

UMS - uniform mark guidance: an example GCSE Physical Education (Short Course)

What are UMS and why do we use them?

Grade boundaries are set using raw marks. Raw marks are matched to the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) to make a full or half GCSE from the best marks for your student from any given exam series. UMS ensures the standard required to get a grade is the same from year to year.

Sacha and Sam are both re-taking GCSE PE Unit 1 this exam series.

Unit 1 (5PE03/01) is out of 40 raw marks and 40 UMS.

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

Unit Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Raw Mark boundary this exam series	40	35	31	27	23	19	15	12	9
Raw mark boundary last exam series	40	34	30	26	22	18	14	10	6
UMS Mark	40	36	32	28	24	20	16	12	8

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 22 last series; this series it is 23. However, you will also notice that C will always have a uniform mark of 24.

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.

Last exam series when Sacha and Sam took the exam for the first time the raw mark boundaries were lower. Sacha scored 26/40 and Sam scored 33/40 in raw marks.

This series, Sacha scores a raw mark of 28/40 and Kwasi scores 35/40.

Qualification results -
GCSE in Physical Education (Short Course) Cash in code: 3PE01

Sacha has 29 UMS from Unit 1 resit. Sacha has also taken Units 2 for which she achieved 46 UMS.

When this is put into the below boundary marks = 75 UMS. Grade B for GCSE Physical Education (Short Course).

Qualification Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Maximum UMS	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20

Sam has 36 UMS from Unit 1 resit. He has also taken Units 2 for which he achieved 49 UMS.

When this is put into the below boundary marks = 85 UMS. Grade A for GCSE Physical Education (Short Course).

Qualification Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Maximum UMS	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20