

Tier Entry

Not sure how to enter your borderline foundation/higher tier students?

Guidance is on tier of entry decisions is provided in the Languages area of our website.

Please see the direct link [here](#).

Essentially, content is specifically targeted at **grades 1-5 at foundation Tier** and at **grades 4-9 at higher Tier**. In the case of students who seem to be producing grade 4/5 work, you should consider entering them at foundation tier as they will be more likely to feel more at ease with the overall demand of the paper and since content that goes significantly beyond grades 4 and 5 could prove very demotivating and offer too much stretch.

In terms of a higher tier ‘safety net’*, it is also important to note that this is very restricted. Although an allowance can be made for a higher tier candidate to achieve a grade 3, this is only available to those with marks that are extremely close to a grade 4.

A grade 3 must not be considered as a default grade at higher tier.

The following [guidance from Ofqual](#) recommends that such students are entered at foundation tier

In general, a student whose target grade is a grade 4 or grade 5 should be entered for foundation tier... The opposite... puts students at risk of missing out on a grade.

* In the first awarding of the French, German and Spanish 9–1 GCSEs in summer 2018 some candidates entered at higher tier were able to achieve a grade 3. This was sanctioned by Ofqual across the full grade as it seemed that incorrect tier of entry decisions had been made in some centres. In summer 2019, only those candidates entered at higher tier with marks in the upper area of the grade 3 band were granted a grade 3 pass. This narrower ‘safety net’ followed on from a

[letter to centres that Ofqual sent out in January, 2019.](#)

It's important to note that as students are now entered either at foundation or higher tier across all papers. Consequently, even if you have a student who is good in one skill but only produces borderline performances in the others, entry at foundation tier may still be the most appropriate option.

