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**Should offers to Widening Participation applicants be discounted?”**

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## Background

- Currently 20% UK schools supply 80% of medical students
- Secondary school-level performance is associated with increased chance of admission but, paradoxically, reduced academic achievement at university
- Efforts at ‘widening access’ have targeted able students from poorly performing schools (e.g. KCL EMDP course)
- Some medical schools already offer grade ‘discounts’ to applicants from poorly performing schools
- We need evidence to support this policy!
- UKCAT12 reported relationship between A level achievement, secondary school performance and year 1 medical school achievement
- Here we use national data from all 5 years of medical school to examine this relationship



## Methods

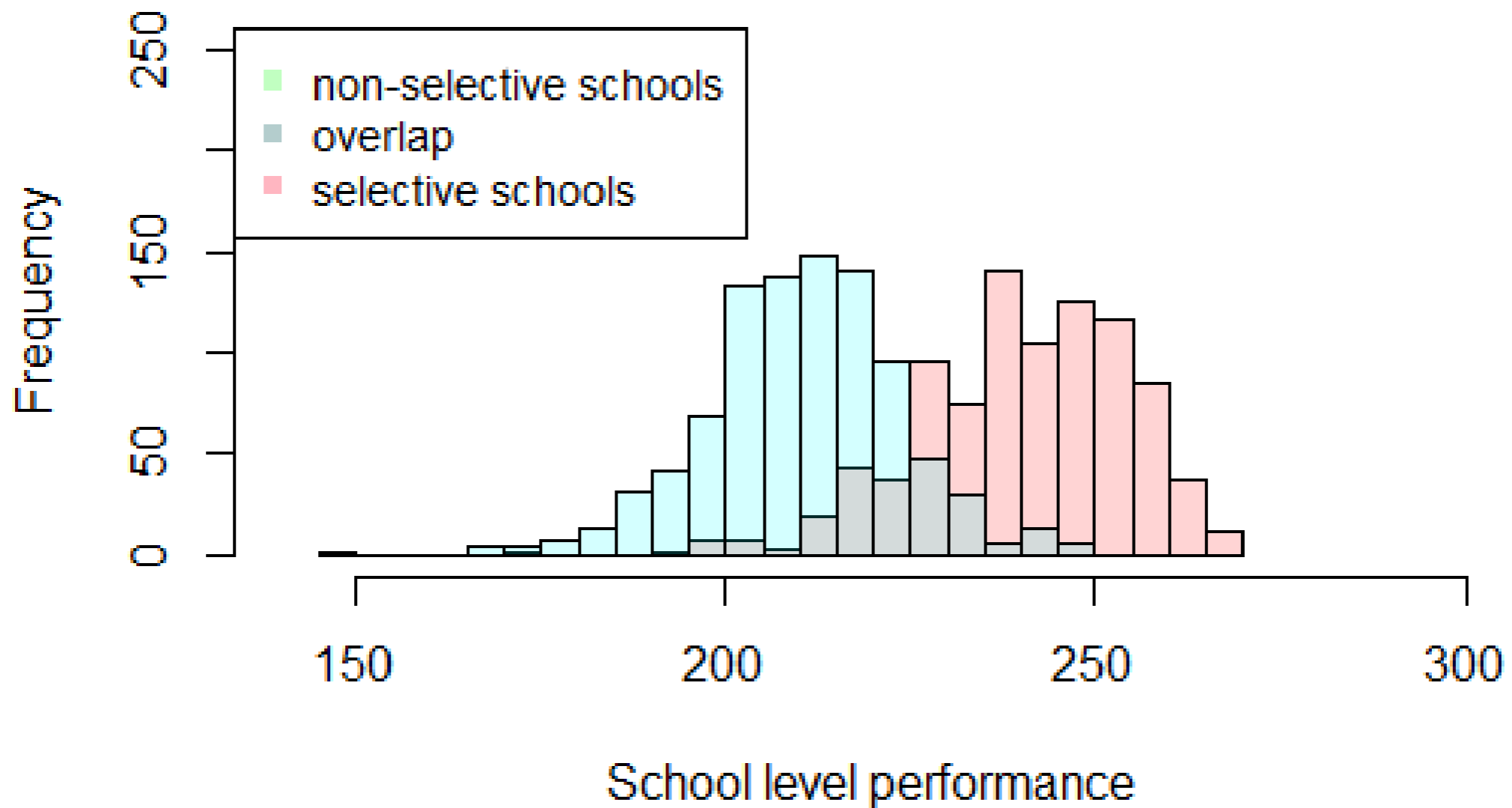
- What is the impact of secondary school level performance on medical school achievement?
- Multi-level analysis
  - 1) Reported average school level performance for a school in 2008 in terms of average exam grade per student (linked from English DfE data)
  - 2) GCE A level grades for entrants in medical school in 2008
  - 3) 'Theory' and 'skills'-based exams for years 1-5 of medical school
- Plot of predicted outcomes

# Results



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-selective schools tend to outperform non-selective, but some overlap

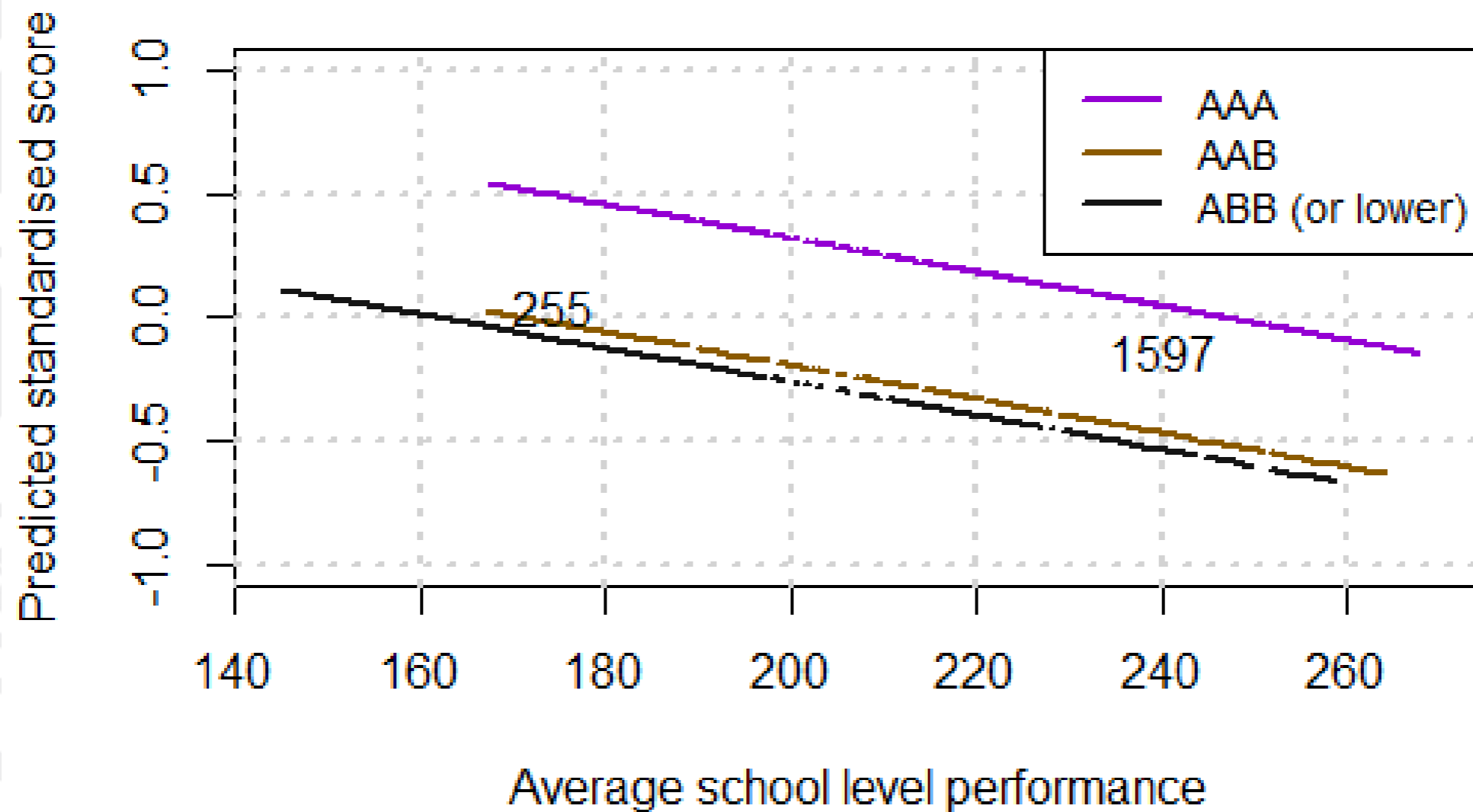


# Results



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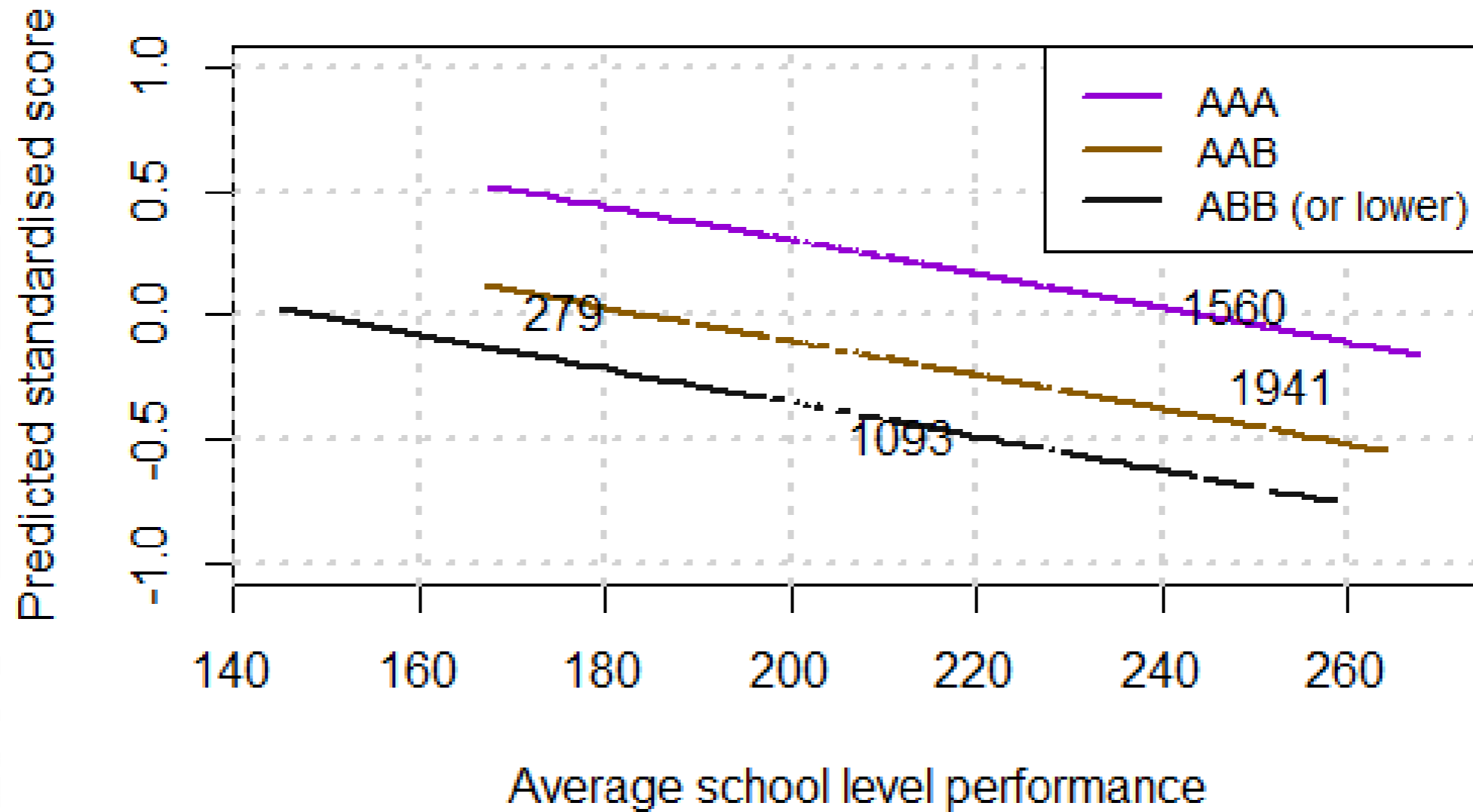
## Theory year 1



# Results



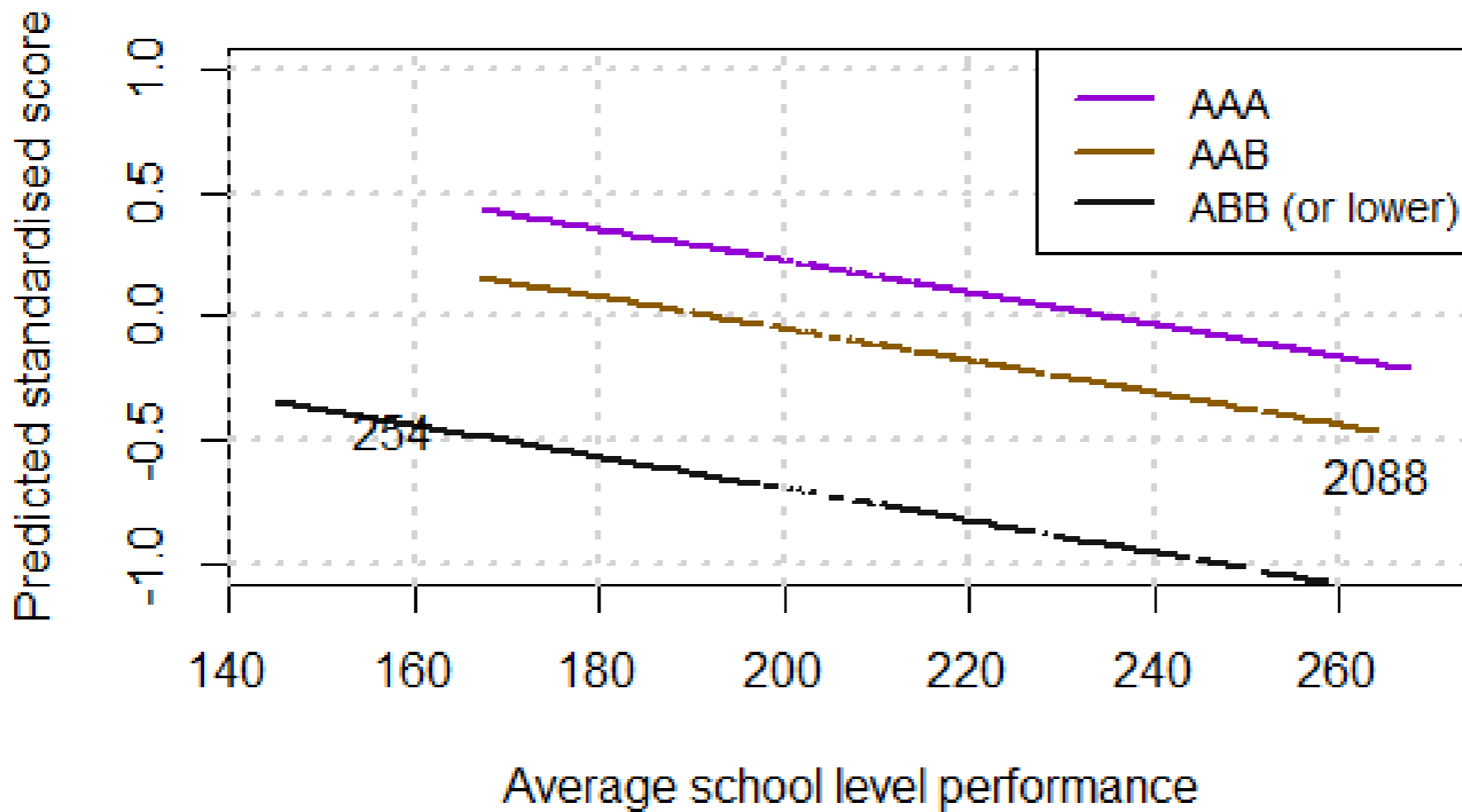
## Theory year 3



# Results



## Theory year 5





## Conclusion

- For a particular average school level score
  - Performance of AAA > AAB > ABB (or lower)
- **BUT** to some extent, grades adjustment are needed for fair comparison of ability
  - Performance of AAB equivalent to AAA
  - Performance of ABB equivalent to AAB
- The performance in theory exams between AAA and AAB is widest in year 1 but narrows as training progresses to year 5
- The performance in theory between AAB and ABB(or lower) is narrowest in year 1 but widens as training progresses to year 5
- Somewhat similar trend, though less pronounced, for 'skills' exams





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**Discussion?**

# References



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