

Uniform mark (UMS) guidance: an example GCSE Arabic

What are uniform marks and why do we use them?

Grade boundaries are set using raw marks. For each unit, raw marks are mapped to uniform marks. A GCSE qualification grade is determined from the unit uniform mark scores.

Uniform marks are used to ensure that the standard required to gain a particular unit score is the same from exam series to exam series.

Below we have exemplified what the use of uniform marks mean in GCSE Arabic.

Sumita & Kwasi are both re-taking GCSE Arabic Unit 1 in this exam series.

Unit 1 (5AR01) is out of 50 raw marks and has a total 70 UMS.

After they have sat the examination and their papers have been marked, Edexcel senior examiners recommend the raw mark grade boundaries as follows:

Unit 1 Higher Tier	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Mark boundary this exam series	50	45	40	35	30	25	(22)	-	-	0
Raw mark boundary last exam series	50	43	38	33	28	23	(20)	-	-	0
Uniform Mark boundary	70	63	56	49	42	35	(28)	-	-	0

IMPORTANT NOTE:

*The raw boundary marks listed above are for illustration only to show how raw marks map to uniform marks in this subject area and should not be taken as the actual grade boundaries for the unit.

Why are the raw marks boundaries different in this series compared to the last series?

You'll notice, for example, that at C the raw boundary mark was 28 last series; this series it is 30. However, you will also notice that C will always have a uniform mark of 42.

Why do raw mark boundaries change?

Raw mark boundaries change from series to series since examination papers can perform differently from year to year depending on the task set. Even though the raw mark boundaries have changed, the uniform mark for each grade boundary remains the same for all series. In this example, the reason for the different raw mark boundaries is that, in the last series, the paper was more demanding.

In the last examination series when Sumita & Kwasi took the exam for the first time the raw mark boundaries were higher. Sumita scored 33/50 and Kwasi scored 26/50 in raw marks.

This series, Sumita scores a raw mark of 30/50 and Kwasi scores 24/50.

Calculating Results - GCSE Arabic Cash in code: 2AR01

Sumita achieved 42 uniform marks in her original unit 1 resit. She has also taken units 2, 3 & 4 in this series. Since units 2, 3 & 4 have been taken in this series, the better result can count as it is not needed to satisfy the 40% terminal requirement.

Sumita achieved:

Unit	Uniform Mark	
	This series	Last series
1	42 (resit)	49
2	54	
3	42	
4	62	

Sumita's total score is $49 + 54 + 42 + 62 = 207$ uniform marks. With reference to the table below, she will achieve a grade C.

Qualification Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Uniform mark grade	270	240	210	180	150	120	90	60

Kwasi has 39 uniform marks from his original unit 1 result. For his resit he gained 33 uniform marks; a lower score. Since he has also taken units 2, 3 & 4 in this series, his better result can count as it is not needed to satisfy the 40% terminal requirement.

Kwasi achieved:

Unit	Uniform Mark	
	This series	Last series
1	33 (Resit)	39
2	42	
3	35	
4	43	

Kwasi's total score is $39 + 42 + 35 + 43 = 159$ uniform marks. With reference to the table below, he will achieve a grade D.

Qualification Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Uniform mark grade threshold	270	240	210	180	150	120	90	60