



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

*Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga*

New information on workplace  
literacy & numeracy

# Adult Literacy & Life Skills Survey

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# Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALL)

This presentation will cover:

- ALL and its predecessor, IALS
- The kind of information that ALL will provide
- Some tables from IALS to give an indication of the potential for information on literacy and numeracy at work



# Why undertake an adult skills survey?

- Concerns about skill barriers to economic growth, productivity growth, and rates of technological innovation.
- Concerns about the role of skills in creating social inequities.
- Information from ALL will support the development of foundation learning programmes both within and beyond the workplace.



# What is ALL?

- ALL is an international study involving about 15 OECD countries.
- ALL measures adult skill levels in literacy, numeracy & problem solving.
- ALL has a nationally representative, household-based sample of people aged 16-65.
- The New Zealand ALL sample will have about 6,000 people.
- The survey data collection, undertaken by the National Research Bureau, was May 2006 – March 2007.
- First results will be available late 2007.



# Countries participating in ALL

- First wave 2003:  
Canada, USA, Nuevo Leon (province of Mexico), Bermuda, Norway, Switzerland, Italy
- Second wave 2005-2007:  
New Zealand, Australia, Hungary, Korea, Netherlands and Germany.



# What will ALL measure?

- **prose literacy** – the knowledge and skills needed to understand and use information from texts such as editorials, news stories, poems and fiction;
- **document literacy** – the knowledge and skills required to locate and use information contained in various formats such as tables, forms, graphs and diagrams;
- **numeracy** – the knowledge and skills required to effectively manage the mathematical demands of diverse situations;
- **problem solving** – the ability to solve problems by clarifying the nature of the problem, and developing and applying appropriate solution strategies.



# The ALL interview

- A background questionnaire which seeks a range of demographic, socio-economic and education information
- A 'core' test booklet, a minimum of which must be correct in order to proceed to the ...
- Main test booklet.



# International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS)

- IALS, ALL's predecessor was undertaken in New Zealand in 1996.
- It measured adults' skills in three domains:
  - prose literacy
  - document literacy
  - quantitative literacy

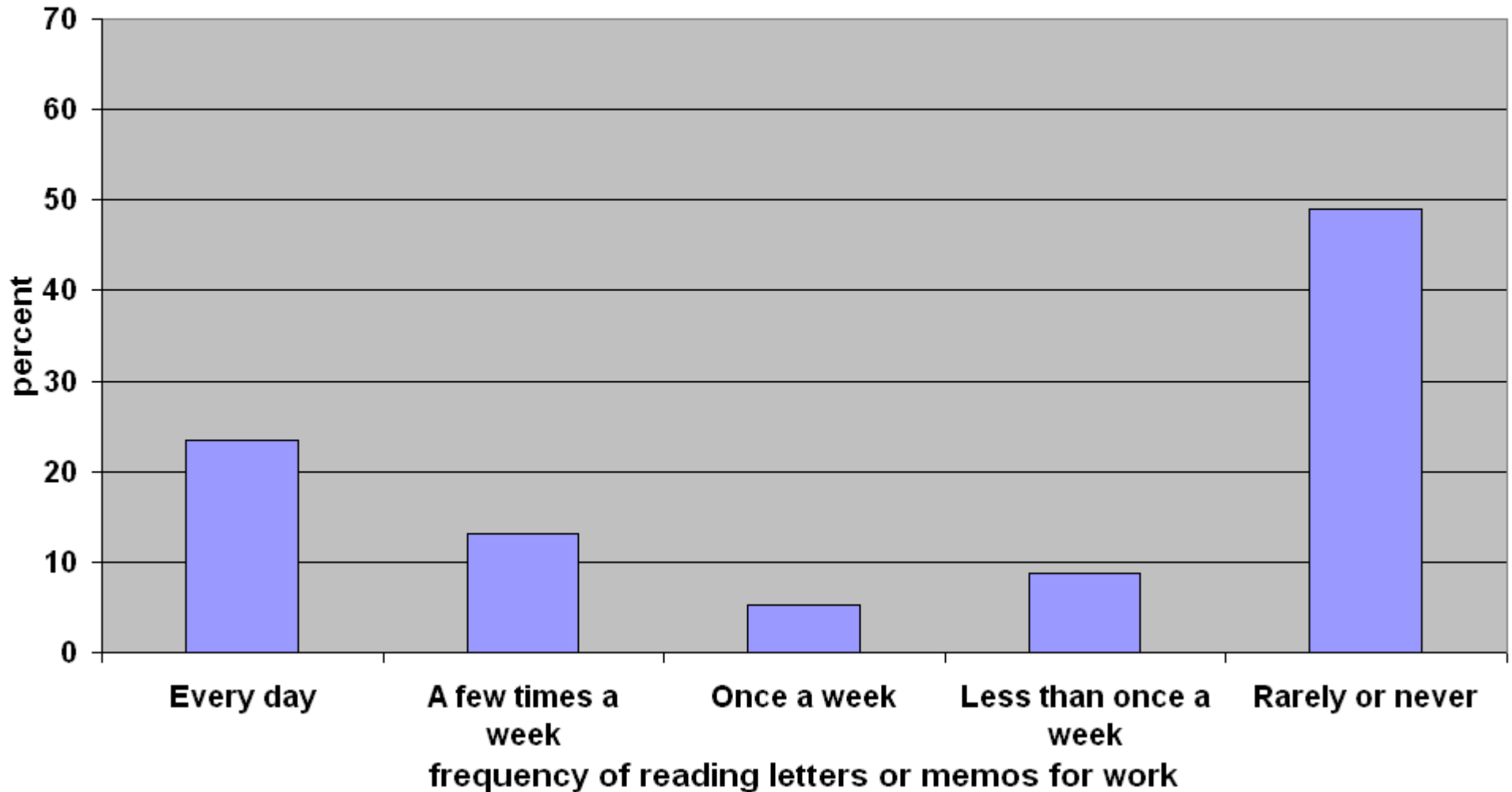


# Workplace literacy and numeracy

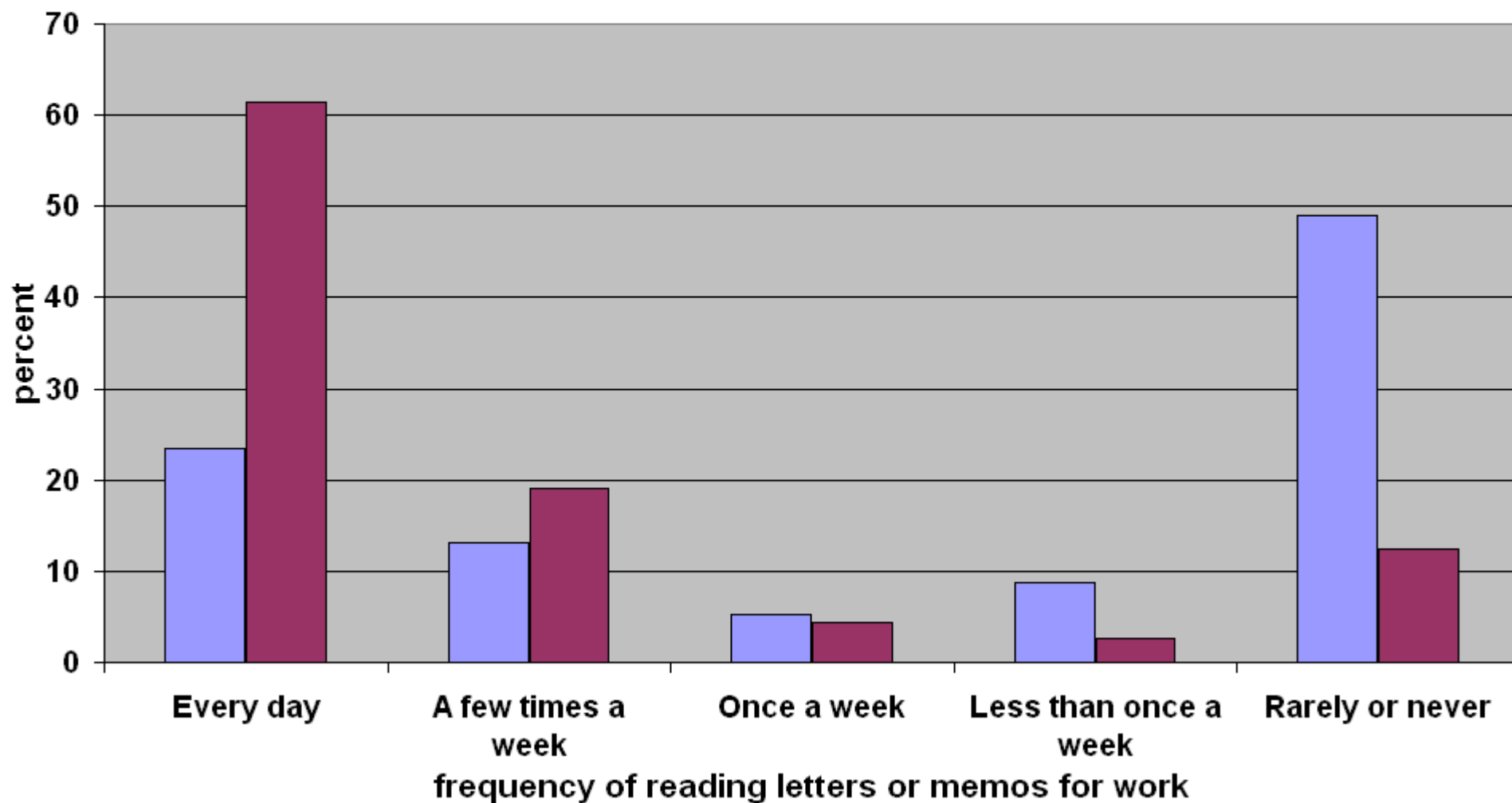
- Both IALS and ALL collect information relevant to workplace literacy and numeracy, including, for main job:
  - frequency of **reading** various types of material
  - frequency of **writing** various types of material
  - frequency of using various types of **maths** skills
  - self-assessed reading, writing and maths skills



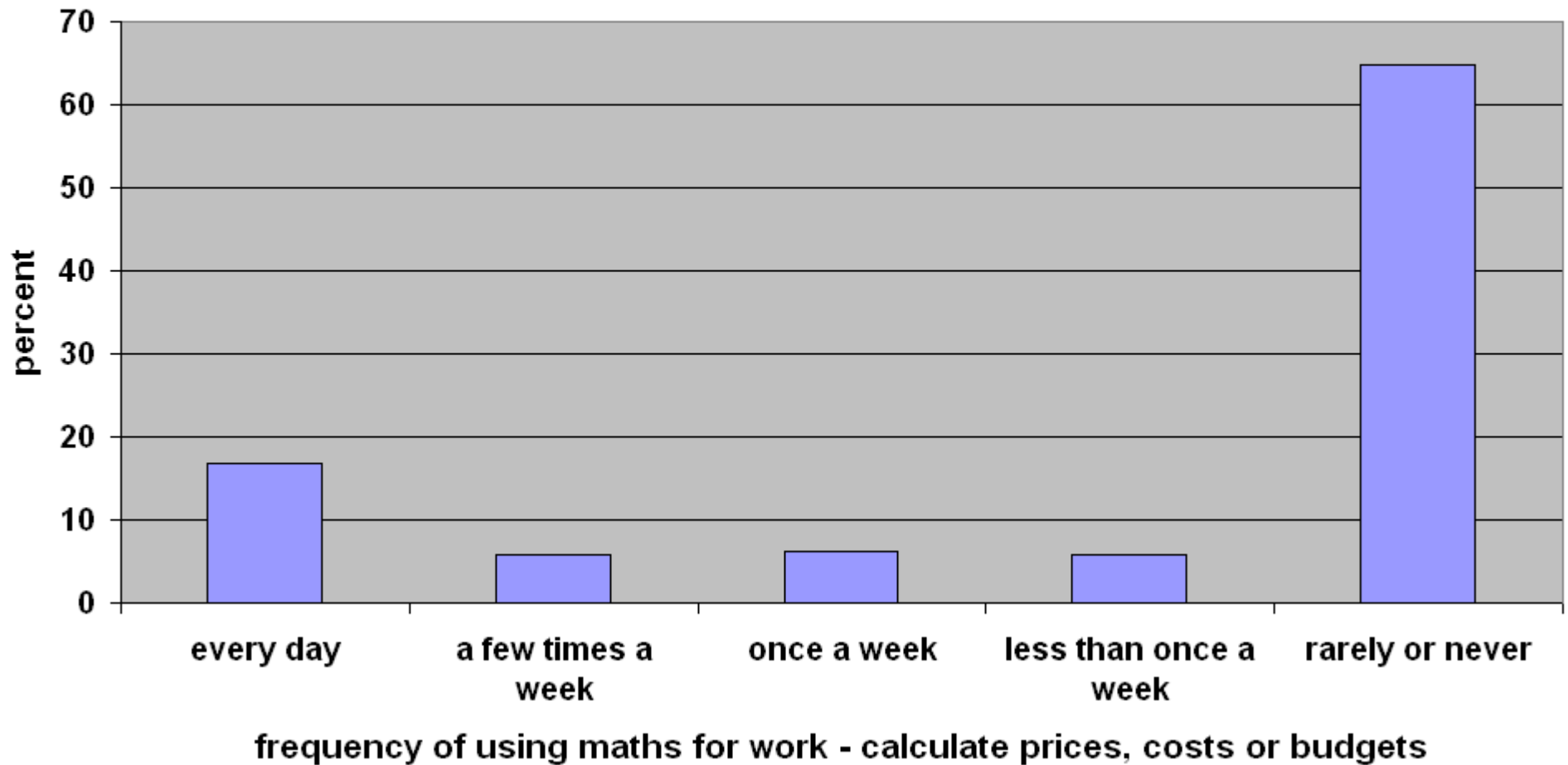
## Frequency of reading for work, prose literacy level 1, IALS 1996



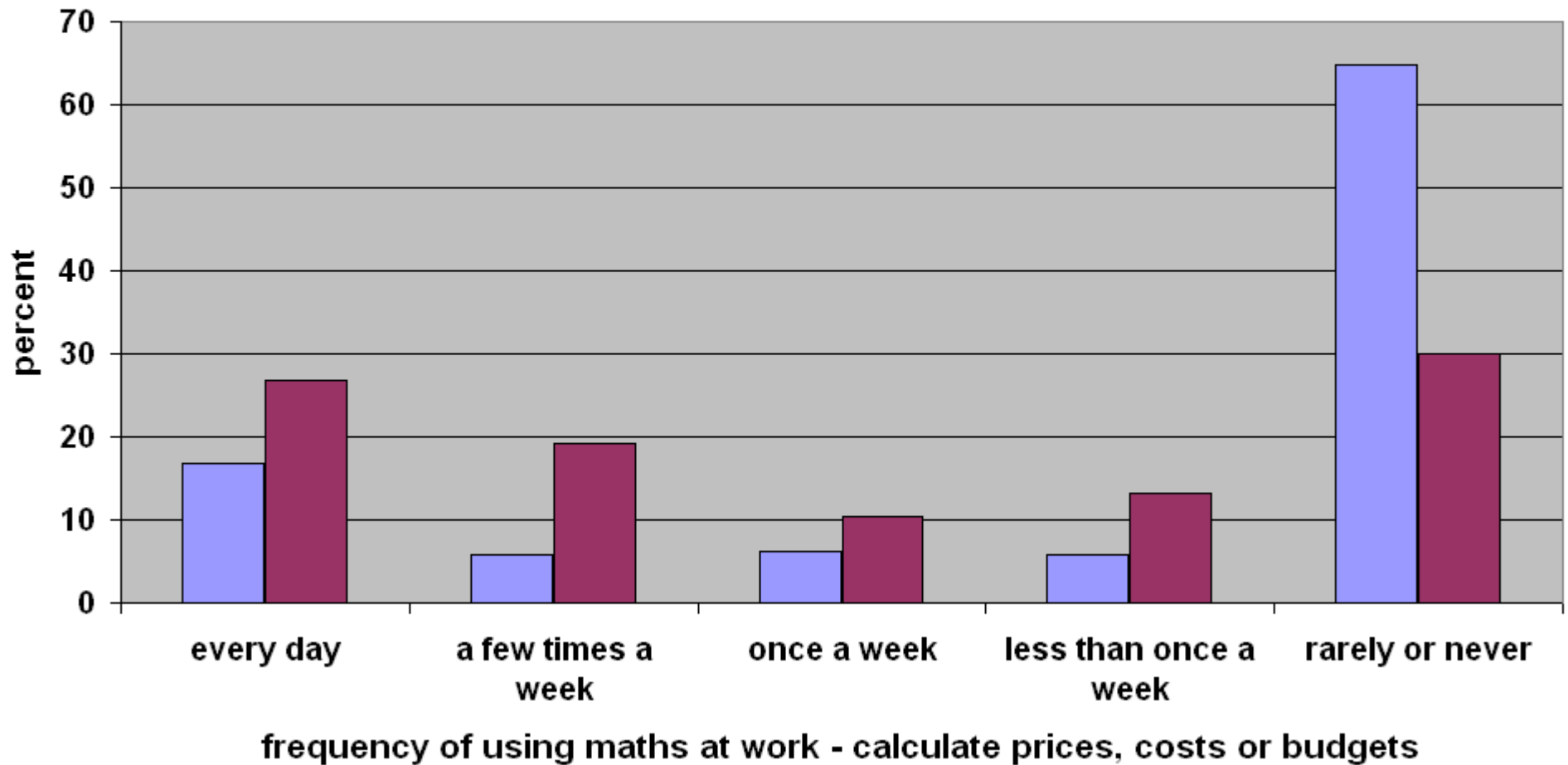
## Frequency of reading for work, prose literacy levels 1 and 5, IALS 1996



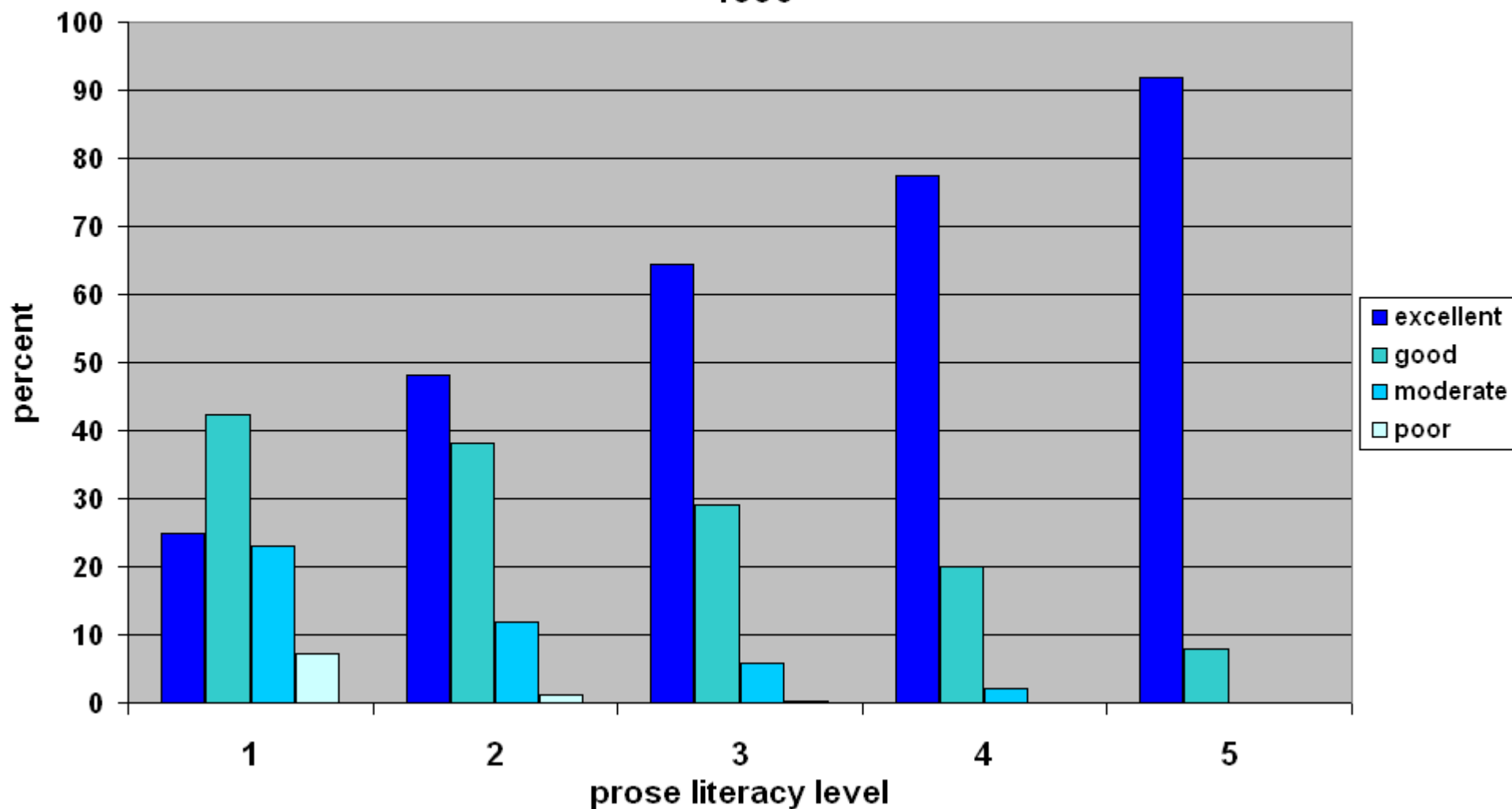
## Frequency of using maths for work, quantitative literacy level 1, IALS 1996



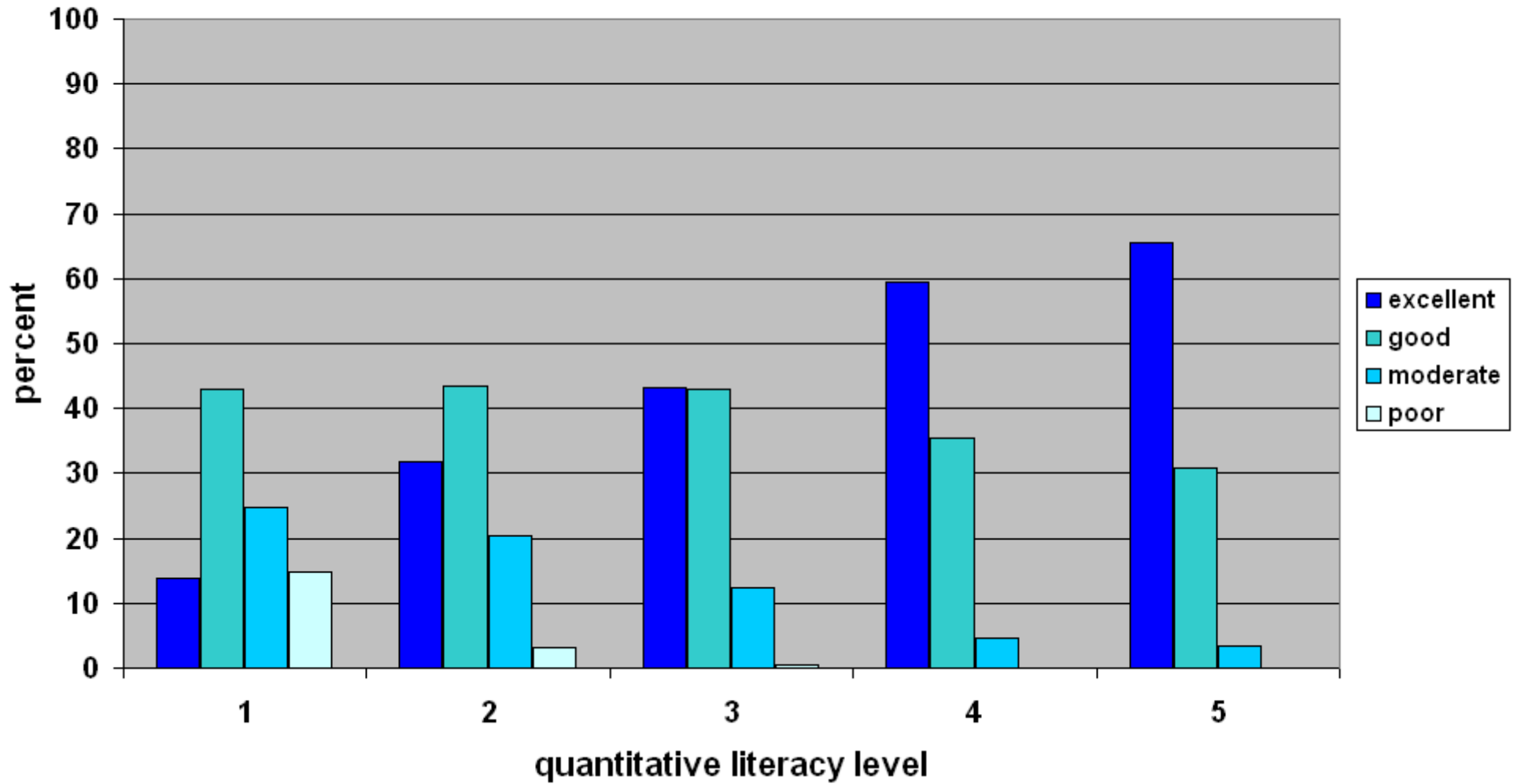
## Frequency of using maths for work, quantitative literacy levels 1 & 5, IALS 1996



## Self-rated reading skills for main job by prose literacy level, IALS 1996



## Self-rated maths skills for main job by quantitative literacy level IALS 1996



# Summary

- From late 2007 new information from ALL will be available on the distribution of adults' skills.
- Analysis relevant to workplace literacy and numeracy will be possible, including:
  - reading, writing and maths at work
  - self-assessed reading, writing and maths skills for work
- IALS 1996 findings show:
  - Many people with low literacy or numeracy skills frequently read or do maths in their job.
  - Many people with low literacy or numeracy skills rate their skills as good or excellent for their job.

