

Uniform mark (UMS) guidance: an example GCSE Drama

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 Drama.

Kelly & John are both taking GCSE Drama Unit 1 in the next examination series.

Unit 1 (5DR01) is out of 60 raw marks and has a total 90 UMS.

After they have completed the controlled assessment and their papers have been moderated, Edexcel senior moderators recommend the raw mark grade boundaries as follows:

Unit 1	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Mark boundary last exam series (5DR01)	60	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	0
Raw mark boundary this exam series (5DR01)	60	43	38	33	28	23	18	13	8	0
Uniform Mark boundary (5DR01)	90	81	72	63	54	45	36	27	18	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 30 last series; this series it is 28. However, you will also notice that C will always have a uniform mark of 54.

Why do raw mark boundaries change?

Raw mark boundaries change from series to series since examinations can vary in difficulty. Even though the raw mark boundaries have changed, the uniform mark for each grade boundary remains the same for all series. Another reason for the different raw mark boundaries is that there is a difference in the abilities of the cohorts.

In the last examination series when Kelly & John took the controlled assessment for the first time the raw mark boundaries were lower. Kelly scored 40/60 and John scored 30/60 in raw marks.

This series, Kelly scores a raw mark of 45/60 and John scores 33/60.

Calculating Results - GCSE Drama Cash in code: 2DR01

Kelly achieved 76 uniform marks in her original unit 1 resit. She has also taken units 2 & 3 in this series. For the resit she gained 58 uniform marks: a lower score. Since units 2 & 3 were taken in this series, the better result can count as it is not needed to satisfy the 40% terminal requirement.

Kelly achieved:

Unit	Uniform Mark	
	This series	Last series
1	58 (resit)	76
2	81	
3	96	

Kelly's total score is $76 + 81 + 96 = 253$ uniform marks. With reference to the table below, she will achieve a grade A.

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

John has 54 uniform marks from his original unit 1 result. For his resit he gained 59 uniform marks; a higher score. Since he has also taken units 2 & 3 in this series, his better result can count as it is not needed to satisfy the 40% terminal requirement.

John achieved:

Unit	Uniform Mark	
	This series	Last series
1	59 (resit)	54
2	45	
3	72	

John's total score is $59 + 45 + 72 = 176$ 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