APPENDIX B - INSIGHT Local Benchmark Measures Summary

Introduction

Formally benchmarked educational attainment and achievement data are released at various points throughout the course of each subsequent academic year with an emphasis on the provision, and use of two main sets of comparable measures, for the purpose of detailed analysis by education authorities and schools.

The first of these releases, the **Local Benchmark Measures**, which are reflected in the summary below, offer a pre-review (i.e. prior to completion of the appeals process) evaluation of outcomes from examination diet and end of year achievement assessments of all Senior Phase pupils undertaking evaluated work aligning with the Scottish Qualifications Framework

The Framework encompasses Scottish Qualification Authority, Vocational, Skills for Work and Foundation Apprenticeship qualifications, along with a range of personal development courses and activities. Each of these in combination contribute to a holistic assessment of the educational progress and achievement being made by our young people.

This cumulative year data is provided to education authorities in detail through the national INSIGHT Benchmarking Tool, which is released in September subsequent to completion of the prior academic year and is updated in February of the subsequent calendar year. This latter release encompasses the attainment and achievement of school leavers from the prior academic year, referred to as National Benchmarking Measures.

Evaluation of the data provided through each release of the Insight Tool is provided through an extensive, and on-going, analysis by the education authority and its partners which 'tests' the validity of the current National Improvement Framework Plan and informs the development of future Plans.

Benchmark Comparability

In the context of data comparisons between year cohorts and education authorities, including the Virtual and National Comparators, there are multiple influences at each level of achievement.

Of these, the profiles and characteristics of each pupil cohort e.g. SIMD status, language skills etc. are amongst the most important determinants of comparative achievement but course availability, presentation policies and course grading changes are also influential.

As examples of the influences noted above, an increasing number and proportion of our Senior Phase pupils were presented for assessment, and against higher SCQF levels, in 2023/24 than in most prior years. The levels of fluency in English Language/Reading of some of those pupils, including those more recently welcomed to the city, understandably, are also material to an appreciation of the range of attainment and achievement outcomes.

At the 2023 Pupil Census point 15.3 % of all secondary pupils were recorded as having English as an Additional Language, more than twice the national level of 6.6%. In September 2024, the unvalidated Census data indicated that this figure had increased to 17.2%, with 1,656 recorded as having an Additional Support Need related to this characteristic, some 85% greater than in 2018/19 when the number was 894.

At the same time, the quality and scope of educational provision and teaching seeks to mitigate both the natural and assessment-based data variations in the outcomes between and among our young people, and those of the city's benchmarks. The Virtual Comparator is a data construct that seeks to offer authorities additional comparability of outcomes taking into account similarities in the core profiles of pupils, although it does not account for differences in delivery models and locally set priorities within individual education authorities.

Data Continuity

In each of the past three years, the remaining mitigations applied to SQA attainment, initially as a response to the circumstances around the pandemic and the legacy impacts that this created, have increasingly been removed as more comprehensive assessments of some practical course activity has been re-instated. Consequently, the boundaries for each grade banding (A-C. A-D and No Award) in particular subjects, and across SCQF levels overall, have generally risen. In 2023/24, this increase equates to an average of 2 percentage points across all levels.
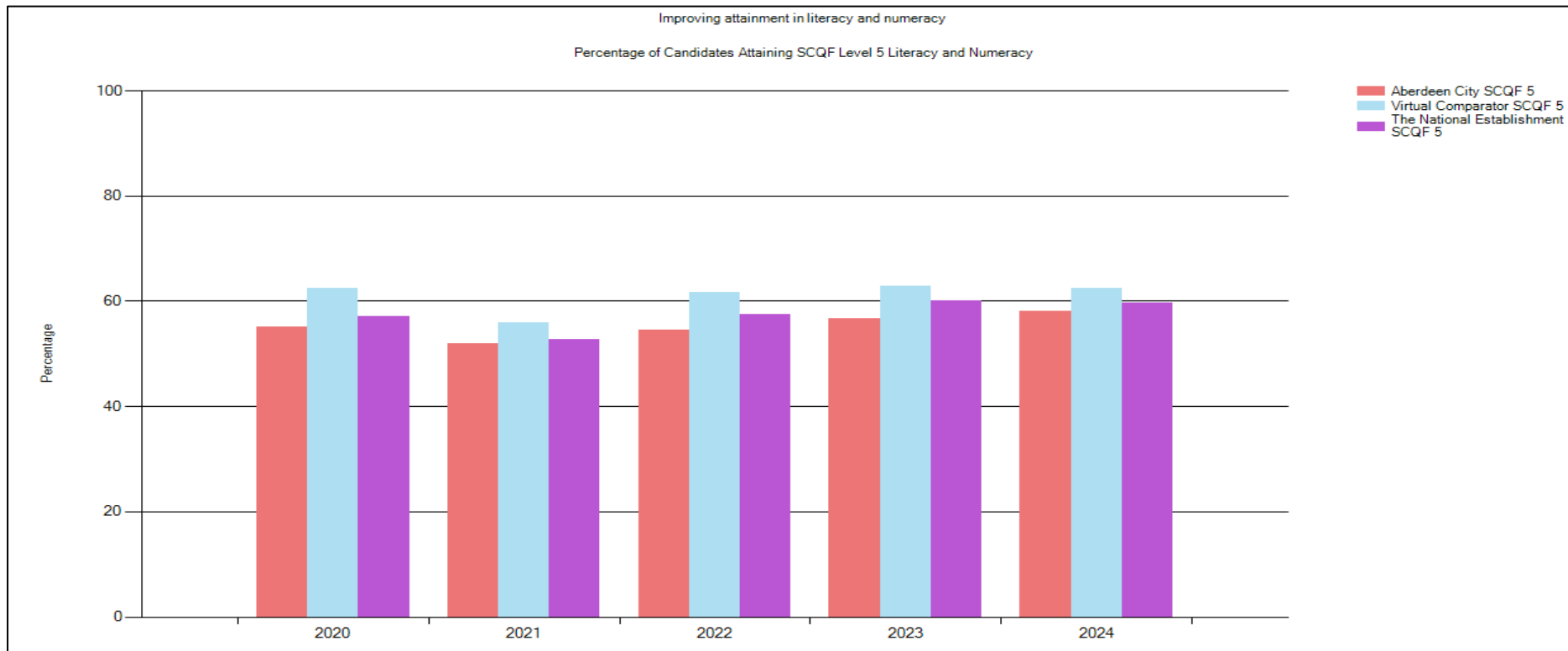
Summary

What follows are highlights of key measures and analysis from the September INSIGHT release, based on three core aspects of National Improvement Framework themes for Senior Phase: Literacy and Numeracy, Improvement for All and Breadth and Depth of qualifications

Literacy and Numeracy

Key Measure: Percentage of learners in **S4** (based on S4 roll) who achieve both literacy and numeracy at Level 5.

Trend Analysis

- 2024 results show an increasing trend with 58.1% of pupils achieving SCQF Level 5, representing the best outcome in five years.
- Work in this area has resulted in a narrowing of the gap to both the virtual comparator (4.4%) and the national figure (1.5%).

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

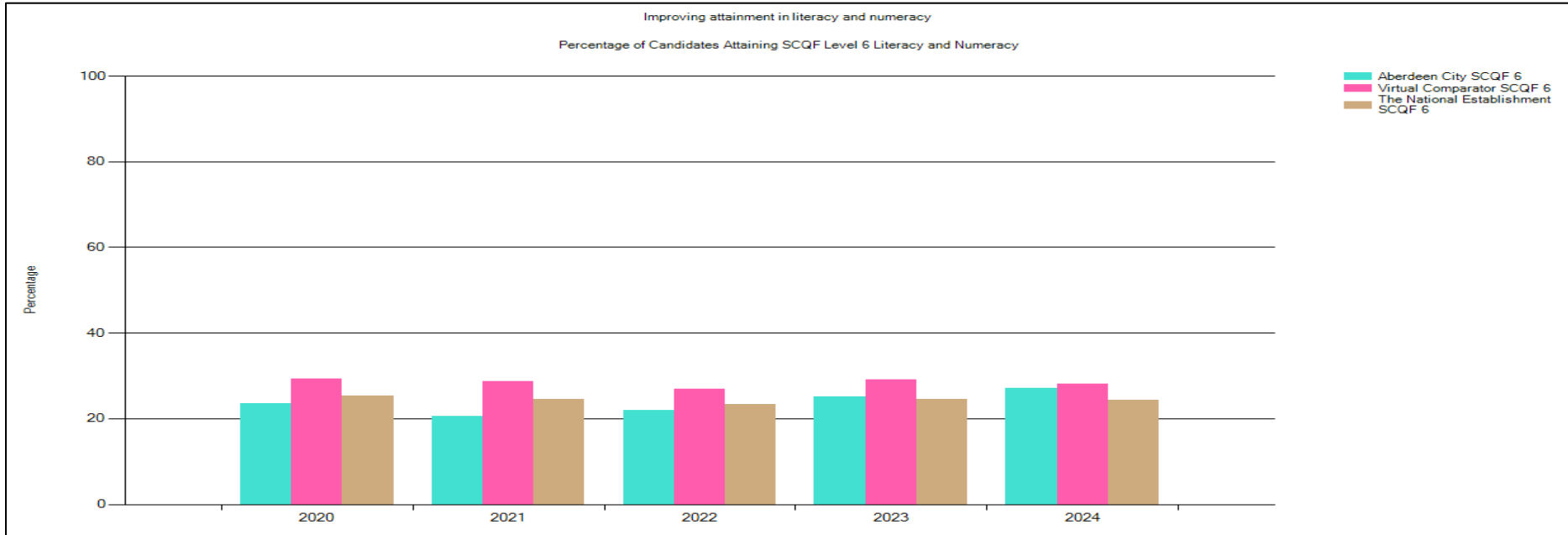Percentage of Candidates Attaining SCQF Level 5 Literacy and Numeracy

Key Measure: Percentage of learners in **S5** (based on S5 roll) who achieve <u>both</u> literacy and numeracy at Level 6.

Trend Analysis

- 2024 results show an increasing trend with 27.2% representing the best outcome in five years.
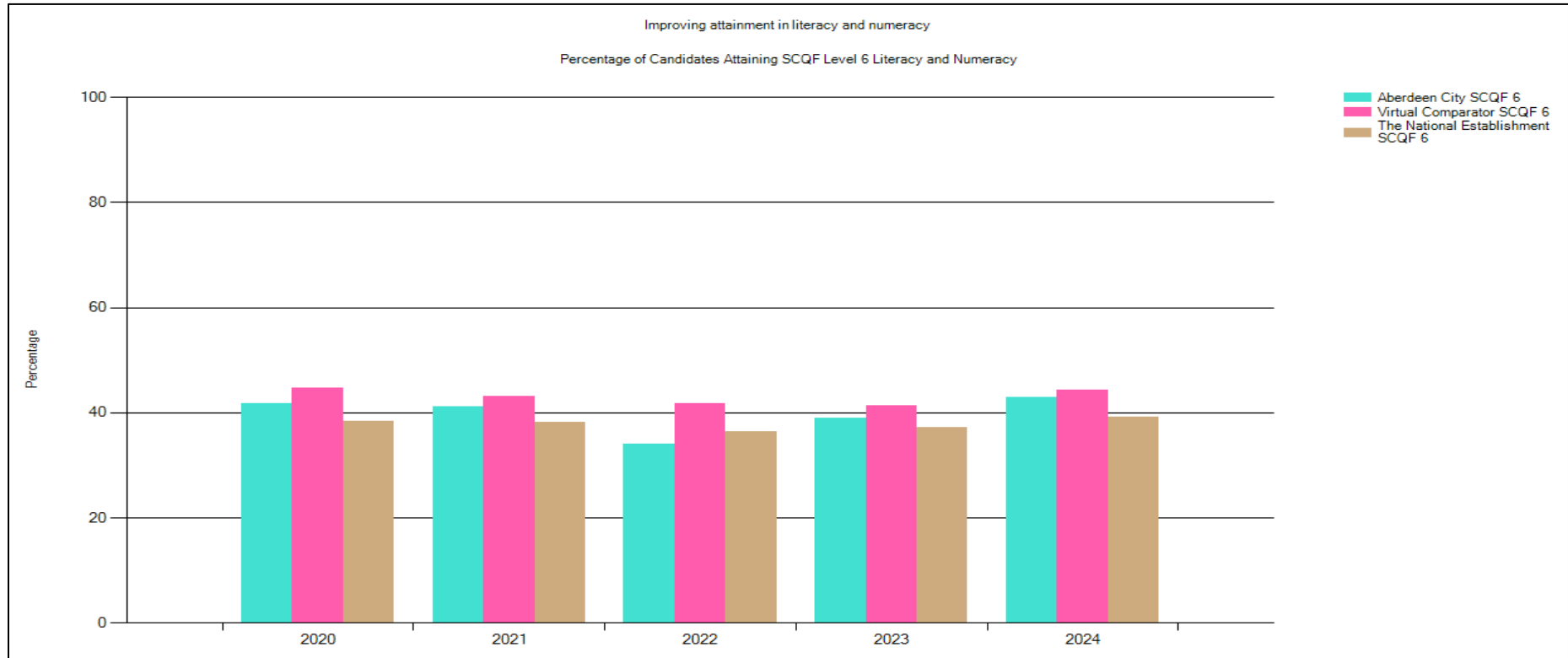
- Work in this area has resulted in the narrowing of the gap to the virtual comparator (0.9%) and moving ahead of the national figure by 2.8%.

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Candidates Attaining SCQF Level 6 Literacy and Numeracy

Key Measure: Percentage of learners in **S6** (based on S6) roll) who achieve <u>both</u> at Level 6.

Trend Analysis

- 2024 results show an increasing trend with 42.8% again representing the best attainment in five years.
- Work in this area has resulted in the narrowing of the gap to the virtual comparator (1.5%) and moving further ahead of the national figure by 3.7%.

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Candidates Attaining SCQF Level 6 Literacy and Numeracy

Attainment For All

Attainment for All converts learner success in qualifications into *tariff points,* which numerically represents the cumulative attainment of our pupils across the Senior Phase stages. This is presented within INSIGHT by percentile quintiles of candidate attainment that enables comparative analysis of trends across the spectrum of abilities.
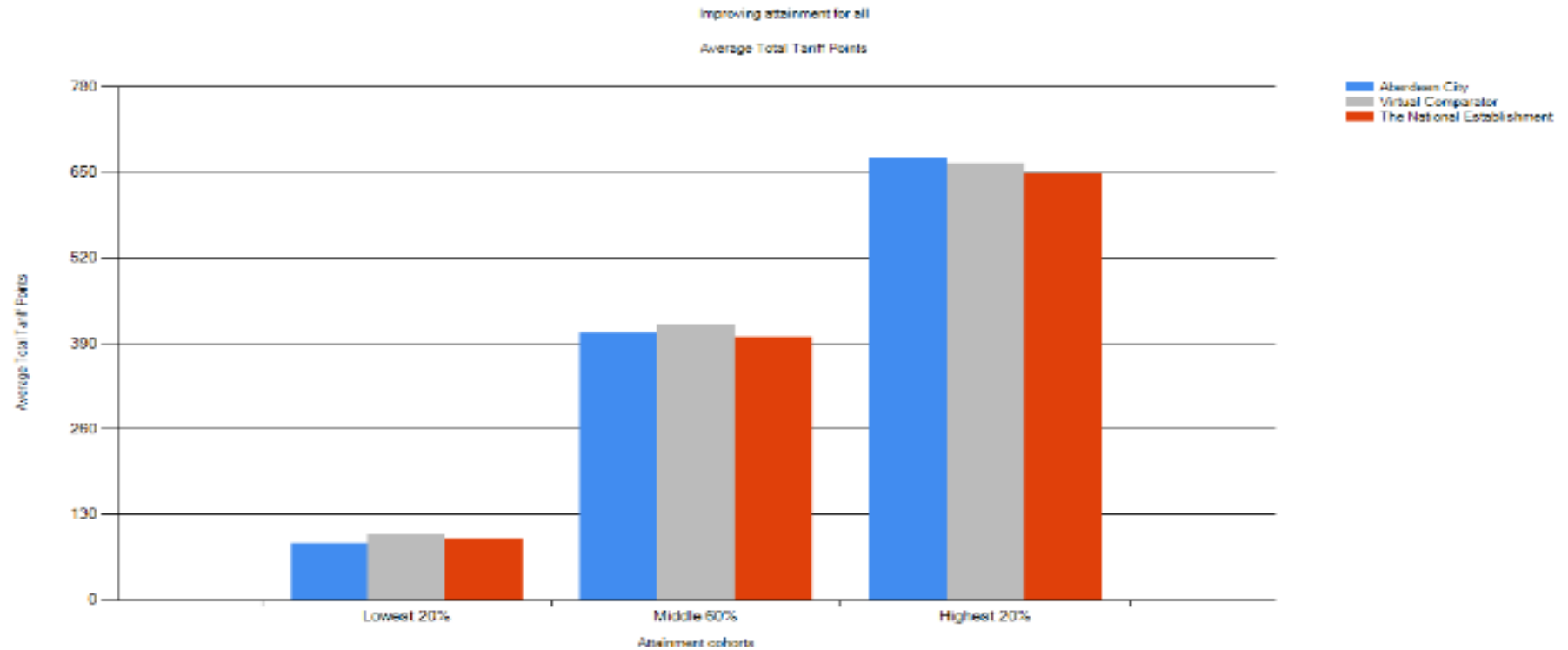
The graphs below shows the performance of learners split into the Lower 20 percentile (L20), Middle 60 percentile (M60) and Highest 20 percentile (H20) quintiles of candidate attainment The charts below outline outcomes at each of the Senior Phase stages. It should be borne in mind that completion of a proportion of course activity may be undertaken across more than a single stage.

Stage 4

- 2024 saw increases in the Middle 60 percentile (406 in 2024, 394 in 2023) and Highest 20 percentile (672 in 2024, 665 in 2023) compared to 2023, with a slight reduction for the Lowest 20 percentile (86 in 2024, 101 in 2023).
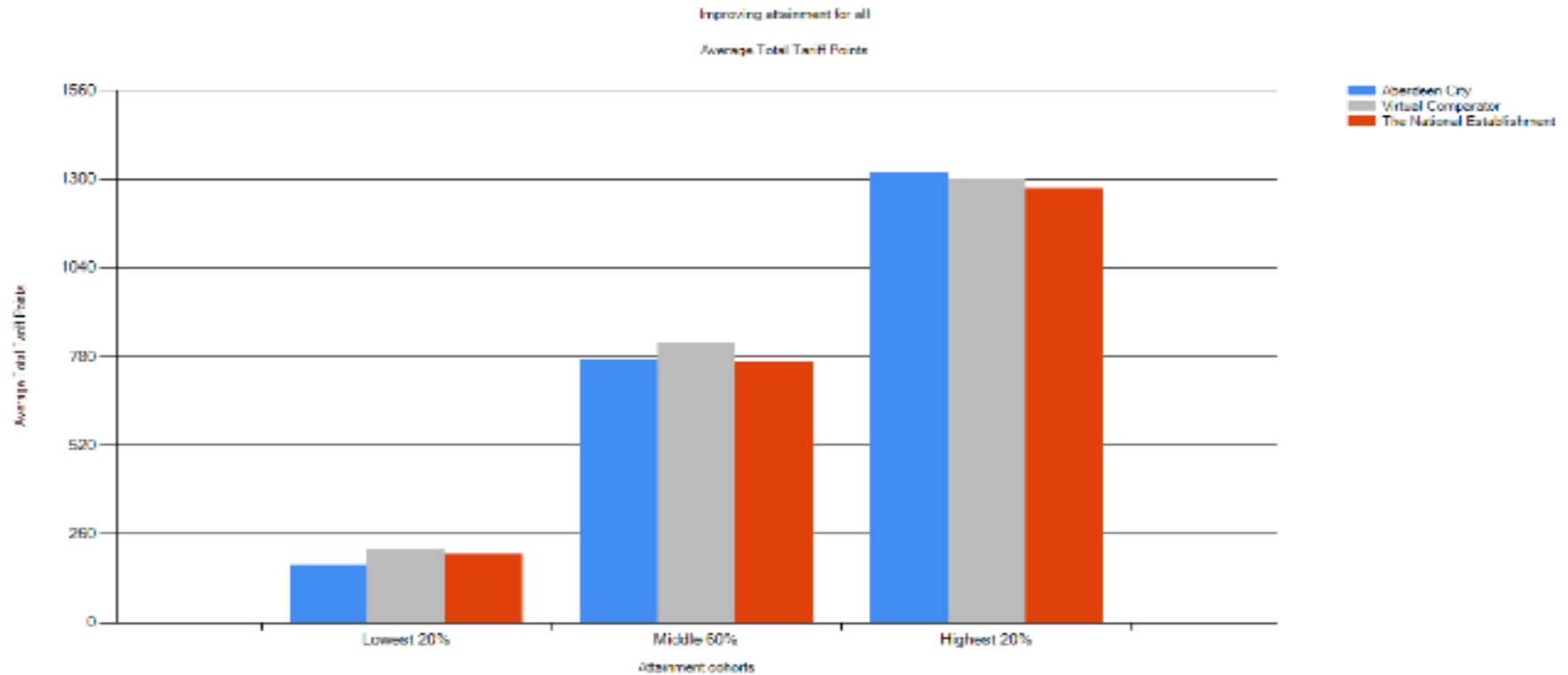
- The Middle 60 and Highest 20 percentiles are now ahead of the national figure, with the Highest 20 percentile of candidate attainment now exceeding the virtual comparator.

The selected year is **2024**

Stage 5

- 2024 saw the Lower 20 percentile hold steady (160 in 2024, 170 in 2023) with increases in the Middle 60 percentile (770 in 2024, 758 in 2023) and Higher 20 percentile (1319 in 2024, 1234 in 2023) categories compared to 2023.
- The Middle 60 percentile and Highest 20 percentile are now ahead of the national figure, with the Highest 20 percentile exceeding the virtual comparator.
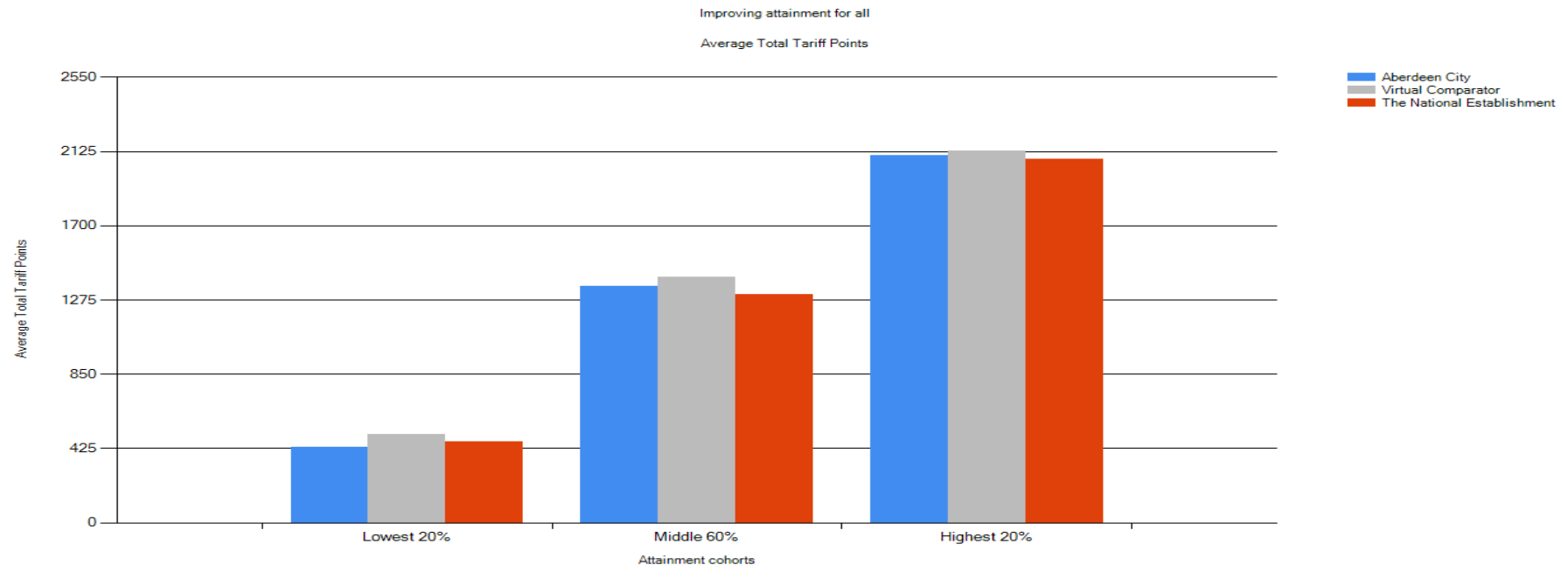
Stage 6

The final graph in this section shows the performance of **S6** (based on S6) learners split into the lower 20% (L20), middle 60% (M60) and highest 20% (H20) categories of performance.

- 2024 saw increases in the Middle 60 percentile (1352 in 2024, 1329 in 2023) and Highest 20 percentile (2103 in 2024, 2047 in 2023) compared to 2023, with a decrease for the Lowest 20 percentile (431 in 2024, 451 in 2023).
- The Middle 60 percentile and Highest 20 percentile are ahead of the national figure and slightly behind the virtual

The selected year is **2024**

Improving attainment for all

Average Total Tariff Points

comparator.

Breadth & Depth

Breadth & Depth information provides data to show the number of learners as a percentage of their cohort who achieve a series of passes in a particular SCQF level -for example those who achieve more than one pass at Level 5 in S4. The number of passes and levels selected align with those key measures highlighted within National Improvement Framework Evidence Reporting (NIFIER) and Scotland's National Performance Framework.

Stage 4

- In **S4**, there have been improvements in the percentage of learners who have achieved 3 and 5 or more passes at Level 5 compared to 2023. These figures are also ahead of the national picture but remain behind the Virtual Comparator.

Stage 5

- In **S5**, there have been improvements in the percentage of learners who have achieved 3 and 5 or more passes at Level 6 compared to 2023. Again, these are now ahead and significantly ahead of the national picture and are behind but approaching the Virtual Comparator.

Stage 6

- In **S6**, there have been improvements in the percentage of learners who have achieved 1 and 5 or more passes at Level 6 compared to 2023. The 5 or more figure is significantly ahead of the national picture and only slightly behind the Virtual Comparator. There has also been an improvement in the percentage of young people who have achieved 3 or more passes at Level 7 compared to 2023. The figure for Aberdeen City learners is ahead both of the national picture and the Virtual

S4	2024 ACC	2024 National	2024 VC	Change on 2023
1 or more at Level 5	83.98%	84.22%	85.32%	-0.72%
3 or more at Level 5	70.35%	69.53%	71.84%	2.50%
5 or more at Level 5	55.57%	54.36%	57.99%	2.87%

S5 (based on S5 roll)	2024 ACC	2024 National	2024 VC	Change on 2023
1 or more at Level 6	71.45%	73.80%	76.02%	0.97%
3 or more at Level 6	53.90%	52.42%	57.32%	0.49%
5 or more at Level 6	33.67%	29.35%	34.18%	3.64%

S6 (based on S6 roll)	2024 ACC	2024 National	2024 VC	Change on 2023
1 or more at Level 6	91.43%	91.82%	92.79%	0.07%
3 or more at Level 6	80.34%	79.25%	82.92%	-1.01%
5 or more at Level 6	66.53%	63.11%	68.44%	2.67%

S6 (based on S6 roll)	2024 ACC	2024 National	2024 VC	Change on 2023
1 or more at Level 7	43.15%	43.16%	47.93%	-1.53%
3 or more at Level 7	12.40%	7.35%	8.83%	1.65%

Comparator.