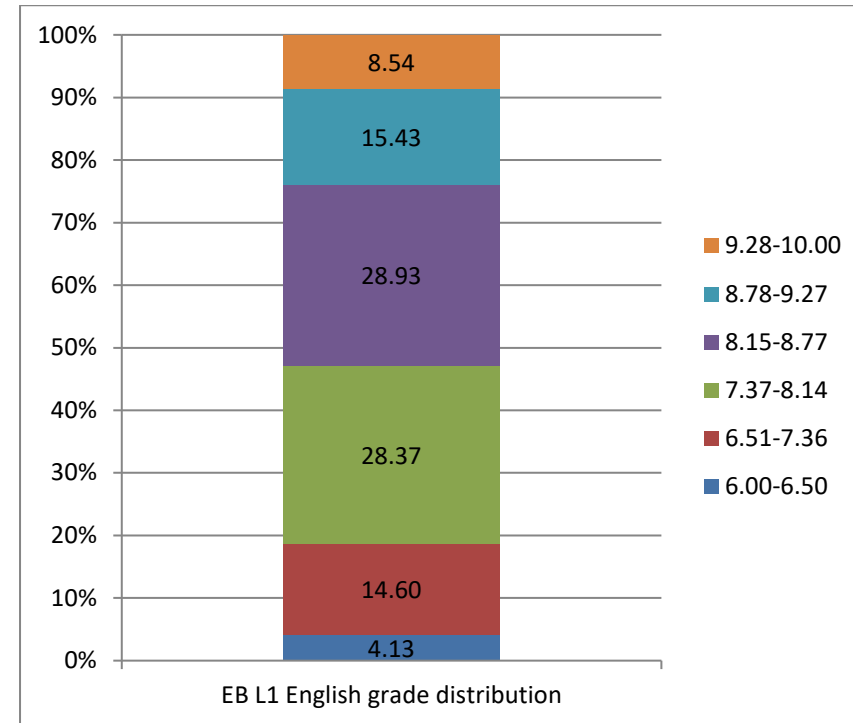
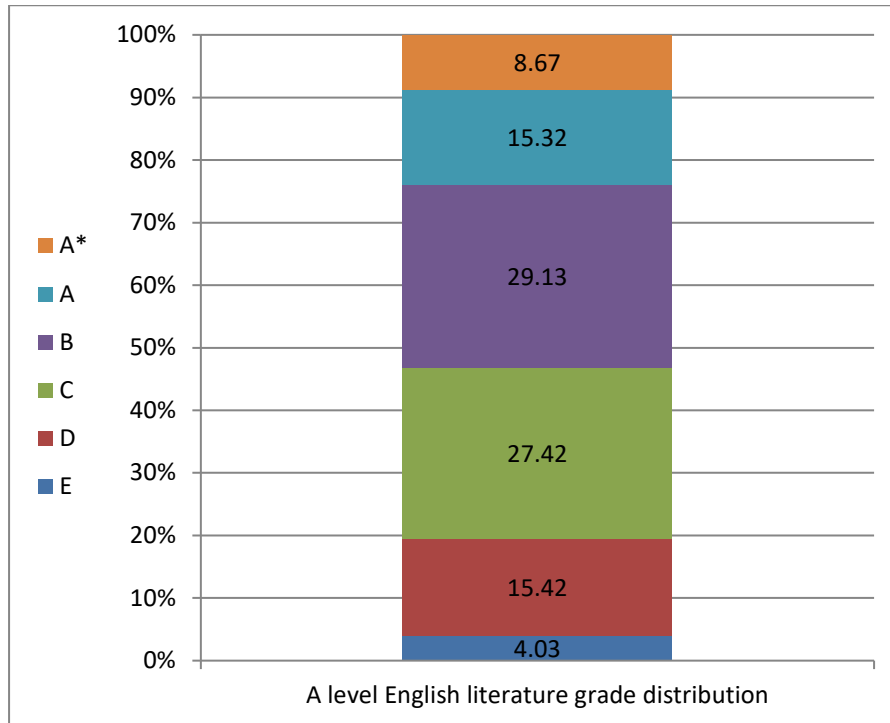
Figures 4 and 5: Overall grade distribution data for the A level and EB





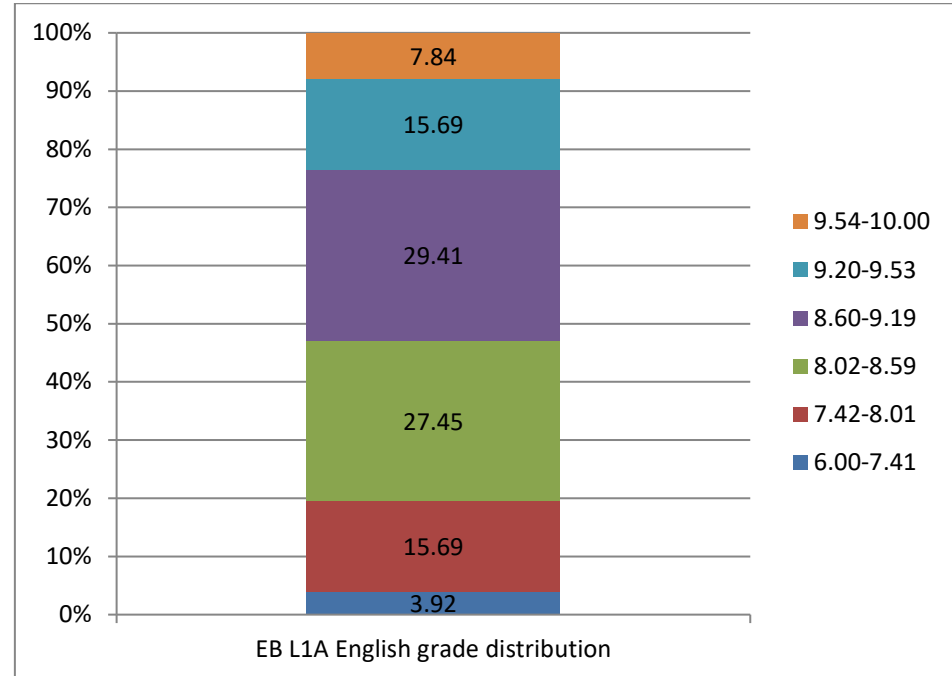
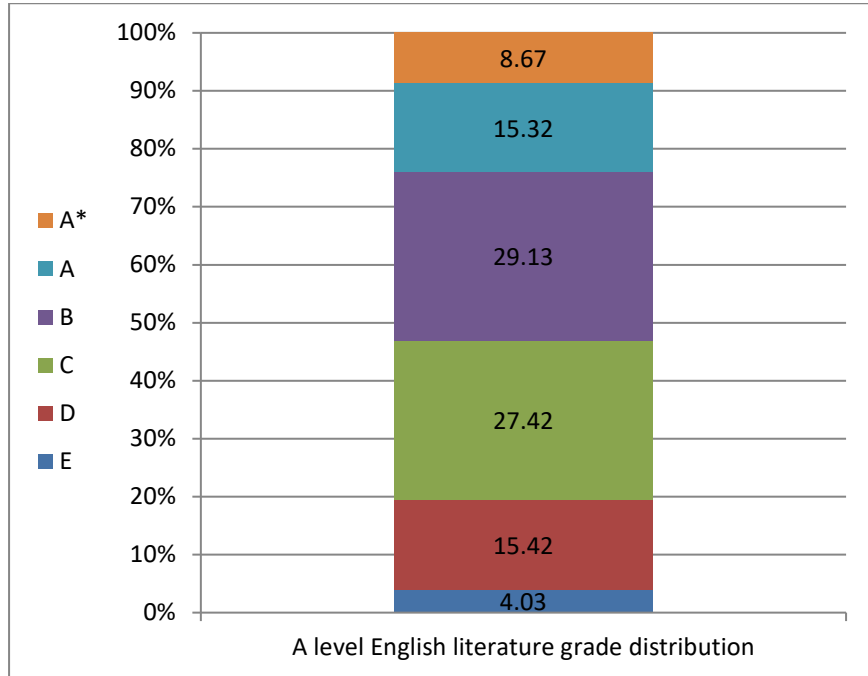
# English Language 1

Figures 6 and 7: Grade distribution data for A level English literature and EB L1 English



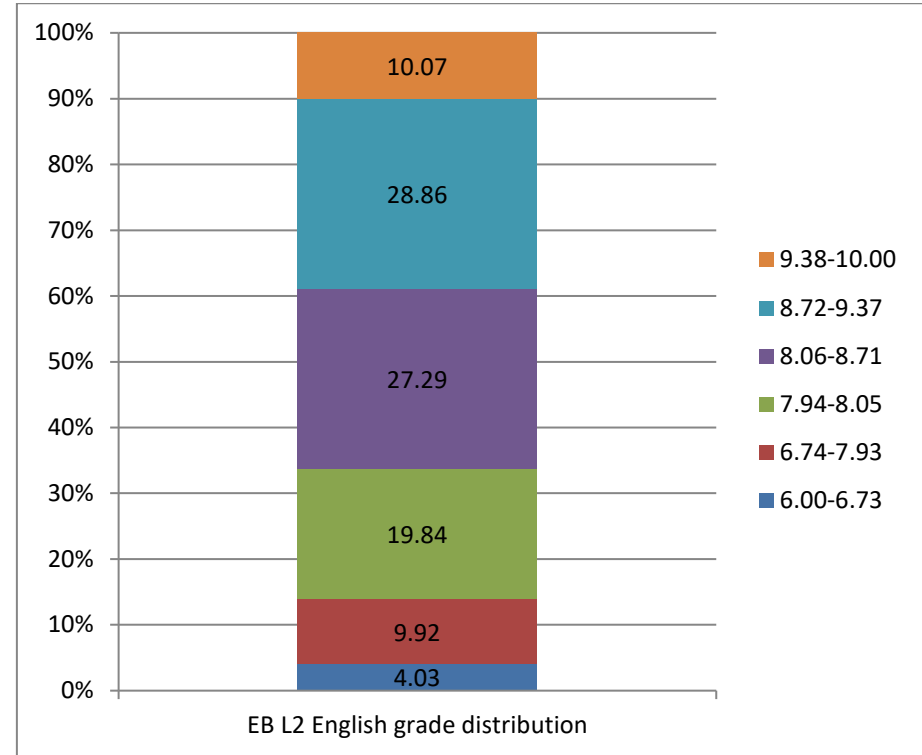
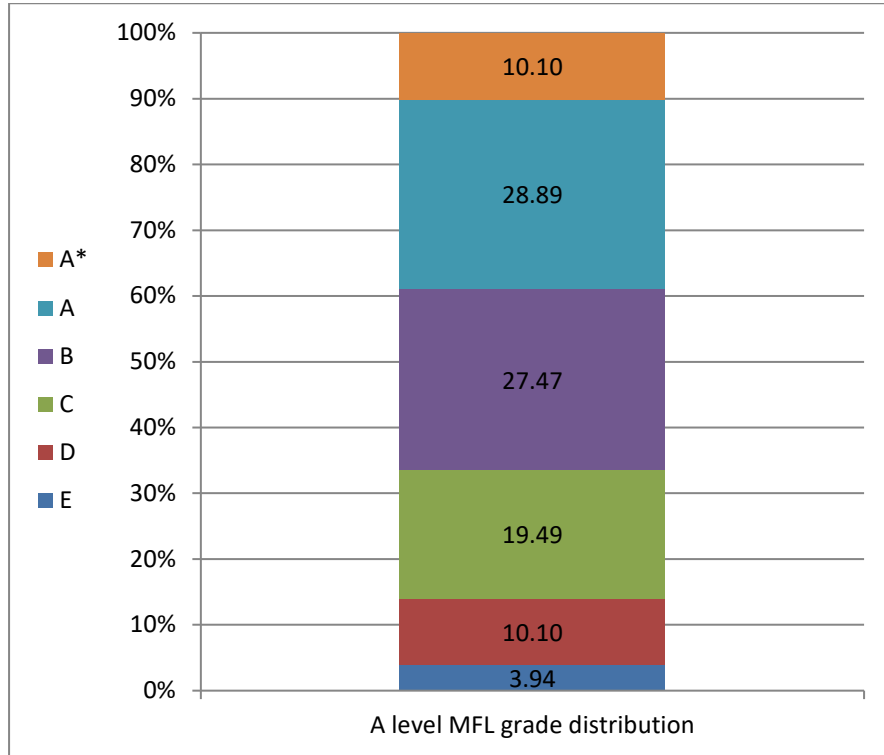
# Advanced English Language 1

Figures 8 and 9: Grade distribution data for A level English literature and EB L1A English



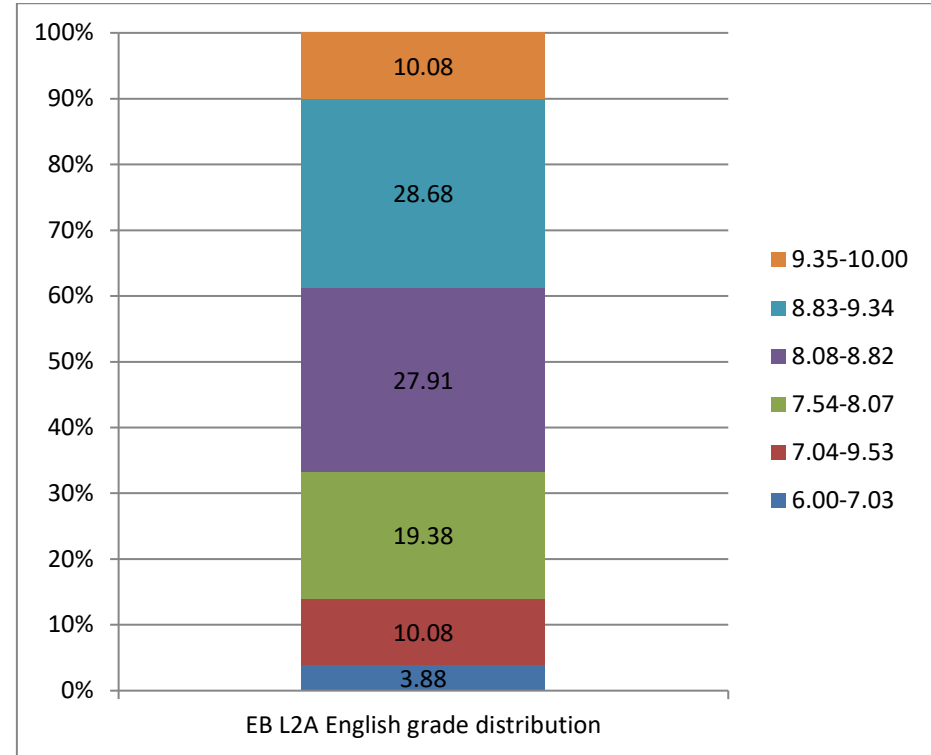
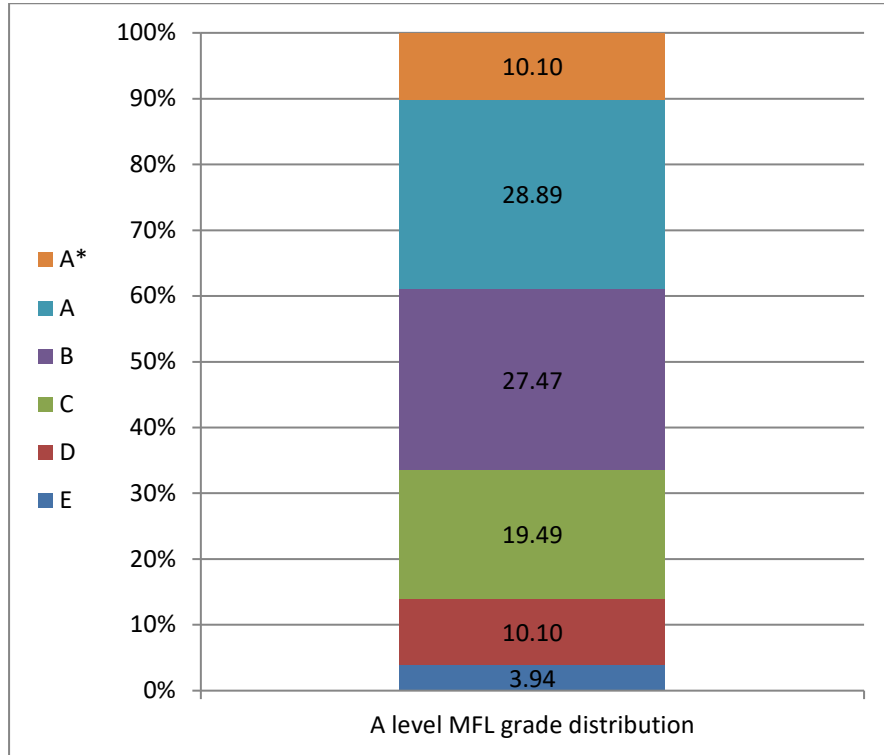
# English Language 2

Figures 10 and 11: Grade distribution data for A level modern foreign language (MFL) and EB L2 English



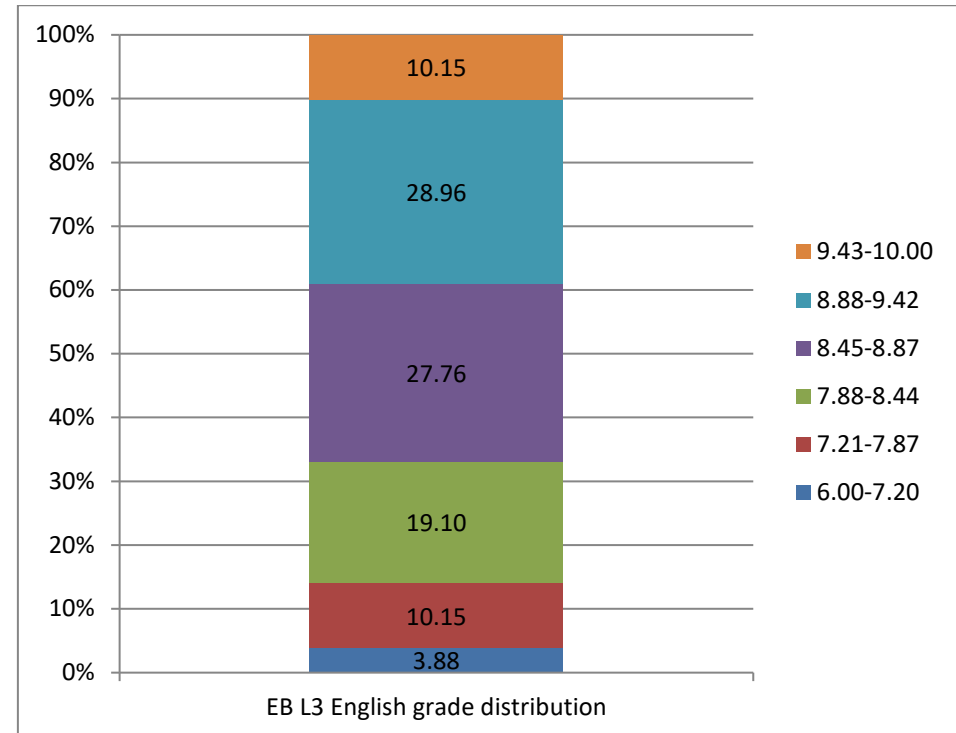
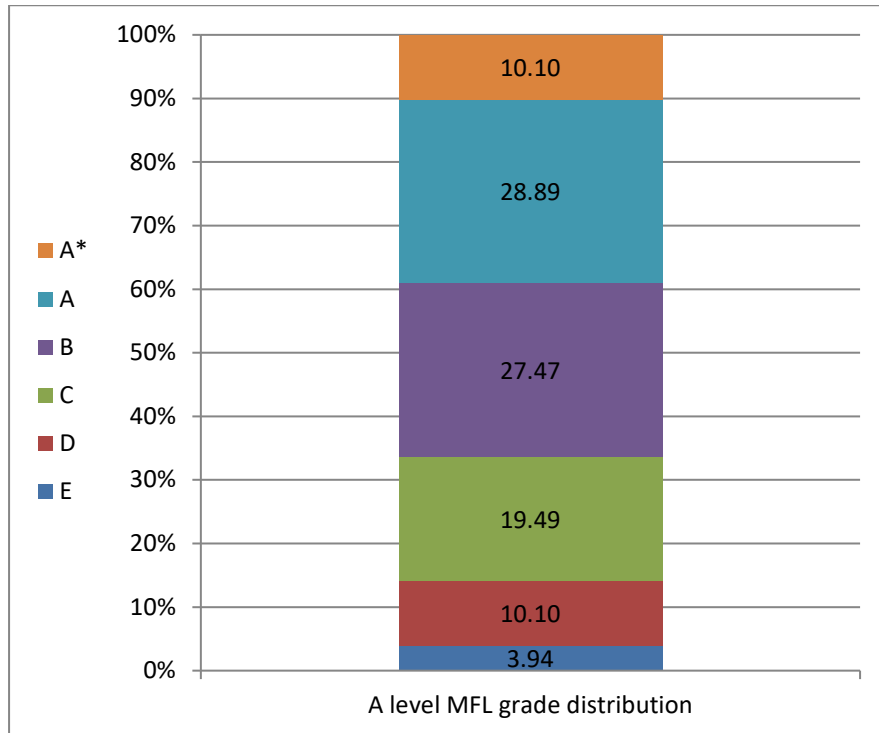
## Advanced English Language 2

Figures 12 and 13: Grade distribution data for A level modern foreign language and EB L2A English



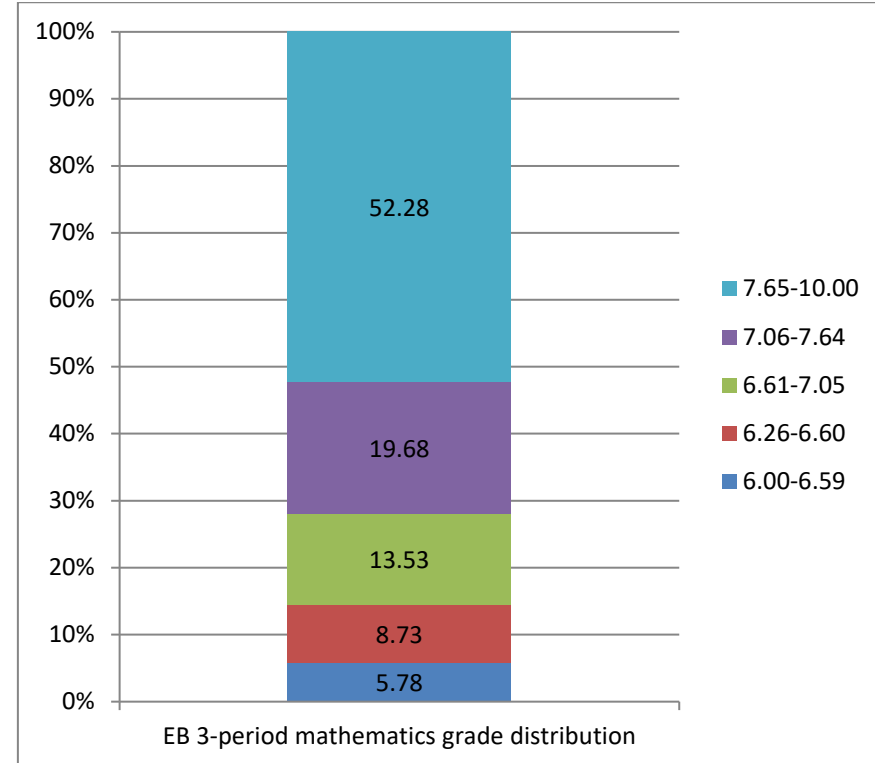
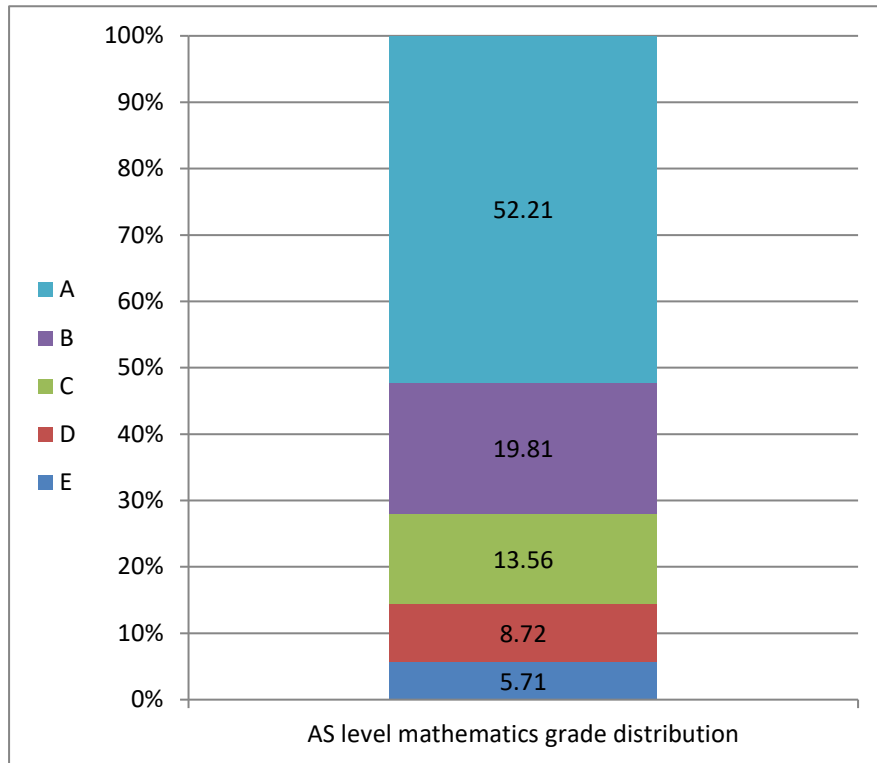
# English Language 3

Figures 14 and 15: Grade distribution data for A level modern foreign language and EB L3 English



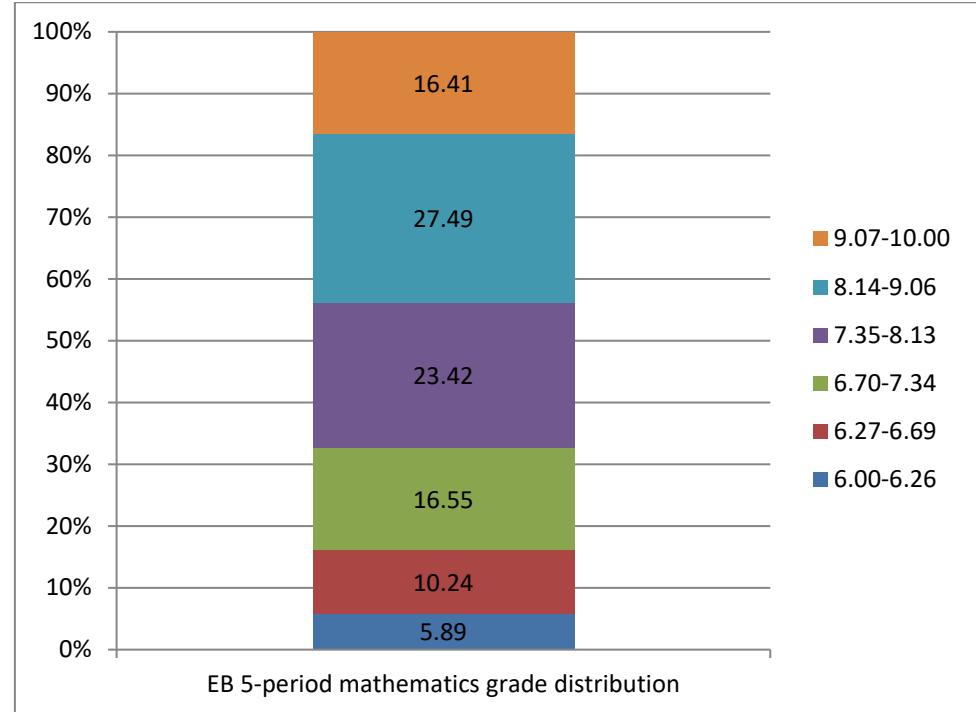
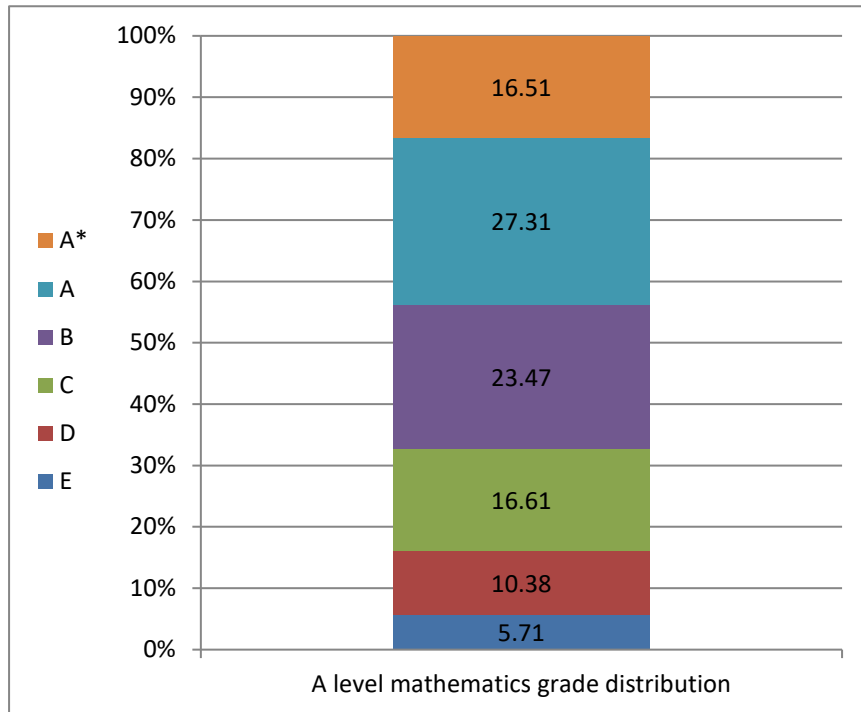
## Elementary (3-period) mathematics

Figures 16 and 17: Grade distribution data for AS level mathematics and EB 3-period mathematics



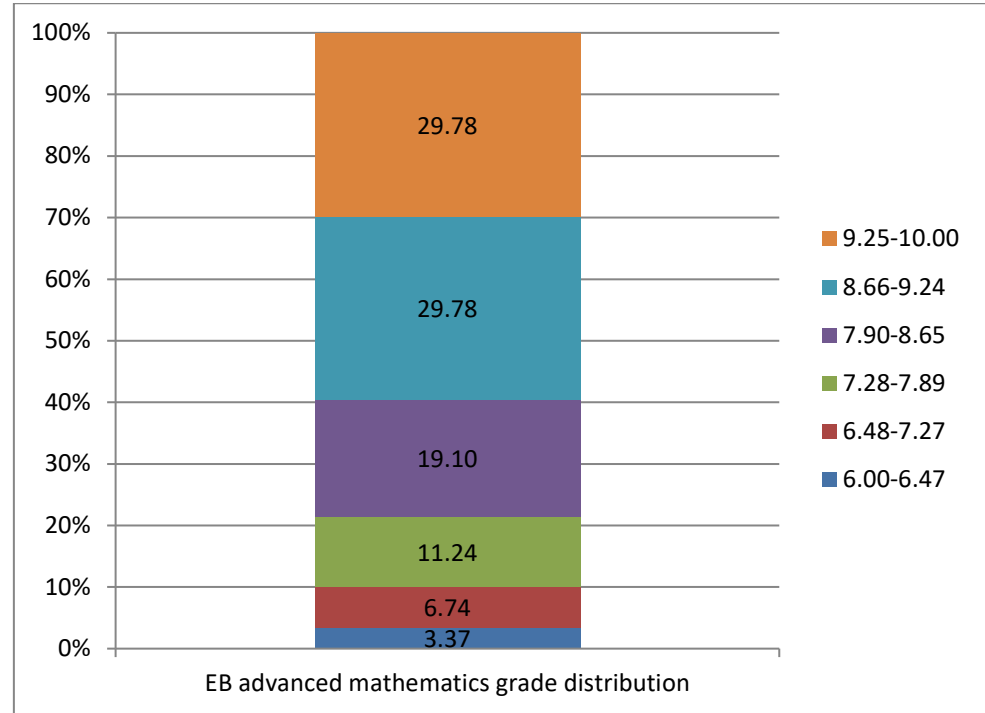
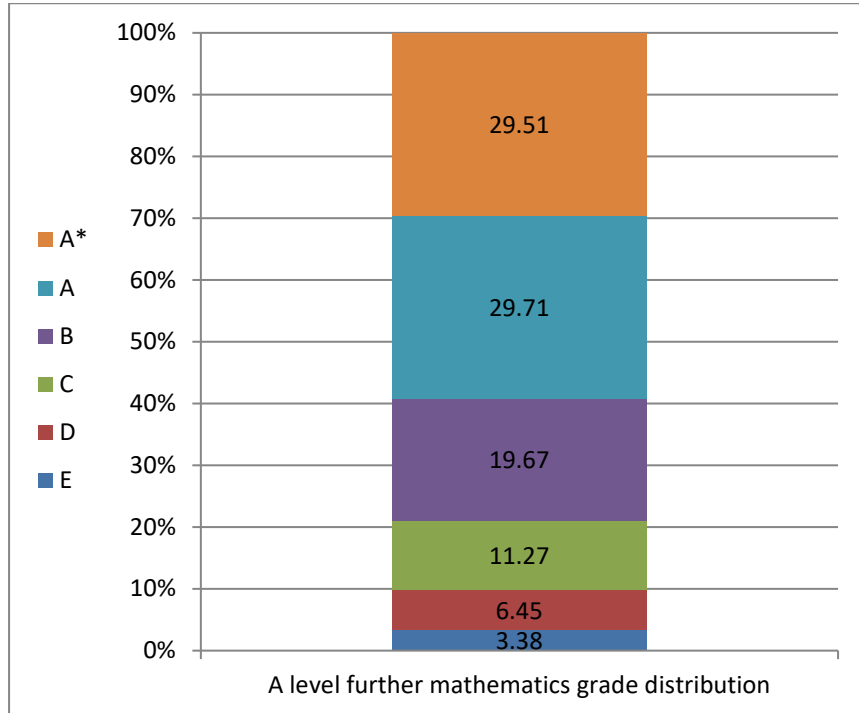
## Standard (5-period) mathematics

Figures 18 and 19: Grade distribution data for A level mathematics and EB 5-period mathematics



## Advanced mathematics

Figures 20 and 21: grade distribution data for A level further mathematics and EB advanced mathematics





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# Appendix 1: The European Schools

## The European Schools

Country	School name and information
Belgium	<b>BRUSSELS I</b> Avenue du Vert Chasseur 46, B-1180 Brussels, Belgium <b>Phone:</b> +32 2 373 86 11 <b>Fax:</b> +32 2 375 47 16 <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.eeb1.eu">www.eeb1.eu</a>
Belgium	<b>BRUSSELS II</b> Avenue Oscar Jespers 75, B-1200 Brussels, Belgium <b>Phone:</b> +32 2 774 22 11 <b>Fax:</b> +32 2 774 22 43 <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.eeb2.eu/">www.eeb2.eu/</a>
Belgium	<b>BRUSSELS III</b> Boulevard du Triomphe, 135, B-1050 Brussels, Belgium <b>Phone:</b> +32 2 629 47 00 <b>Fax:</b> +32 2 629 47 92 <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.eeb3.eu/">www.eeb3.eu/</a>
Belgium	<b>BRUSSELS IV</b> Brussels IV European School (Laeken), Drève Sainte-Anne 86, B-1020 Brussels, Belgium <b>Phone:</b> +32 2 340 13 90 <b>Fax:</b> +32 2 340 14 97 <b>Website :</b> <a href="http://www.eeb4.be">www.eeb4.be</a>
Belgium	<b>MOL</b> Europawijk 100, B-2400 Mol, Belgium <b>Phone:</b> +32 14 56 31 01 <b>Fax:</b> +32 14 56 31 04 <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.esmol.net/">www.esmol.net/</a>
Germany	<b>FRANKFURT</b> Praunheimer Weg 126, D-60439 Frankfurt am Main, Germany <b>Phone:</b> +49 69 92 88 74 0 <b>Fax:</b> +49 69 92 88 74 74 <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.esffm.org">www.esffm.org</a>
Germany	<b>KARLSRUHE</b> Albert Schweitzer Strasse 1, D-76139 Karlsruhe, Germany <b>Phone:</b> +49 721 68 00 90 <b>Fax:</b> +49 721 68 00 95 0 <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.eskar.org">www.eskar.org</a>
Germany	<b>MUNICH</b> Elise-Aulinger Strasse 21, D-81739 Munich, Germany <b>Phone:</b> +49 89 628 16 0 <b>Fax:</b> +49 89 628 16 444 <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.esmunich.de">www.esmunich.de</a>



Country	School name and information
<b>Italy</b>	<b>VARESE</b> Via Montello 118, I-21100 Varese, Italy <b>Phone:</b> +39 332 80 61 11 <b>Fax:</b> +39 332 80 62 02 <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.eurscva.eu">www.eurscva.eu</a>
<b>Luxembourg</b>	<b>LUXEMBOURG I</b> Boulevard Konrad Adenauer, 23, L-1115 Luxembourg/Kirchberg, Luxembourg <b>Tel:</b> +352 43 20 821 <b>Fax:</b> +352 43 20 823 44 <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.euroschool.lu">www.euroschool.lu</a>
<b>Luxembourg</b>	<b>LUXEMBOURG II</b> 6, rue Gaston Thorn, L-8268 Bertrange, Luxembourg <b>Phone:</b> +352 273 224 5001 <b>Fax:</b> +352 273 224 5901 <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.eursc-mamer.lu">http://www.eursc-mamer.lu</a>
<b>Spain</b>	<b>ALICANTE</b> Avenida Locutor Vicente Hipólito s/n, 03540 Playa de San Juan – Alicante, Spain <b>Phone:</b> +34 965 15 56 10 <b>Fax:</b> +34 965 26 97 77 <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.escuelaeuropea.org">www.escuelaeuropea.org</a>
<b>The Netherlands</b>	<b>BERGEN</b> Molenweidtje 5/PB 99, NL-1862 BC Bergen N.H., The Netherlands <b>Phone:</b> +31 072 589 01 09 <b>Fax:</b> +31 072 589 68 62 <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.esbergen.eu">www.esbergen.eu</a>

*In addition at present there are 14 Accredited European Schools. Full details are available on the European Schools [website](#)*



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