

16.2 Labelling a Chart

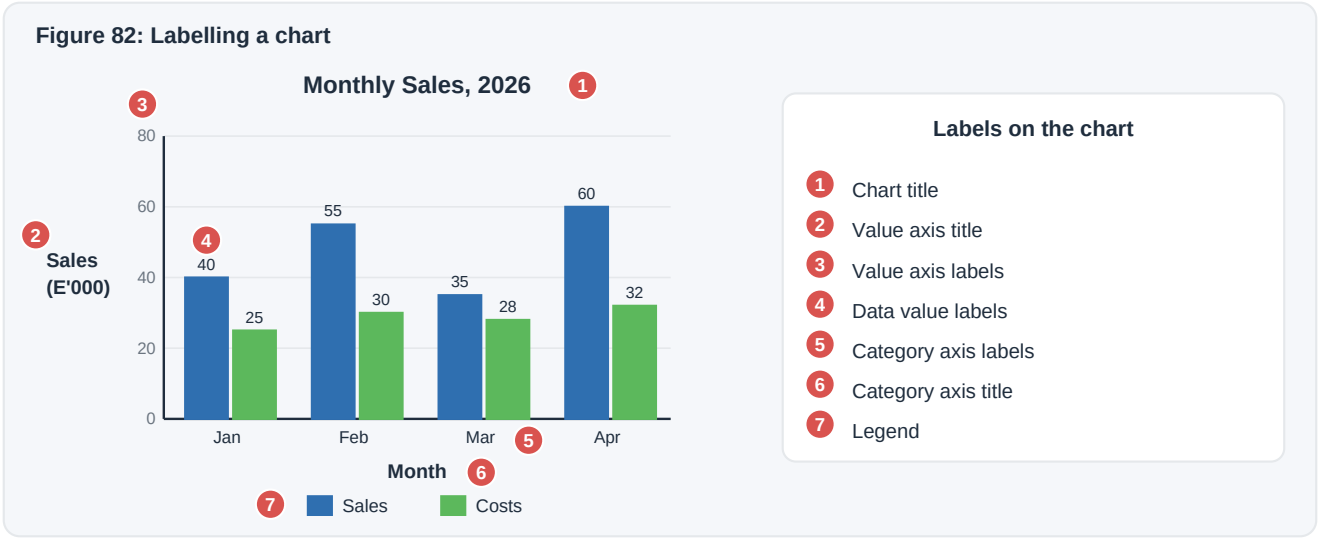
Syllabus 2026 - 2028

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Label the chart: chart title, legend, sector labels, sector values, percentages
- Category axis title, value axis title, category axis labels, value axis labels, data value labels

Why charts need labels

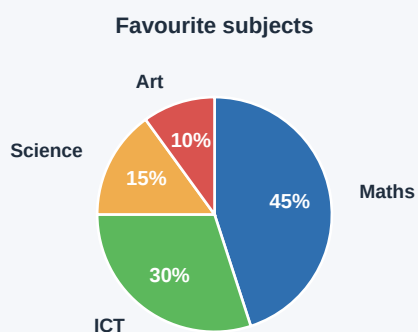
Without labels, a chart cannot be understood. Labels tell the reader **what the chart is about**, what each axis, colour or sector means and what the values are.



Label	Purpose
Chart title	States what the chart shows
Category axis title	Names what the categories on the horizontal (x) axis are, for example Month
Value axis title	Names the measure and unit on the vertical (y) axis, for example Sales (£'000)
Category axis labels	The names of the categories, such as Jan, Feb, Mar
Value axis labels	The numbers on the scale of the value axis
Data value labels	The exact value shown on each bar, point or sector
Legend	A key that shows which colour or pattern belongs to each series

Pie chart labels

Figure 83: Pie chart labels



Pie chart labels

- Chart title
- Sector labels (the name of each sector)
- Sector values or percentages
- Legend (colour key) when labels are not on the pie

A pie has no axes, so there are no axis titles

- **Sector labels:** the name of each category shown on or next to its sector
- **Sector values:** the actual number for each sector
- **Percentages:** each sector's share of the total
- A pie chart has **no axes**, so it has no axis titles or axis labels

EXAM TIP

A chart that has a **title**, **both axis titles** and a **legend** (when there is more than one series) shows full labelling. Always check that axis titles include the **unit** when one is needed.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Chart title	The heading that says what the chart shows.
Axis title	The name given to an axis.
Axis labels	The category names or scale numbers on an axis.
Legend	A key showing what each colour or pattern means.
Data label	The value displayed on a bar, point or sector.
Sector	One slice of a pie chart.
Value axis	The axis that shows the scale of the data.
Category axis	The axis that shows the groups.

Practice questions

Answer each question in full sentences. Command words used: State (give a short answer), Describe (say what it is like), Explain (give reasons), Analyse (break it down and examine it), Suggest (apply your knowledge to a situation), Compare and contrast (similarities and differences), Evaluate (weigh up and reach a judgement).

No.	Question	Marks
1	State two labels that should be added to a pie chart.	[2]
2	State the purpose of a legend.	[1]
3	Describe the difference between an axis title and axis labels.	[3]
4	Explain why data value labels may be added to a column chart.	[2]
5	Analyse why a chart with no title or axis titles is difficult to use.	[4]
6	Suggest the labels needed for a column chart showing monthly sales for two shops.	[4]
7	Evaluate the use of percentages instead of actual values as labels on a pie chart.	[5]

Total: 21 marks