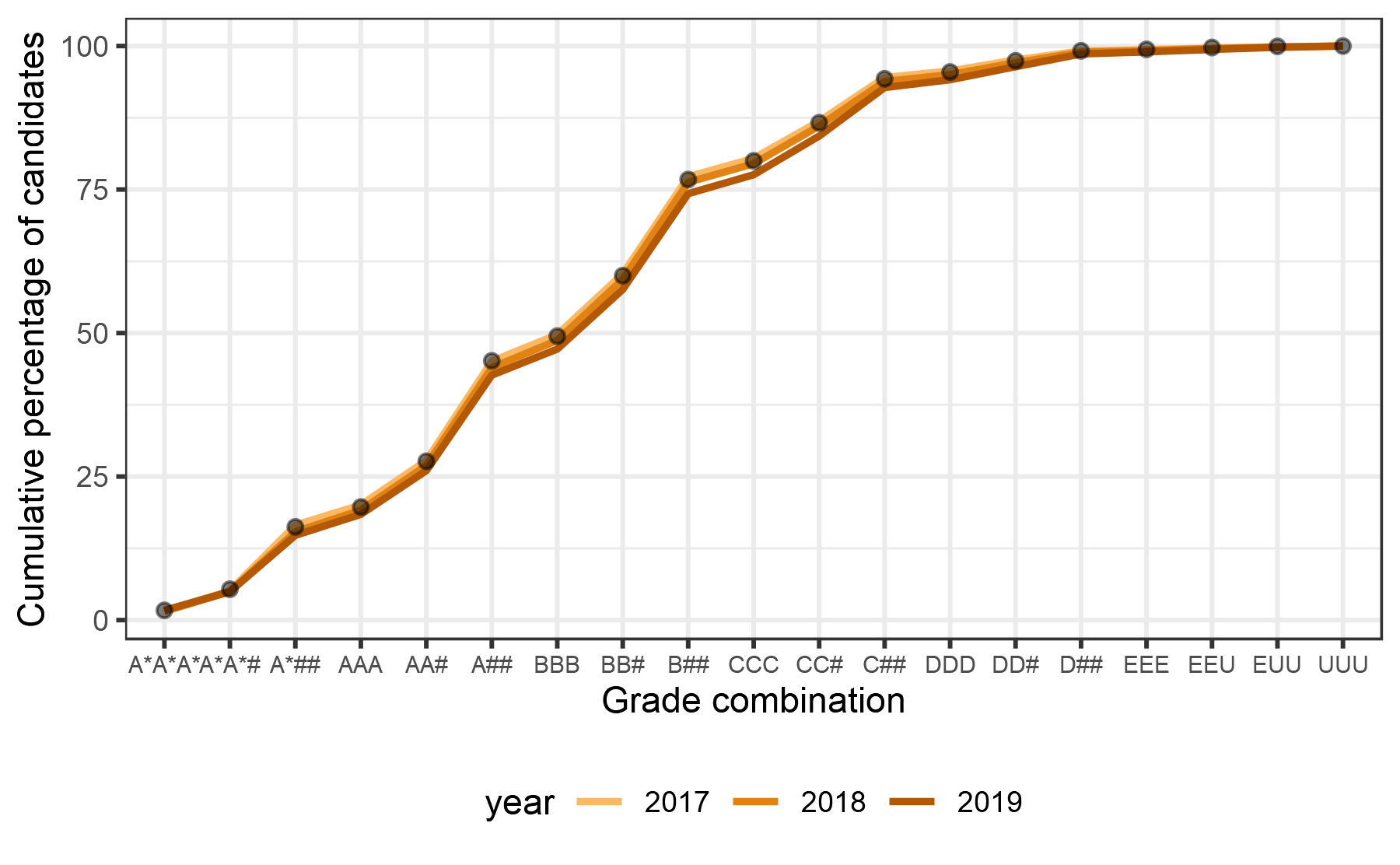
Grade profiles

## Patterns in grade combinations

The combinations of grades that students were awarded at A level were distributed very similarly to previous years. Focusing on candidates that were awarded 3 A levels (the majority), this can be seen clearly when the cumulative percentage of students awarded sets of grade combinations is visualised in comparision to previous years (Figure 1).



*Figure 1. Cumulative percentage of candidates covered by grade combinations. Attainment decreases from left to right (3 A\* grades on left of plot to 3 U grades on right of plot). Hashes (#) represent any grade lower than the first grade in the three character strings, eg CC# represents candidates awarded 2 C grades and a D, E, or U grade. Lines show the trajectories for 2017 to 2019 respectively. Points show the results based on calculated grades in 2020.*

*Table 1. Percentage and cumulative percentage of total candidates awarded grade combinations between 2017 and 2020. Hashes (#) represent any grade lower than the first grade in the three character strings, eg CC# represents candidates awarded 2 C grades and a D, E, or U grade.*

Table 1.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Percentage of total candidates | | | | Cumulative percentage of total candidates | | | |
| Grade combination | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
| A\*A\*A\* | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.7 | 1.7 |
| A\*A\*# | 3.6 | 3.4 | 3.2 | 3.7 | 5.1 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 5.4 |
| A\*## | 11.4 | 10.4 | 9.8 | 10.9 | 16.5 | 15.4 | 14.8 | 16.2 |
| AAA | 3.5 | 3.8 | 3.6 | 3.5 | 20.1 | 19.1 | 18.4 | 19.7 |
| AA# | 7.7 | 7.8 | 7.6 | 8.0 | 27.8 | 26.9 | 26.0 | 27.7 |
| A## | 17.3 | 17.1 | 16.6 | 17.5 | 45.1 | 44.0 | 42.7 | 45.2 |
| BBB | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.5 | 4.3 | 49.7 | 48.7 | 47.2 | 49.5 |
| BB# | 10.6 | 10.6 | 10.4 | 10.5 | 60.3 | 59.3 | 57.6 | 60.0 |
| B## | 16.9 | 16.9 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 77.2 | 76.3 | 74.3 | 76.7 |
| CCC | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 80.4 | 79.5 | 77.6 | 80.0 |
| CC# | 6.5 | 6.6 | 6.7 | 6.6 | 86.9 | 86.1 | 84.3 | 86.6 |
| C## | 7.6 | 7.8 | 8.4 | 7.7 | 94.5 | 93.8 | 92.8 | 94.3 |
| DDD | 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.4 | 1.2 | 95.6 | 95.0 | 94.1 | 95.5 |
| DD# | 1.9 | 2.1 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 97.6 | 97.1 | 96.4 | 97.4 |
| D## | 1.6 | 1.8 | 2.2 | 1.7 | 99.1 | 98.9 | 98.6 | 99.2 |
| EEE | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 99.4 | 99.2 | 99.0 | 99.4 |
| EEU | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 99.6 | 99.6 | 99.4 | 99.7 |
| EUU | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 99.9 | 99.8 | 99.8 | 99.9 |
| UUU | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Differences in the proportion of candidates awarded specific grade combinations in 2020 were similar to the degree of variation seen between years in other years (Table 2).

*Table 2. Proportion of candidates achieving the 20 most common grade combinations for candidates awarded 3 A levels form 2017 to 2020*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Percentage of total candidates | | | |
| Grade combination | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
| BBC | 7.9 | 8.0 | 7.8 | 7.7 |
| ABB | 7.1 | 7.2 | 7.1 | 6.9 |
| BCC | 7.0 | 7.1 | 7.0 | 6.9 |
| AAB | 6.1 | 6.2 | 6.1 | 6.1 |
| BCD | 5.4 | 5.3 | 5.3 | 5.3 |
| ABC | 5.3 | 5.2 | 5.0 | 5.3 |
| CCD | 4.9 | 4.9 | 5.1 | 4.9 |
| BBB | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.5 | 4.3 |
| A\*AA | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 4.2 |
| CDD | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.9 | 3.5 |
| AAA | 3.5 | 3.8 | 3.6 | 3.5 |
| CCC | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.3 |
| A\*AB | 3.2 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 3.0 |
| A\*A\*A | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 2.9 |
| CDE | 2.6 | 2.5 | 2.8 | 2.5 |
| BBD | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 2.2 |
| DDE | 1.5 | 1.6 | 1.9 | 1.6 |
| A\*A\*A\* | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.7 | 1.7 |
| ACC | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.7 |
| BDD | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |