

GCSE languages scaling guidance

Applicable to:

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

There is no scaling of marks required for GCSE Biblical Hebrew.

What is scaling?

9-1 GCSE languages are linear qualifications and no longer feature UMS. However, to ensure that each of the four papers equates to 25% of the qualification, some adjustments (or 'scaling up') of marks must be made to certain papers.

How does it work?

The raw mark totals in three of the four papers are different to the corresponding subject mark totals. To reflect the correct paper weightings, the raw marks for papers 1 (1F/1H), 3 (3F/3H) and 4 (4F/H) 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 need to be multiplied by 1.4 and that the raw marks for paper 4 need to be multiplied by 1.167 to ensure that these three papers represent 75% of the qualification. No adjustment is needed to marks in Paper 2 (Speaking).

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, a listening test that would require 70 raw marks could lead to an inappropriately long paper.

The scaled marks for papers 1, 3 and 4 are then combined with the raw marks from paper 2 to obtain the total subject marks for the qualification. The total subject mark for each of these GCSEs is 280.

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 on the following page shows how the scaling is applied regardless of tier.

Component	Maximum raw marks	Scaling factor	Maximum subject marks at component level	Weighting (Subject marks at component level expressed in percentages)
1	50	1.4	70	25%
2	70	1	70	25%
3	50	1.4	70	25%
4	60	1.167	70	25%
Qualification total	230		280	100%

Clear reference is made to scaling in the all the 9-1 specifications (e.g., page 65 of the [9-1 GCSE French specification](#)). You will need to scale your students' results for Papers 1 and 3 by multiplying the raw marks out of 50 by 1.4 and for Paper 4 by multiplying the raw marks out of 60 by 1.167. A [component scaling calculator](#) is available on our website to help you do this. This could prove useful if you wish to provide students with indicative grade boundaries in their mock exams.

Will grades be awarded for the individual papers?

No grades will formally be awarded 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 will only show the 'qualification grade' for a linear qualification. 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.