



*Alsama*

# **Report on Alsama's Education Center "Shatila 1"**

September 2025

[www.alsamaproject.com](http://www.alsamaproject.com)

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## 1. Overview of Shatila 1

## 2. Academic Year Highlights

## 3. Student Life Snapshots

## 4. Appendix (Detailed Assessment Results)



# Alsama's flagship school – Shatila 1



## Shatila Camp

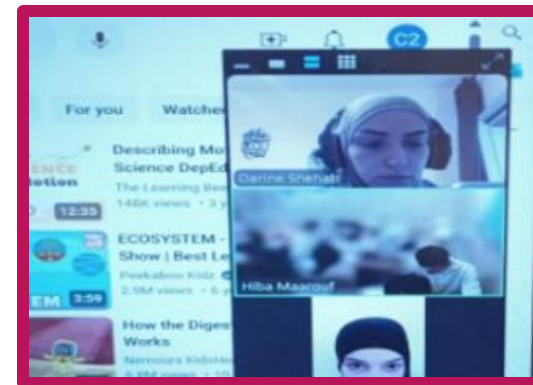
- Built in 1949 to host 3,000 Palestinian refugees, the Shatila refugee camp is positioned in the southern suburb of Beirut.
- It houses >40,000 people – mainly Syrian refugees – in one square kilometer.

## Education Centre Shatila 1

- Shatila 1 opened in November 2020 and is Alsama's flagship center, piloting new educational strategies before broader implementation.
- 248 students are currently educated at Shatila 1 - over the last year we retained **100% of year 5 and 82% of year 4 students**.
- Now in its sixth year, we have our first year of graduates who will move on to tertiary education at the end of this academic year.



# Alsama's 2024-2025 academic year faced unprecedented challenges with the war in Lebanon



## War in Lebanon

Lebanon experienced devastating turmoil and destruction in the last academic year. From September to November 2024, bombs and targeted attacks descended upon the South and Southern suburbs of Beirut, where Shatila 1 is based and where many of our students live.

## Displacement

Students and staff were badly affected; 325 students from our Beirut centers returned to Syria to escape the violence, and many were displaced across Lebanon. Educating our students became especially challenging as all four of our centers were forced to physically close. But we did not give up.

## Online Learning Model

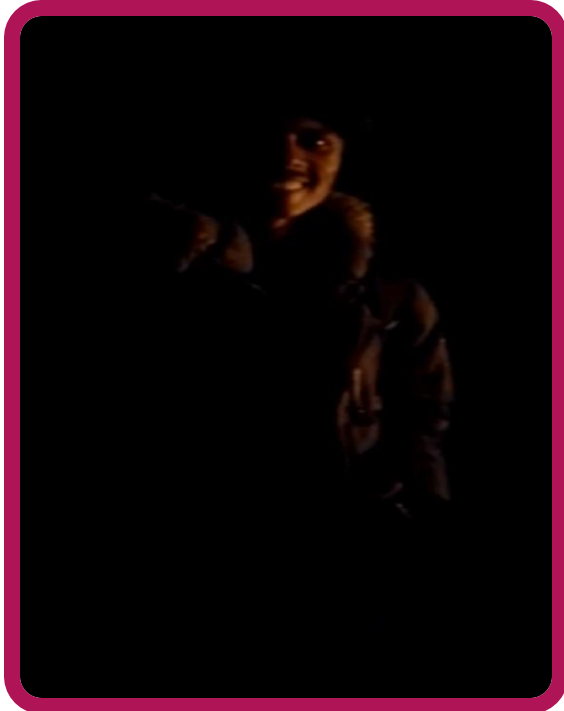
While schools across the country shut down, Alsama persevered. We became the only education provider in Lebanon to deliver continuous education during war, teaching more than 600 students online as well as teaching 150 students in emergency shelters. This meant Alsama students did not miss a single day of class. 4

# Our students demonstrated incredible commitment and resilience

Louay, one of our top year students – didn't let war stop him from learning



23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024 – 3.00am



23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024 – 8.00am



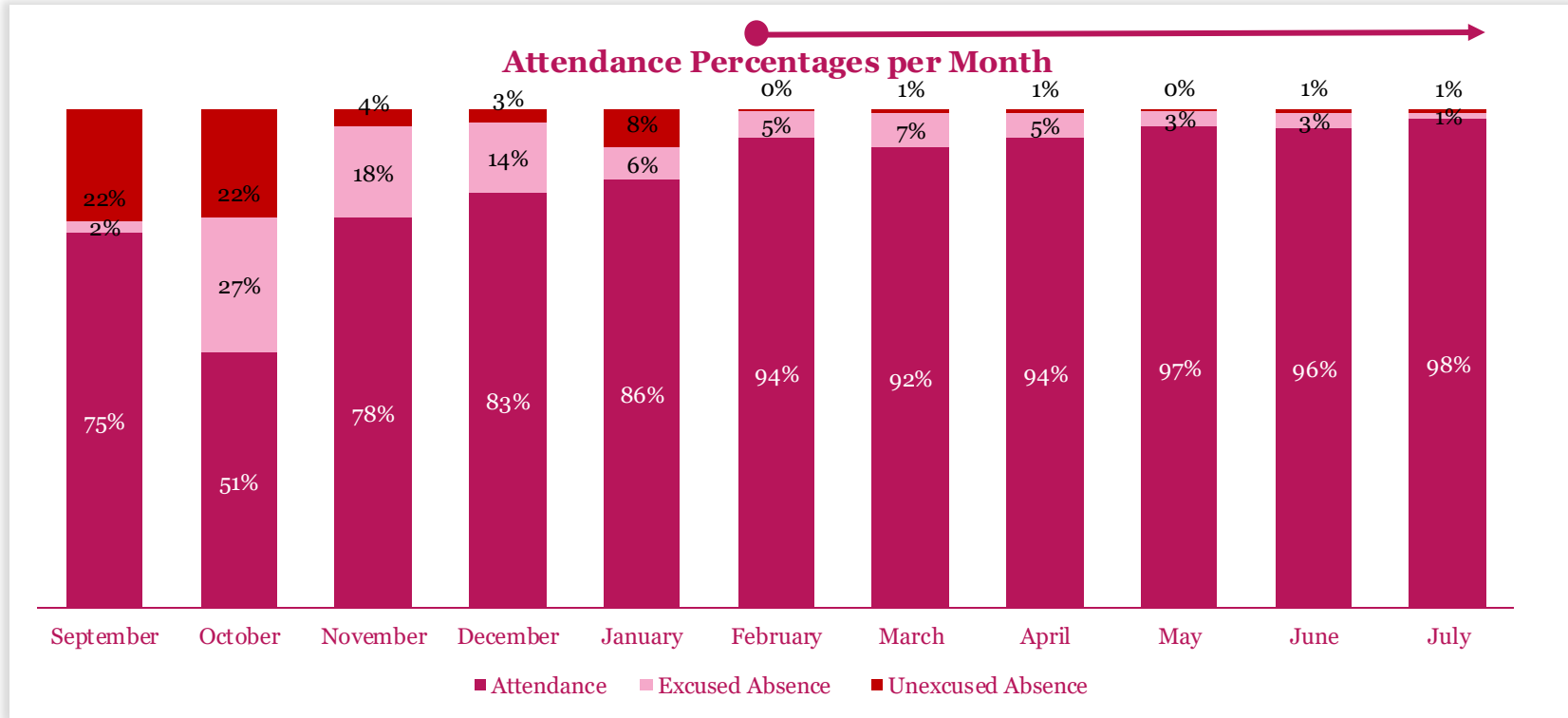
Louay fled to Syria with his family after the war began in Lebanon.

Devastated to leave his education behind, Louay decided to make the difficult journey back to Beirut, crossing the border in the early hours of the morning.

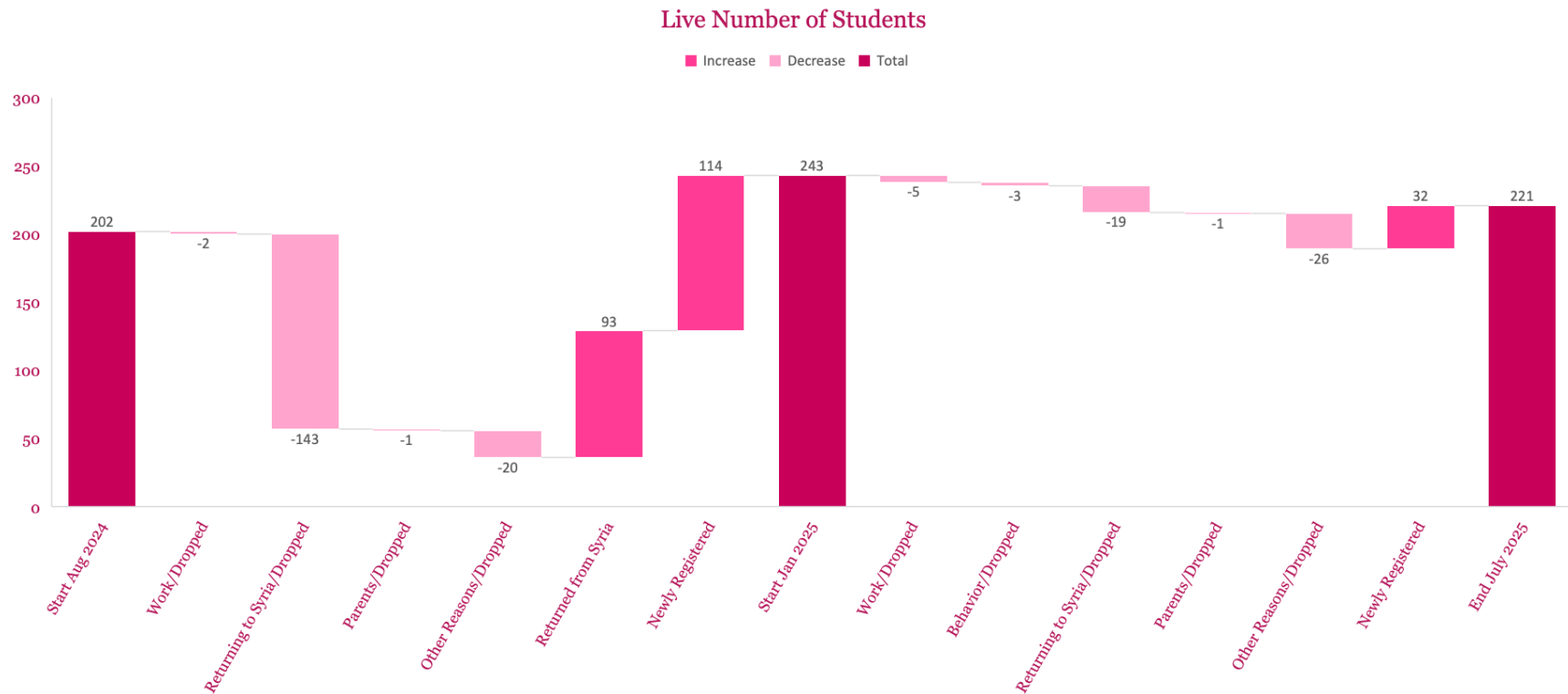
Despite the taxing journey, Louay was up for class at 8.00am - testament to his unwavering dedication and commitment to his education with Alsama.

He is a shining example of our students' resolve to persevere in challenging times.

**Our students showed impressive commitment considering the disruption – attendance recovered to a 95% average from February**

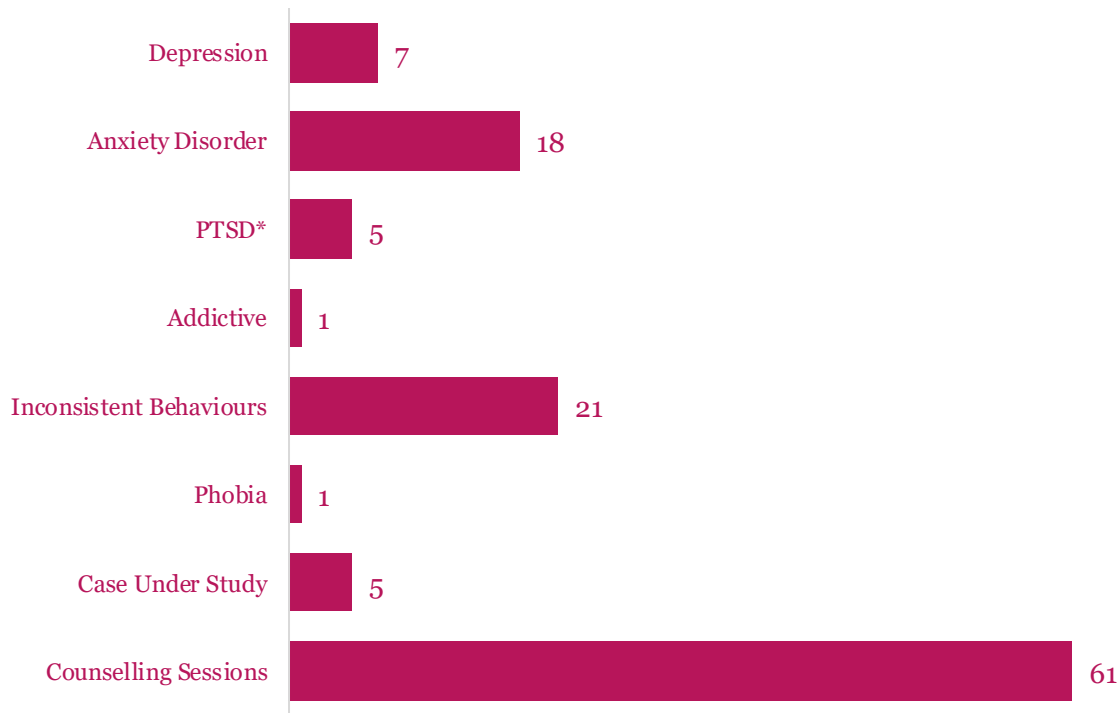


**And we finished the year with a school filled to capacity – a great result considering dropouts throughout the year**



## Student mental health support has been essential this year, with our in-house psychologist addressing 119 individual cases

### Mental Health Cases



Source: Psychology data records in Shatila 1 center – July 2025

\*Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder



### Commentary:

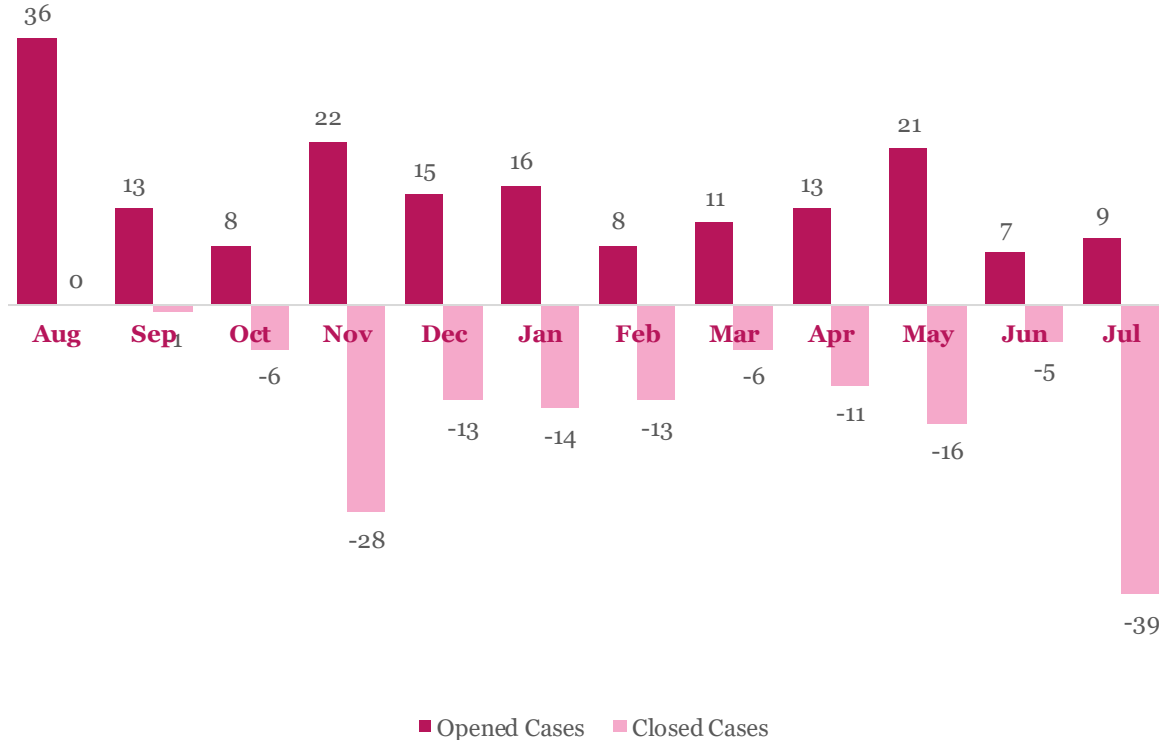
- Many of our students have **traumatic life experiences**, and on top of this, the experience of war and violence in Lebanon over the last year put further strain on students.
- Our psychologist helps students to **work through difficult experiences** with specific techniques and grow into **confident and balanced students** so they can **thrive in their studies**.



## Our psychologist helped to resolve many students' issues, with 152 mental health cases closed vs 179 opened



Mental Health In/Outs per Month



### Commentary:

- Our psychologist helps with a **range of student problems** – some of these require ongoing support, and others may only require a limited number of sessions.
- Students feel increasingly more comfortable asking for psychological support after sessions were conducted to **de-stigmatize perceptions around mental health**.



1. Overview of Shatila 1

**2. Academic Year Highlights**

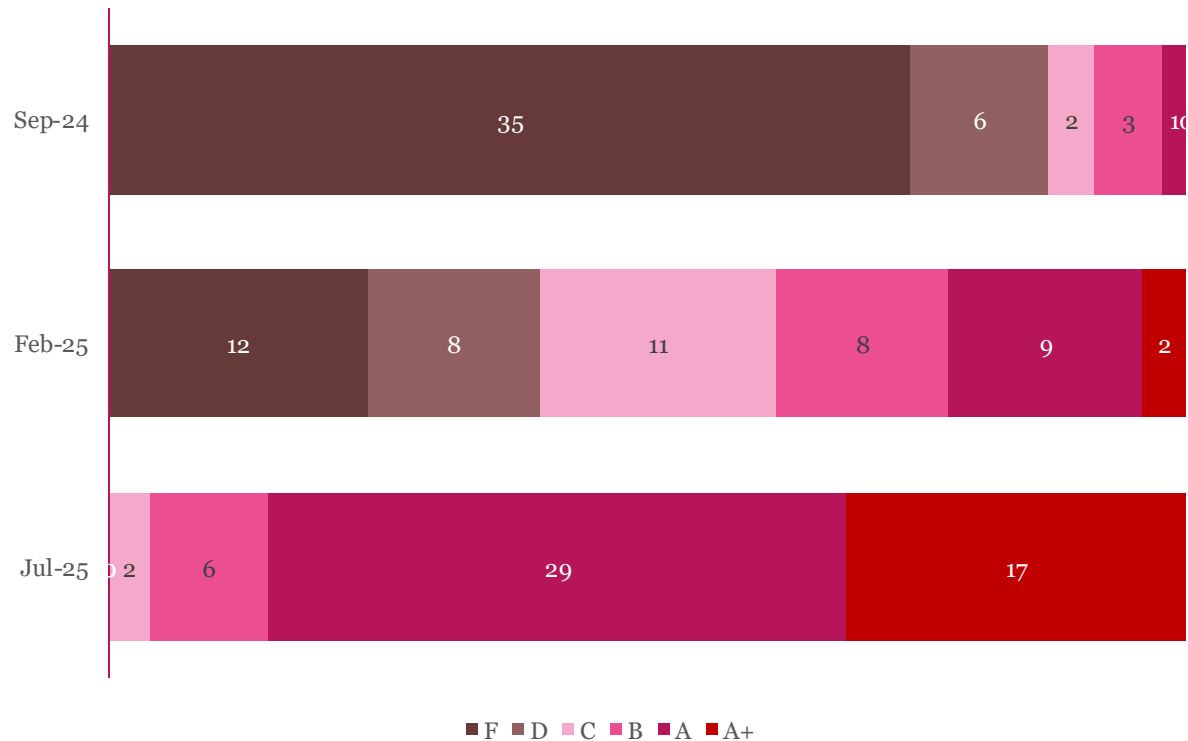
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## Our level 2 students made fantastic progress in Arabic – 85% achieved an A or A+

### Marks Distribution in Arabic A2



Source: Shatila 1 assessment results – July 2025



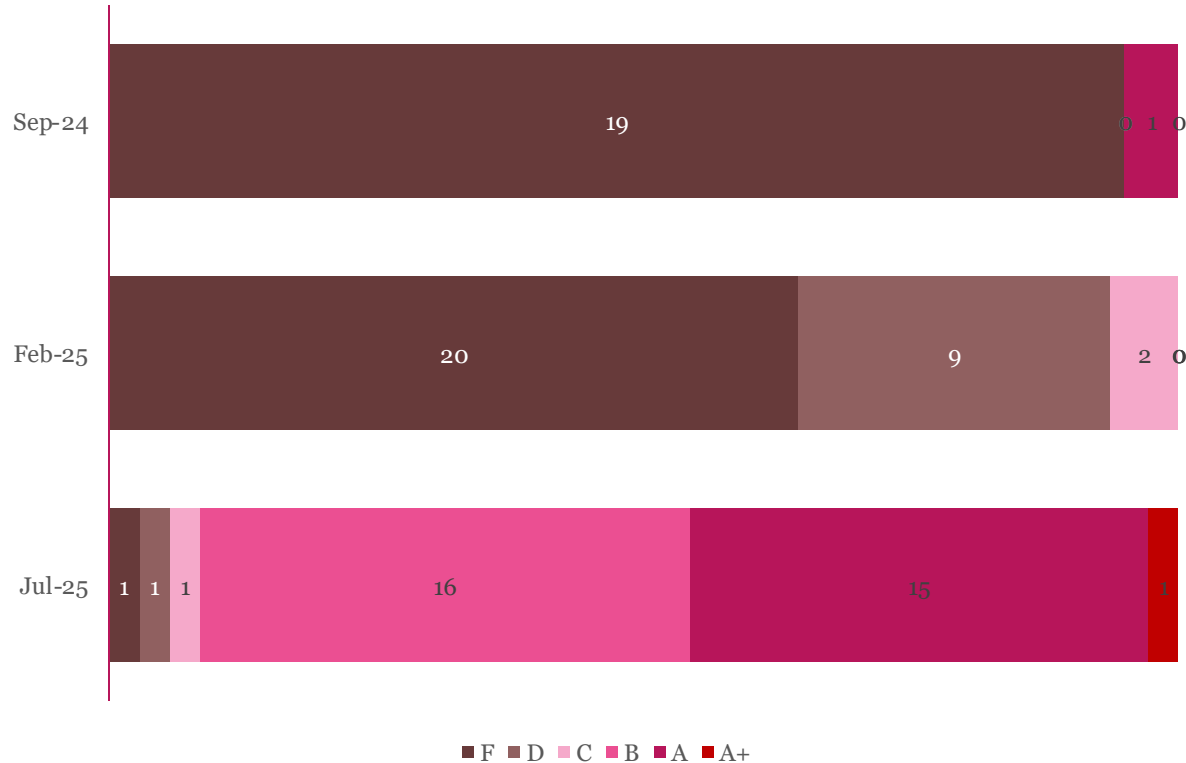
### Commentary:

- Progressing from level 1, where most students joined unable to read or write in their native language, to level 2, students have made big progress this year.
- In September 2024, only 9% of students achieved a B or above. By **July 2024 this had risen to 96%.**
- Arabic assessments include listening, reading and writing sections.



**Our students have been making steady progress in English,  
with 46% of them achieving an A or A+**

### Marks Distribution in English B1



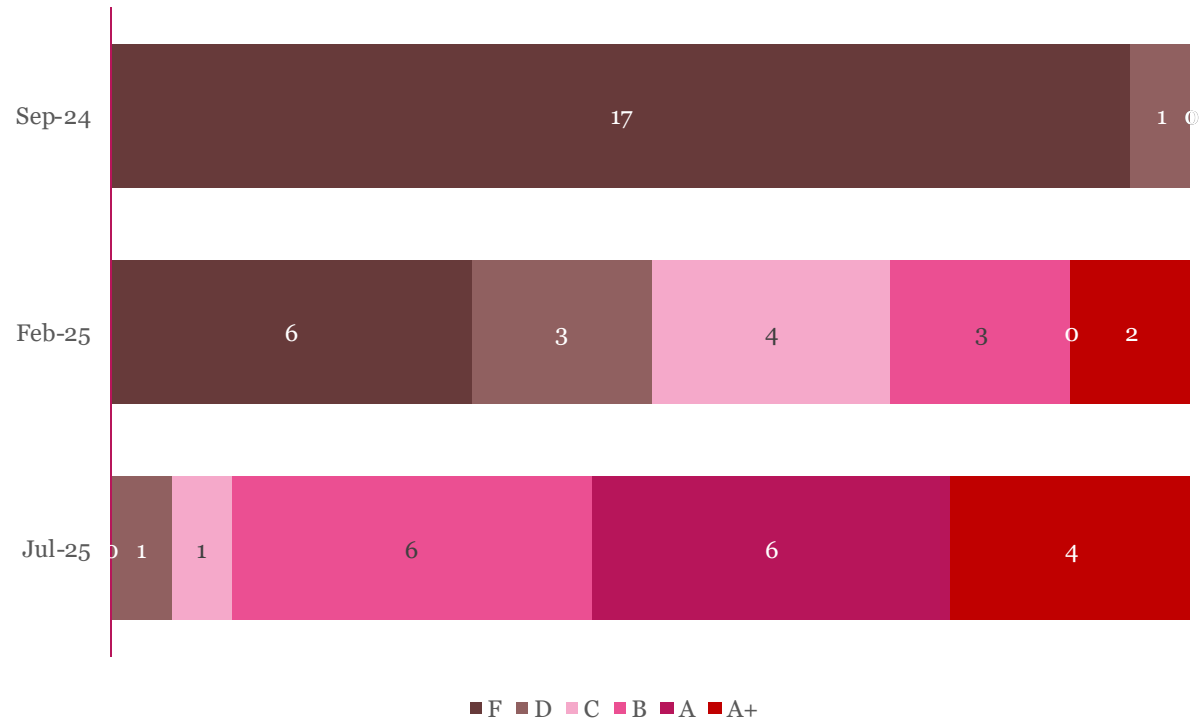
Source: Shatila 1 assessment results – July 2025

### Commentary:

- In September 2024, 95% of students failed their B1 English exam. By July 2025, 97% of students passed, with 91% scoring a B or higher.
- Students practiced their **writing** in a recent task where they wrote a school newspaper article reporting on updates at Alsama using journalistic language.
- They simultaneously practiced their **reading** by looking at different news articles and analysing the difference in language between real and fake news.

# And our top students have been challenging themselves in Maths GCSE – 89% got a B or higher in the final evaluation

Marks Distribution in Math GCSE



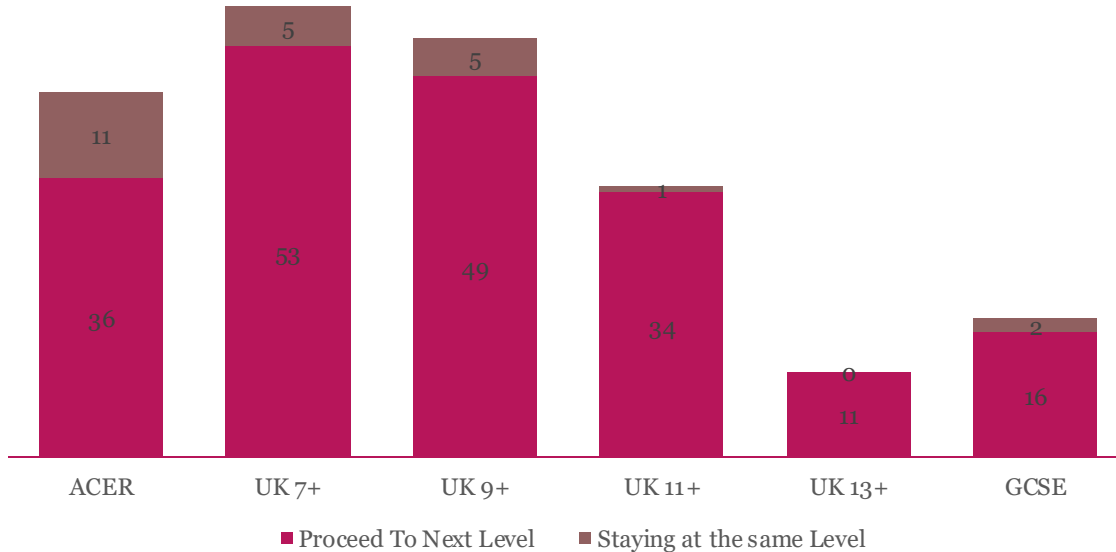
## Commentary:

- Our Year 5 students reached **GCSE level**, learning topics such as **algebra, geometry, statistics**, and **problem-solving** to prepare for their exams.
- In September 2024, **94%** of students were graded an F in their exams. By the end of the year, **0%** scored an F and an impressive **22% obtaining an A+ grade**.



## With top marks comes progress through levels – 89% of students proceeded to the next level in Maths

Number of Students Proceeding to The Next Maths Level



### Commentary:

- Our students make **impressive progress**, testament to their talent, determination, and the high-quality teaching they receive at Alsama.
- Nearly all of our students are progressing to the next level in their Maths studies.



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## We won our first international prize in 2024 - the Library of Congress Literacy Award

# LIBRARY

LIBRARY  
OF CONGRESS



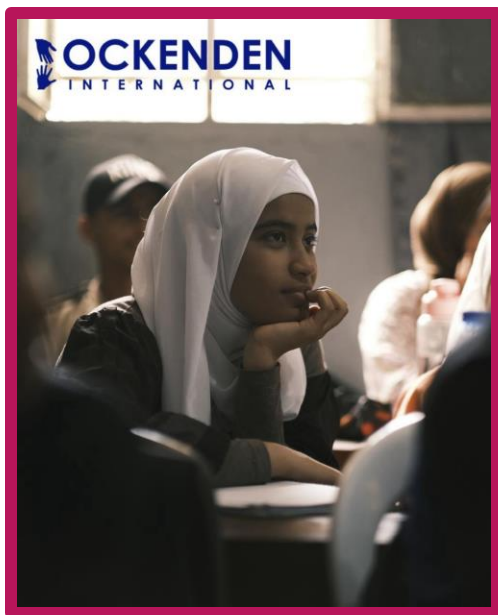
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### Commentary:

- The Congress Literacy Award is given for an **outstanding contribution** to **increasing literacy levels**, recognizing organizations that have demonstrated deep and consistent dedication to improving literacy.
- This award goes hand in hand with one of our great missions: to **eradicate illiteracy in just 6 months**.
- The Library of Congress is located in America's capital city, Washington, D.C. In the photos, our Head of Development, Richard, and volunteer, Laura, have been invited to receive the award.



And our second in 2025 - the Ockenden International Prize



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**Commentary:**

- Alsama won the 2025 Ockenden International Prize, our second major international award.
- **Out of 194 submissions** from 56 countries, we are **one of just five winners**.
- The prize recognizes our work in helping refugees and displaced people build **self-reliant lives**.
- The judges were profoundly impressed by Alsama's impact and were especially struck by the fact that Alsama was **built by and for refugees**, within their own **context** and by our strong commitment to expanding **education for women and girls**.



## After just 5 years of operating, Shatila 1 is now officially WASC<sup>1</sup> Accredited



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### Commentary:

- Shatila 1 has been granted accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).
- This follows the submission of a comprehensive school report and an initial visit by a team of educators, who evaluated the school's program in terms of student learning and well-being.
- Achieving WASC accreditation on our first visit is a significant accomplishment, as few schools are awarded this status at the outset.
- Our accreditation is valid through June 30, 2028, marking a crucial milestone in our ongoing journey of excellence and development.



<sup>1</sup> WASC: Western Association for Schools and Colleges

## In other news - our top students are progressing to tertiary education



Source: Shatila 1 Education Department, December 2024

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### Commentary:

- Our Year 6 students have just **one year** to go **before graduating** from our 6-year curriculum.
- These students attended **information sessions** with three **universities** in their fifth year - Leicester, Cambridge, and Arizona - providing guidance on selection, application processes, potential majors and career paths. Pictured is a Zoom meeting with University of Leicester.
- Students also started a **guidance program**, where they received one-to-one sessions with a career guidance coach who advised on CV and personal statement preparation.



With the help of the G12++, which is well on its way to launch this academic year (February 2026)



Proves **high school**  
**level capabilities**

... and mastery of  
**essential life skills**



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### Commentary:

- We developed the G12++, an exam that tests 5 subjects to 'traditional' grade 12 graduation level and is tailored to the 'realities of displacement'.
- The exam will increase refugee youth's access to universities and employers.
- By 2040, we hope the G12++ will become the **global standard** for **refugee education certification**.
- Photos show refugee youth from Lebanon and China taking the "**Beta-test**" - our pilot test.



## Oula won the *Ambassador for a Day* competition shadowing the British Ambassador to Lebanon, marking the 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive win for an Alsama student



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### Commentary:

- There were **350 applicants** who submitted an essay for the competition which was won by Oula Shahoud, our student from Year 3.
- She shadowed the British ambassador for a day and attended a meeting with the **Minister of the Environment**.
- She spoke about leadership, freedom, and gender equality:

*"Being an ambassador is not simple, but it's powerful. Don't hesitate. Be a woman of your freedom, without fear. Whatever your challenge is, you can overcome it. The future of gender is in your hands."*

- We are lucky to have had her representing Alsama.



**Our individual student stories are marked with significant growth, ownership, and enthusiasm for the future**



**Omar Imran Zeniqa - 18 years old  
joined Alsama in 17.01.2022**

Before Alsama, Omar studied briefly at school but was unable to complete his studies. Upon joining Alsama, Omar's passion for learning was ignited. Here, he has grown personally and academically, achieving fluency in English and literacy in Arabic, including the ability to recite Arabic poetry. As recognition of Omar's efforts and engaging personality, he has now joined the Welcomers Team where he guides visitors around the school.



**Abed Al Hay - 15 years old  
joined Alsama in 11.04.2022**

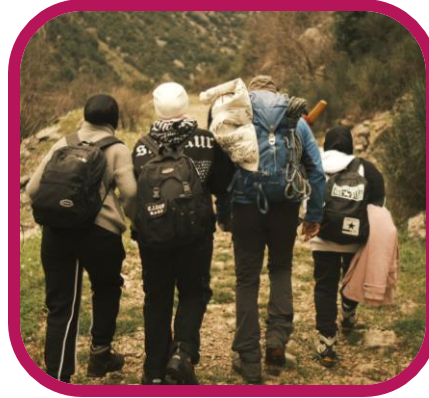
Abed was illiterate when he joined Alsama. He applied himself to his studies and soon made big progress academically and is now at the Professional 1 level. He has been identified as particularly gifted in drawing, especially anime. He describes it as not just a hobby, but something he truly enjoys and excels at. He has ambitious goals for the future and, with his talent and determination, will soon make these a reality.

**And beyond education, our students have participated in a diverse range of extracurricular activities. Notable highlights include:**



### **Music Performance**

An incredible music performance was delivered by students from Shatila 1 and Shatila 2. We were highly impressed with their new talents in music, exhibited in single and band performances.



### **Duke of Edinburgh**

Students completed bronze level Duke of Edinburgh award, camping in Arz Al Shouf for one night and practiced their orienteering skills by navigating themselves across a long walk.



### **Art Exhibition**

Students displayed their art at three exhibitions in the institute this academic year. These showcased students' remarkable talent in drawing and painting. They conveyed their personal stories through their creative pieces.



### **Yoga**

Students remain committed to their yoga classes, which were especially important during the war. They sometimes needed to practice certain postures to calm their nerves and control their emotions. The importance of gratitude and self-reflection was also introduced to students.

**And we have exciting plans for the future – preparing our first cohort of graduates, expanding our art programs, and continuing our Duke of Edinburgh expeditions**



### **2026 Graduates**

Our Year 6 students are due to graduate this year, and some will move on to tertiary education. They will sit many exams, including SATs, IELTS, and G12++. They will also submit university applications to study a range of subjects, from Maths to Law.



### **Duke of Edinburgh Hiking & Camping**

With the success of launching our first Duke of Edinburgh camping program last year, students will have the opportunity to obtain their silver award. We will also continue to conduct hikes with progressively more challenging levels.



### **Art Exhibitions**

More than 100 student paintings will be on display in a London gallery this year, where visitors will be able to purchase pieces for a fixed price. These funds will be given back to the students, who will invest it in educational equipment such as laptops. And more international exhibitions will be coming!



**A sneak peek of our students' artwork @ St James Market Pavilion 25 Sept  
- 31 Oct – see below a teaser of the impressive pieces on display**

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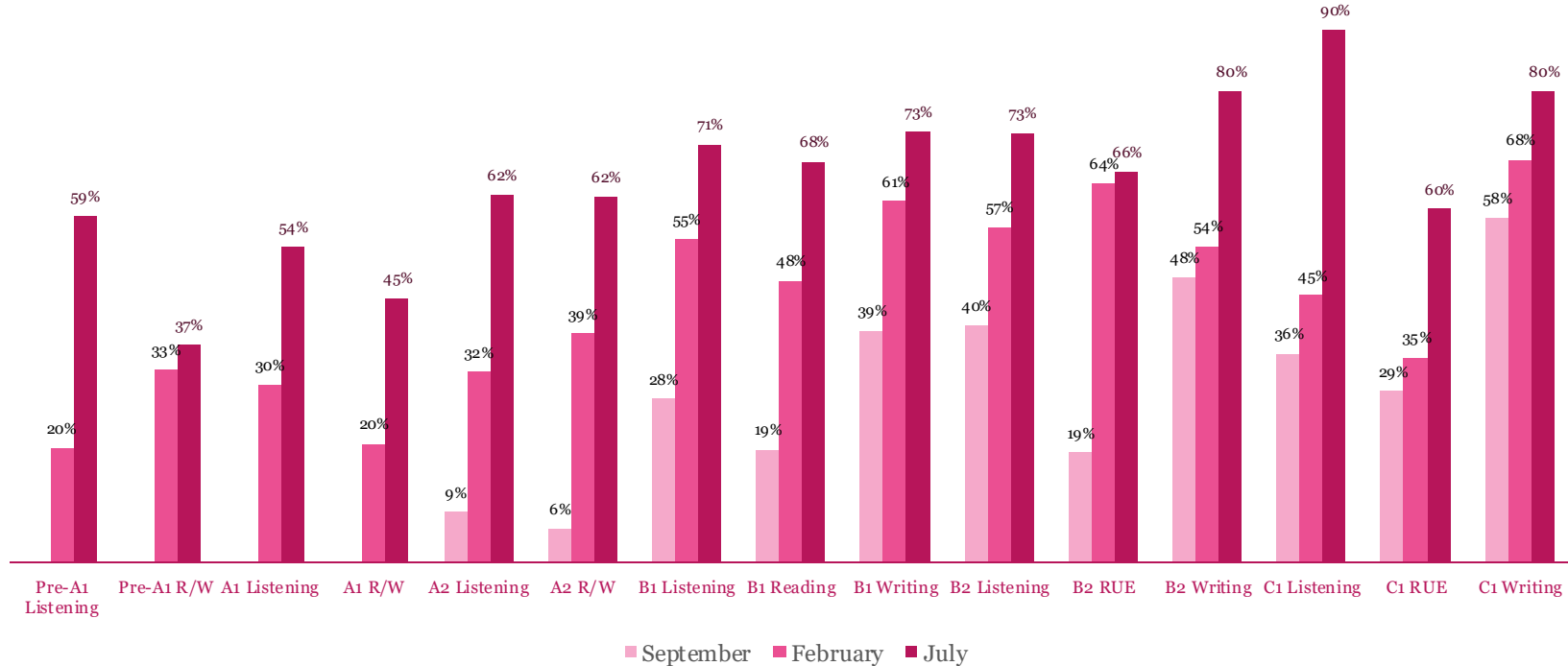
4. Appendix (Detailed Assessment Results)



# Students have made strong progress in English across the board – in particular, achieving 2.5x improvement in C1 listening



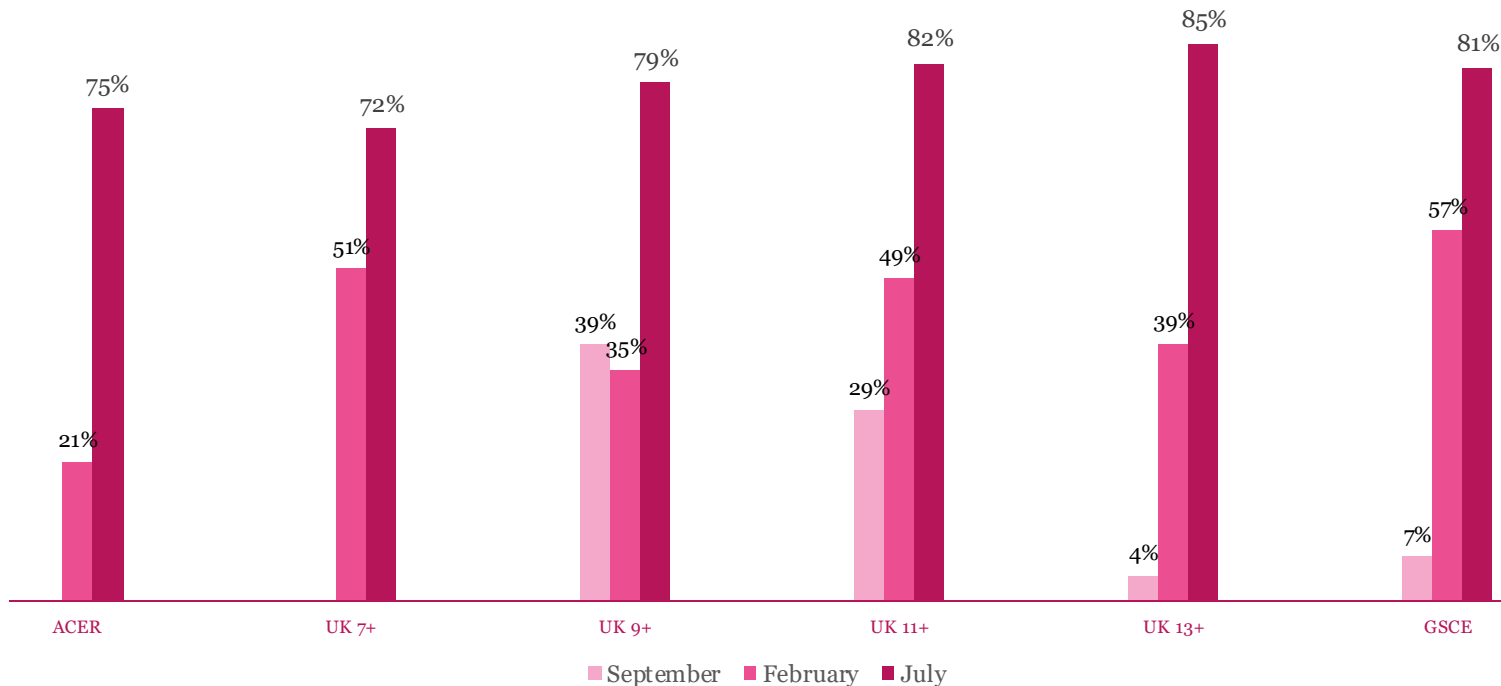
## English Average Percentages per Level



**Results have also been strong in Maths – a significant 21.3x improvement in UK 13+ level**

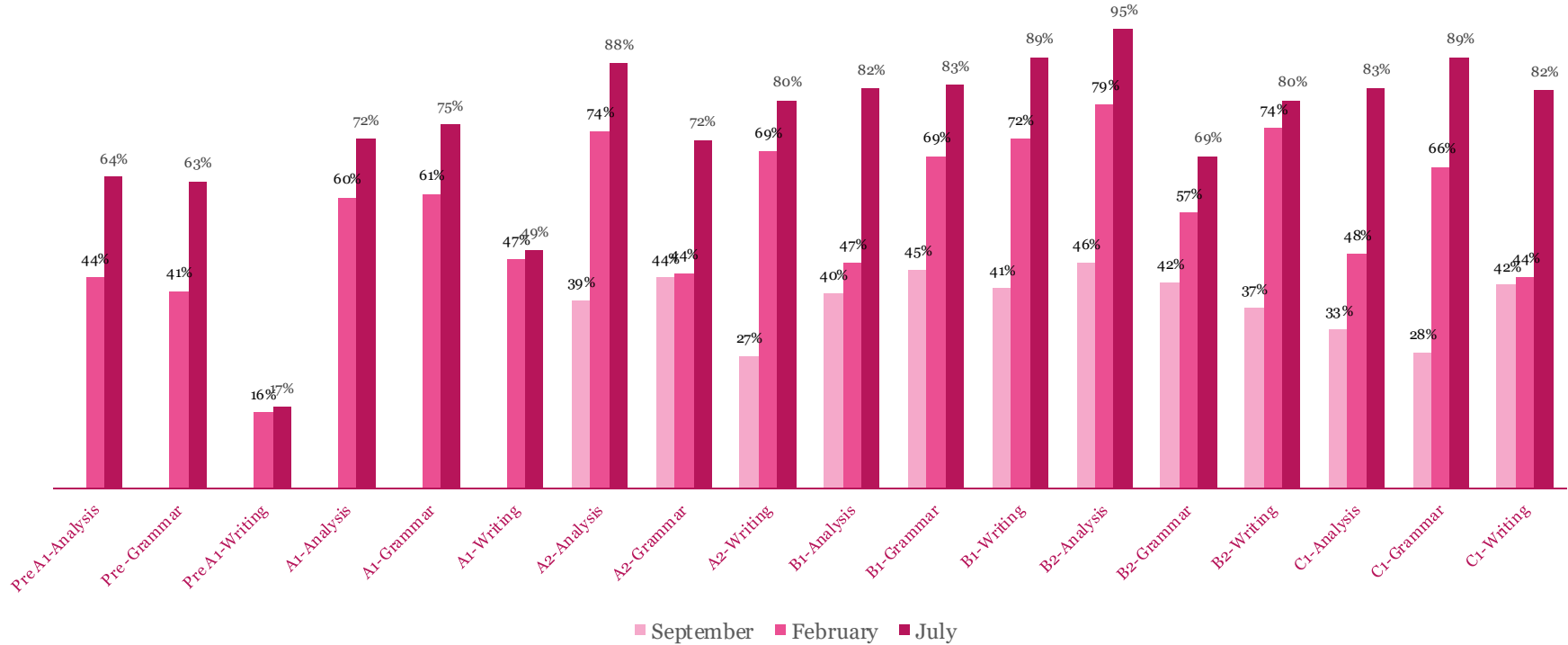


### Maths Average Percentages per Level



**Progress has also been made in Arabic – an average of 3x improvement in A2 writing is a particular highlight**

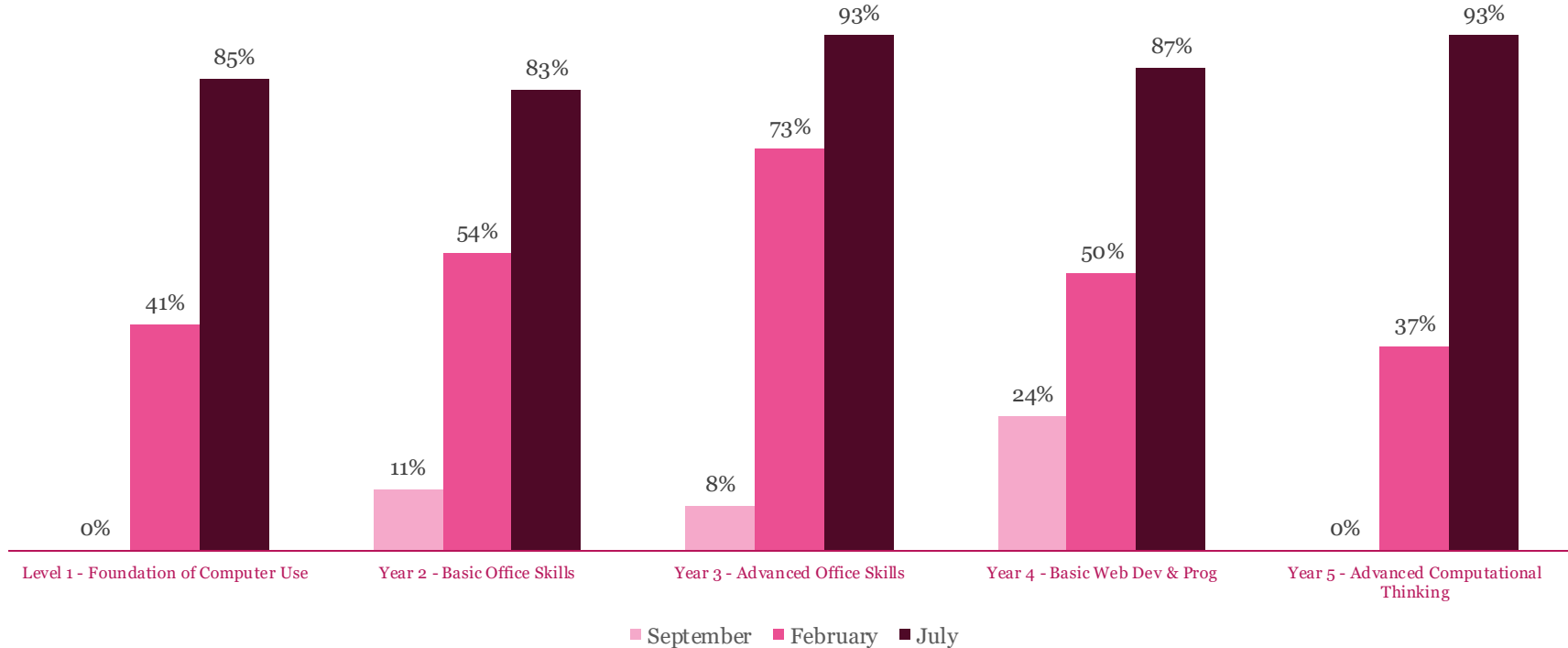
**Arabic Average Percentages per Level**



**We have seen fantastic progress in IT – especially in Year 3,  
where students improved by 11.6x**



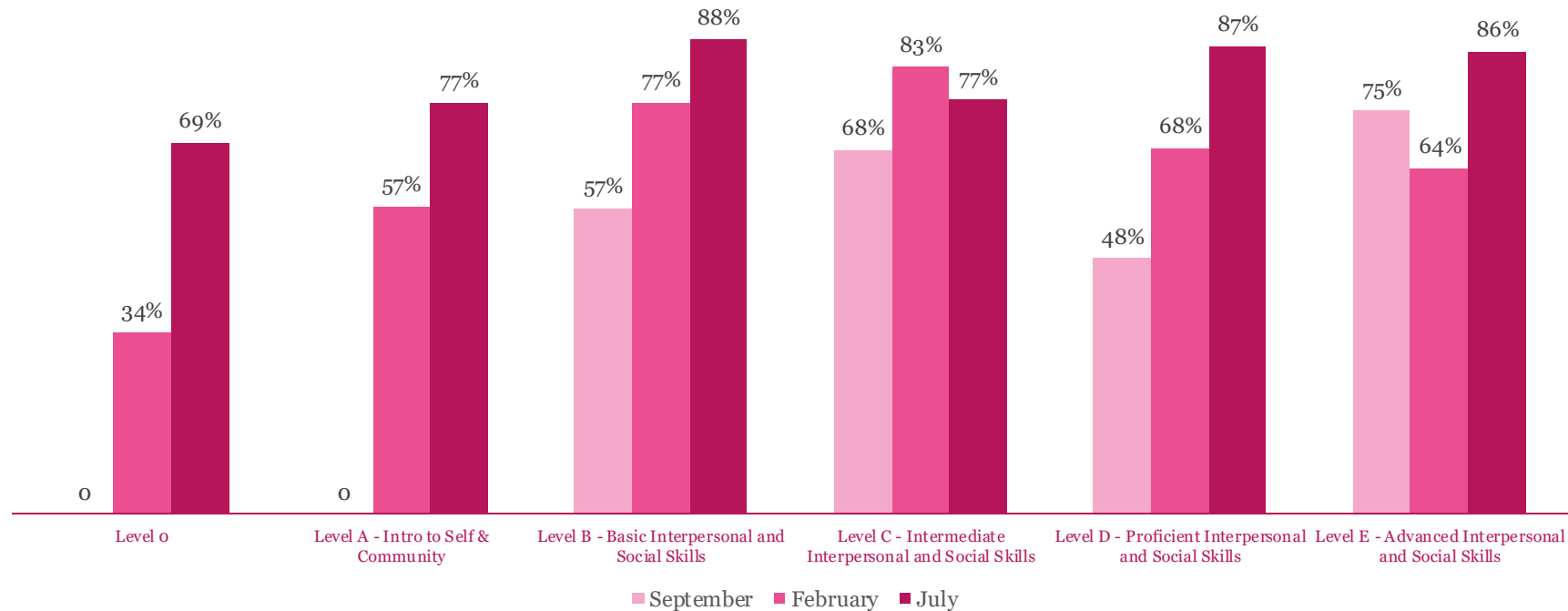
### IT Average Percentages per Level



# Students have been making strong progress in Awareness – our level D students improved by a significant 1.9x



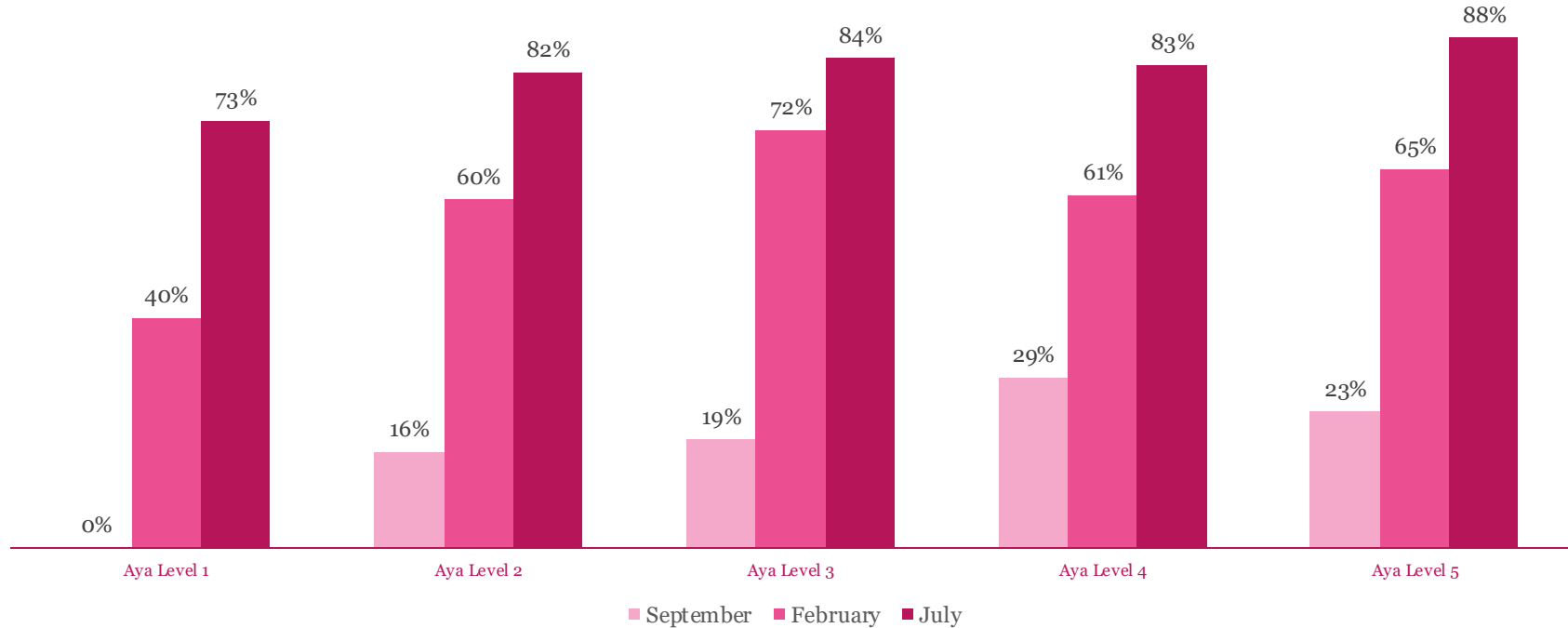
Awareness Average Percentages per Level



**In Yoga, students have shown good progress across all levels – with an impressive 5.1x improvement at Level 2**



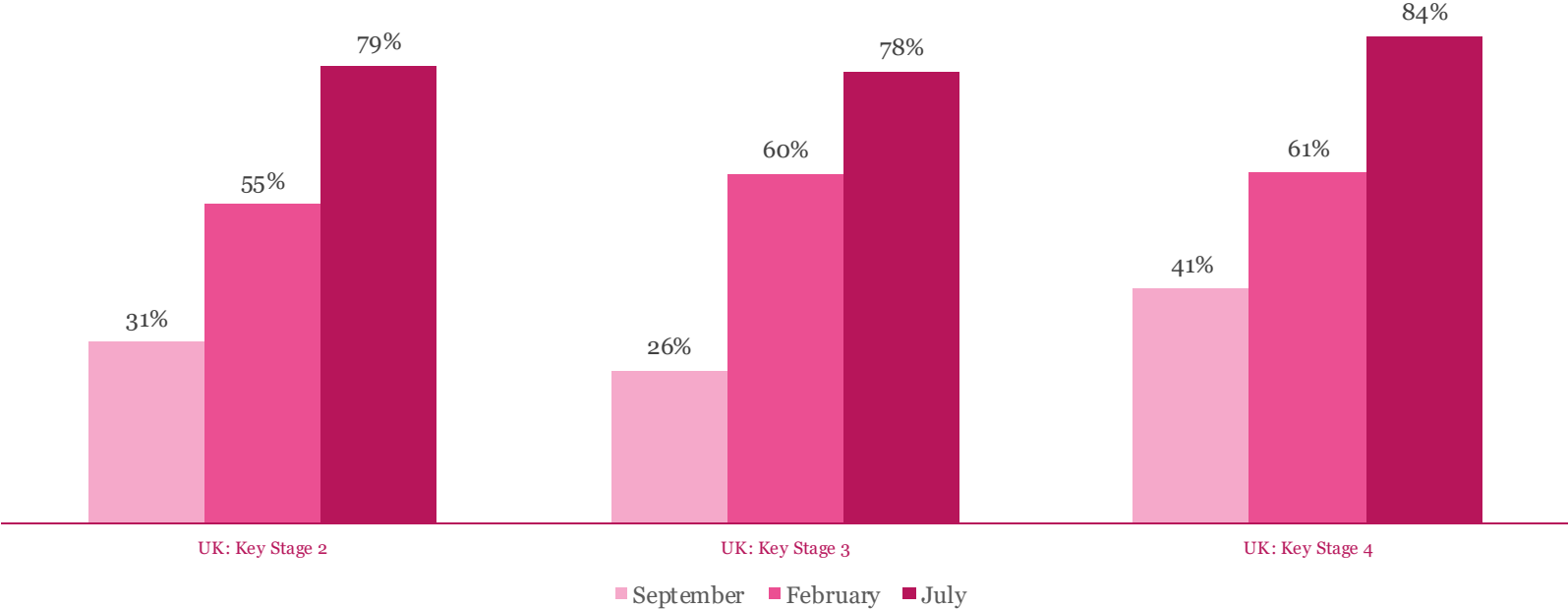
### Yoga Average Percentages per Level



# Students have been making great progress in science – achieving 3x improvement in Key Stage 3

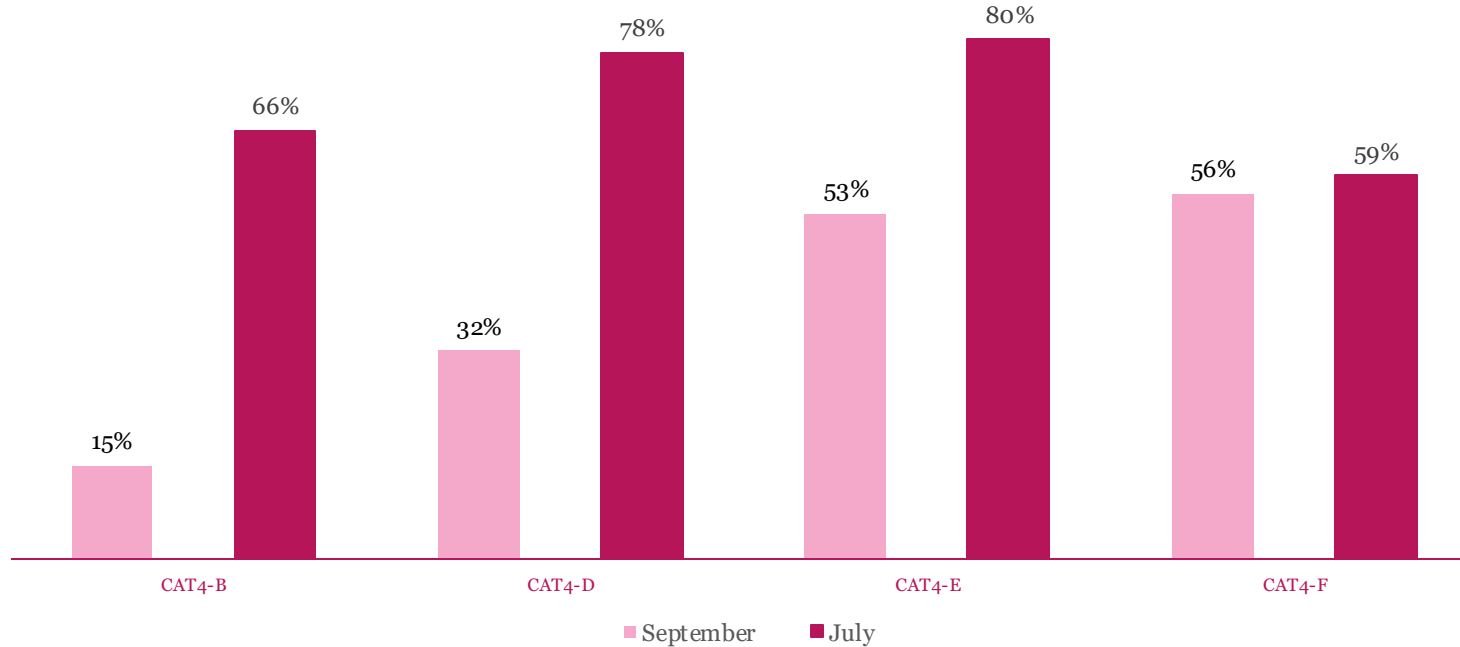


Science Average Percentages per Level



## In Logical Reasoning, students have also shown steady progress

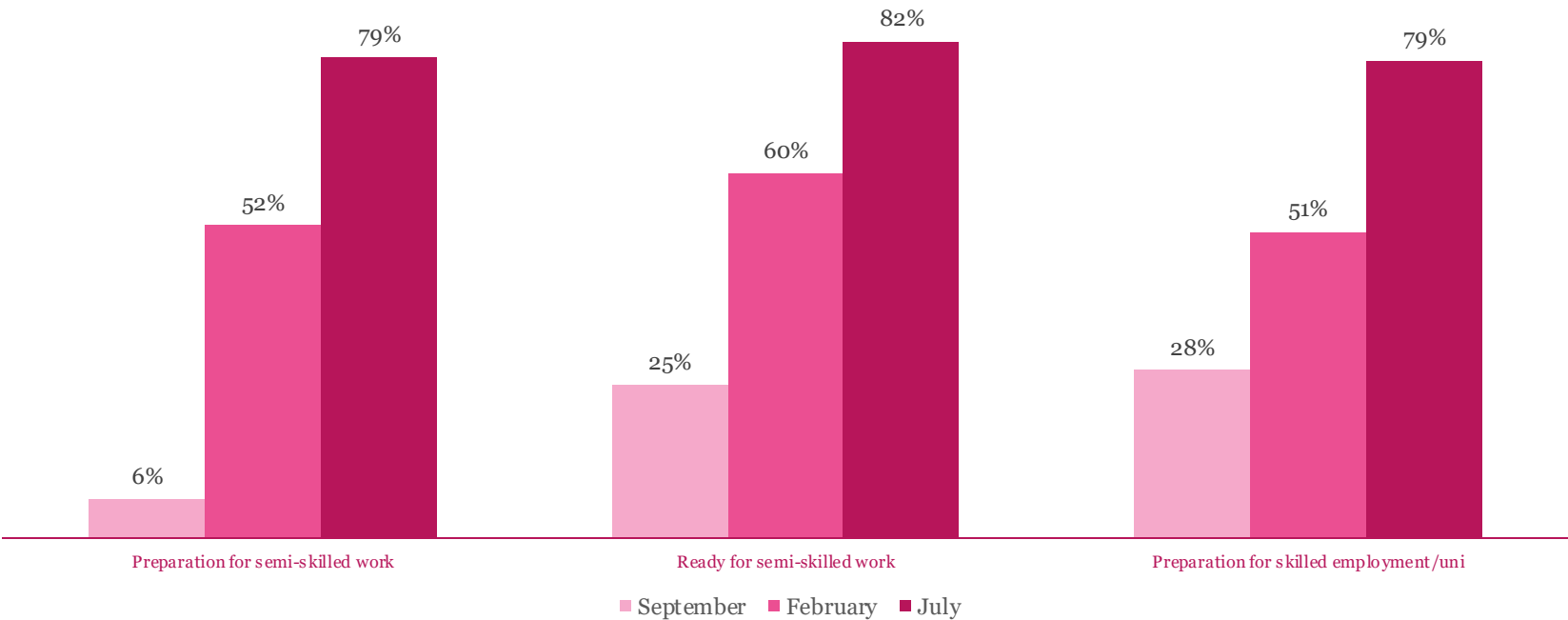
### Logical Reasoning Average Percentages per Level



And our professional students have shown almost 2.8x improvement across both levels



Professionalism Average Percentages per Level



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**Thank you**

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