



A level languages scaling guidance

Applicable to:

- A level French, German, Spanish (2016 specifications)
- A level Chinese, Italian and Russian (2017 specifications)
- A level Arabic, Greek, Gujarati, Japanese, Persian, Portuguese, Turkish and Urdu (2018 specifications)

What is scaling?

A level language qualifications are linear and no longer feature UMS. However, to ensure that the raw marks accurately reflect the different weightings of each paper and the linked assessment objectives, some adjustments (or 'scaling up') of marks must occur in certain papers.

A [component scaling calculator](#) is available on our website to help you scale your students' results on each paper. This could prove useful if you wish to provide students with indicative grade boundaries in their mock exams.

The scaling adjustment required is different for A level languages with a speaking component (Chinese, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish) and for those without a speaking paper (Arabic, Greek, Gujarati, Japanese, Persian, Portuguese, Turkish and Urdu) as these qualifications are structured differently.

It's logical and more candidate-focused to allow for a scaling of marks rather than to contrive assessments that attract more raw marks. For example, increasing the raw marks in paper 1 could lead to an inappropriately long paper.

A level Chinese, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish

For A level languages with a speaking component, the raw mark totals in two of the three papers are different to the corresponding subject mark totals. To achieve the correct weightings for each paper, the raw marks for papers 1 and 3 need to be scaled up by the appropriate ratio or 'scaling factor' as shown in the table below.

You'll note that the raw marks for papers 1 and 3 require multiplying by 2 and 1.667 respectively so that these two papers achieve the required 70% weighting of the qualification. No adjustment is needed for Paper 2 to provide the required 30% weighting.

The scaled marks for papers 1 and 3 are then combined with the raw marks from paper 2 (which do not need adjusting) to obtain the total subject marks for the qualification. The total subject mark for each of these A levels is 400.

As these are linear qualifications, grade boundaries are reported at qualification level only and refer to the total scaled *subject mark* rather than an amalgam of *raw marks*. The table below shows how the scaling is applied.

Component	Maximum raw marks	Scaling factor	Maximum subject marks at component level	Weighting (Subject marks at component level expressed in percentages)
1	80	2	160	40%
2	120	1	120	30%
3	72	1.667	120	30%
Qualification total	272		400	100%

Clear reference is made to scaling in each of the specifications (e.g., page 43 of the [A level French specification](#)).

A level Arabic, Greek, Gujarati, Japanese, Persian, Portuguese, Turkish and Urdu

For A level languages without a speaking component, the raw mark totals in all three papers are different to the corresponding subject mark totals. To reflect the correct paper weightings, the raw marks for papers 1, 2 and 3 need to be scaled up by the appropriate ratio or 'scaling factor' as shown in the table below.

The total subject mark for each of these A levels is 370. As they are linear qualifications, grade boundaries will be reported at qualification level only and refer to the scaled subject mark rather than an amalgam of raw marks. The table below shows how the scaling is applied.

Component	Maximum raw marks	Scaling factor	Maximum subject marks at component level	Weighting (Subject marks at component level expressed in percentages)
1	80	1.850	148	40%
2	110	1.009	110.99	30%
3	60	1.850	111	30%
Qualification total	250		370	100%

Clear reference is made to scaling in the all the specifications (e.g., page 39 of the [A level Arabic specification](#)).

Will grades be awarded for the individual papers?

There is no formal awarding of grades for individual papers. Only notional grade boundaries will be issued at individual paper level and these will refer to raw (unscaled) marks.

Candidate Statements of Provisional Results in linear qualifications will only show the 'qualification grade.' The centre receives a 'component mark' list that shows, for each candidate, the overall subject mark plus the raw (unscaled) mark achieved on each paper, along with the scaling factor for the component.

Using grade boundaries to make decisions on whether to request a review of marking

If considering a review of marking, it's important to note that any change in raw mark that results in a change of 'notional grade' at a paper level may not equate to a change of grade at qualification level. Grade boundaries and notional component grade boundaries for each exam series are [published on our website](#) on results day.