



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

News Release

Issued: Wednesday 27 June 2018

Extra year in class can make pupils smarter, IQ analysis shows

An extra year of schooling can noticeably increase a person's IQ, research suggests.

Researchers have found that an extra year of schooling leads to a small but noticeable increase in intelligence scores.

The study provides the strongest evidence yet that education raises intelligence test scores.

Research has long shown that years of education and intelligence are correlated. However, it has been unclear whether this is because education boosts intelligence, or because starting off with a higher IQ score helps people to stay in school for longer.

In this latest study, scientists at the University of Edinburgh and the University of Texas at Austin examined 42 datasets including results collected from more than 600,000 people.

They examined the link between time spent in education and performance on IQ tests.

Each data set provided intelligence scores obtained from tests of abilities such as reasoning, factual knowledge, and memory, and included participants who were six or older and cognitively healthy.

Overall, they found that an additional year of schooling improved people's IQ scores by between one and five points.

Lead Researcher Dr Stuart Ritchie, at the University of Edinburgh's School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences, said: "The most surprising finding was how long-lasting the effects seemed to be, appearing even for people who completed intelligence tests in their 70s and 80s. Something about that educational boost seemed to be beneficial right across the lifespan."

The researchers also noted that each type of study had strengths and weaknesses, and that the findings raise several new questions that future research will have to address. For example, large and reliable studies will be needed to help understand how, exactly, education has these IQ-boosting effects.

The study is published in *Psychological Science*. Link to paper: <https://bit.ly/2MYOPoZ>

For further information, please contact: Joanne Morrison, Press and PR Office, tel +44 131 651 4266, email joanne.morrison@ed.ac.uk

Ranked among the top universities in the world