Notional Component Grade Boundaries

Edexcel International GCSE (9-1)

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Understanding linear component raw marks and subject marks

Components of International GCSE and reformed GCSE, AS and A level qualifications are all sat at the end of the course. Components are individual assessments, such as examinations or non-exam assessments (NEA), which each make up a linear qualification. These qualifications are all linear rather than modular, which means that there is no longer a need for the UMS marks you will have been familiar with in the past.

The component structure of qualifications

In linear qualifications, each component has a total raw mark. The components contribute a certain percentage to the qualification mark overall, but the contribution of the components may not be equal. This is because one component may represent a larger part of the qualification than the others (see example 2, below). When the contribution of components to the qualification is not equal, the component raw marks, when simply added together, may not reflect the percentage contribution of the components to the qualification. In such cases the raw mark for the assessment is scaled up or down by a weighting factor. The raw mark is multiplied by the weighting factor so that it reflects the contribution of the component mark to the qualification.

The scaled marks, known as subject marks, are then added together to form the overall subject mark.

Two examples are given below.

Example 1: no scaling is needed as the total raw mark for each component reflects the percentage contribution of each to the qualification.

The total raw marks of all components in a linear qualification will add up to the total subject mark **if** they all contribute to the qualification equally.

Component Title	Raw Marks	Contribution to the Qualification	Weighting Factor	Total Scaled Mark
Paper 1	50	25%	1.000	50
Paper 2	50	25%	1.000	50
Paper 3	50	25%	1.000	50
Paper 4	50	25%	1.000	50
Subject max mark	200	100%		200

Example 2: scaling is needed as the raw mark for one or more components does not reflect the percentage contribution.

Component Title	Raw marks	Contribution to the qualification	Weighting Factor	Total Scaled mark
Paper 1	60	35%	1.458	87.5
Paper 2	45	20%	1.111	50
Paper 3	45	25%	1.389	62.5
Paper 4	50	20%	1.000	50
Subject max mark		100%		250

How candidates' grades are determined

Table 1 – candidates sitting the qualification in example 1

Component title	Marks for candidate A	Mark for candidate B
Paper 1	10	40
Paper 2	25	15
Paper 3	30	20
Paper 4	20	10
Subject mark	**85**	**85**

Since the marks for each component in the qualification represent the correct percentage contribution, the component marks are simply added to give the overall subject mark. In this example, both candidates A and B have achieved 85 marks for the overall subject. Since they both have the same subject mark, candidates A and B will receive the same grade even though their component performances are very different.

Suppose the subject grade boundaries were 81 marks for a grade C and 93 marks for a grade B. Since a subject mark of 85 lies within this mark range, both candidates A and B will receive a grade C for the qualification.

Table 2 – candidates sitting the qualification in example 2

Component title	Raw mark for candidate C	Weighting factor	Scaled mark
Paper 1	12	1.458	17.496
Paper 2	24	1.111	26.664
Paper 3	31	1.389	43.059
Paper 4	20	1.000	20.000
		Total:	107.219
		Subject mark:	**107**

Table 2 shows the performance of candidate C in the example 2 qualification. The second column, 'Raw mark', shows the marks achieved on each of the four papers. Since the marks for the components must be scaled to represent the percentage contribution of each paper to the overall subject, the component marks must be scaled, using the weighting factor shown in column 3, to give the scaled mark shown in column 4 of the table. The scaled marks are totalled to give 107.291 which is, as a final step, rounded to the nearest whole number to give the subject mark of 107.

Suppose the subject grade boundaries were 101 marks for a grade D and 115 marks for a grade C. Since a subject mark of 107 lies within this mark range, candidate C will receive a grade D for the qualification.

Please note that footnote 1, relating to the example 2 table, explains the need for the weighting factor and that the scaled marks are calculated to the third place of decimal.

The use of notional component grade boundaries

The above examples, showing the grades achieved by candidates A, B and C, illustrate that notional grade performance at component level plays no part in the determination of a qualification grade. In fact, table 1 shows that both candidates achieve the same subject mark even though their component performances are quite different. Given this, why are notional component grade boundaries published?

When the subject grade boundaries are recommended by the senior examiners, it helps them to consider the component performance for a candidate who will achieve, say, a borderline grade A by producing a borderline grade A performance on each component.

For teachers, the notional component grade boundaries can be useful as an indicator of grade performance when, for example, an examination paper is used as a future mock examination.

Linear qualifications and deciding whether to submit a post-results service (PRS) request

Component-level grade boundaries in these linear qualifications are notional only, and do not equate to a certificated grade.

When considering whether to submit a post-results service request, it is important to understand that notional grade boundaries - or how close a candidate may be to one - are not relevant.

A change in a notional component-level boundary may not equate to a subject grade change. For example, if a learner achieves Bs in each of the two components for a reformed AS level the component grade would be a B. If, after a review of marking, a component mark changes, and the notional grade increases from a B to an A, the overall AS subject grade may still remain a B when the component scores are combined*.

*if, when combined with the other component scores, the revised total equates to an A grade, the subject grade would be changed accordingly.

Accounting

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4AC1	Accounting Paper 01	Raw	100	80	72	65	59	53	47	33	20	7	0
4AC1	Accounting Paper 02	Raw	50	42	37	32	28	24	21	15	10	5	0

Arabic (First Language)

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4AA1	Arabic (First Language) Paper 01	Raw	75	51	47	44	40	36	33	24	16	8	0
4AA1	Arabic (First Language) Paper 02	Raw	50	38	35	33	29	25	22	17	12	8	0

Bangla

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4BA0	Bangla Paper 01	Raw	100	82	77	72	61	51	41	31	21	12	0

Biology

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4BI1	Biology Paper 1B	Raw	110	87	78	69	60	52	44	36	29	22	0
4BI1	Biology Paper 2B	Raw	70	54	48	42	36	30	24	19	15	11	0

Business

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4BS1	Business Paper 01	Raw	80	65	59	54	46	39	32	27	22	18	0
4BS1	Business Paper 1C	Raw	80	65	59	54	46	39	32	27	22	18	0
4BS1	Business Paper 02	Raw	80	67	61	56	48	40	33	28	23	18	0
4BS1	Business Paper 2C	Raw	80	67	61	56	48	40	33	28	23	18	0

Chemistry

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4CH1	Chemistry Paper 1C	Raw	110	96	84	72	63	54	45	35	25	15	0
4CH1	Chemistry Paper 2C	Raw	70	59	51	43	37	31	26	20	15	10	0

Chinese

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4CN1	Chinese Paper 01	Raw	40	37	35	33	30	27	25	21	17	13	0
4CN1	Chinese Paper 02	Raw	80	71	63	55	50	46	42	32	22	13	0
4CN1	Chinese Paper 03	Raw	40	37	34	31	29	27	26	19	13	7	0

Commerce

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4CM1	Commerce Paper 01	Raw	80	71	66	61	55	49	44	39	34	30	0
4CM1	Commerce Paper 02	Raw	80	58	54	50	47	44	41	36	31	26	0

Economics

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4EC1	Economics Paper 01	Raw	80	56	51	46	42	38	35	30	25	20	0
4EC1	Economics Paper 1C	Raw	80	56	51	46	42	38	35	30	25	20	0
4EC1	Economics Paper 02	Raw	80	56	51	47	43	40	37	31	25	20	0
4EC1	Economics Paper 2C	Raw	80	56	51	47	43	40	37	31	25	20	0

English as a Second Language

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4ES1	English as a Second Language Paper 01	Raw	100	91	88	85	80	75	70	62	55	48	0
4ES1	English as a Second Language Paper 02	Raw	40	39	36	34	32	30	28	23	19	15	0

English Language A

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4EA1	English Language A Paper 01	Raw	90	70	66	62	56	51	46	34	22	10	0
4EA1	English Language A Paper 1C	Raw	90	70	66	62	56	51	46	34	22	10	0
4EA1	English Language A Paper 02	Raw	60	41	38	35	31	27	24	18	12	6	0
4EA1	English Language A Paper 2C	Raw	60	41	38	35	31	27	24	18	12	6	0
4EA1	English Language A Paper 03	Raw	60	53	49	46	41	36	31	25	19	13	0
4EA1	English Language A Paper 03T	Raw	60	53	49	46	41	36	31	25	19	13	0

English Language B

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4EB1	English Language B Paper 01	Raw	100	70	64	59	55	52	49	38	27	16	0

English Literature

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4ET1	English Literature Paper 01	Raw	90	71	65	60	53	46	40	30	21	12	0
4ET1	English Literature Paper 1C	Raw	90	71	65	60	53	46	40	30	21	12	0
4ET1	English Literature Paper 02	Raw	60	47	45	43	37	32	27	20	13	6	0
4ET1	English Literature Paper 2C	Raw	60	47	45	43	37	32	27	20	13	6	0
4ET1	English Literature Paper 03	Raw	60	53	49	46	41	36	31	23	16	9	0
4ET1	English Literature Paper 03T	Raw	60	53	49	46	41	36	31	23	16	9	0

French

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4FR1	French Paper 01	Raw	40	34	30	27	24	22	20	15	10	5	0
4FR1	French Paper 02	Raw	80	67	58	49	44	40	36	27	18	9	0
4FR1	French Paper 03	Raw	40	32	28	24	21	18	15	12	9	6	0

Further Pure Mathematics

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4PM1	Further Pure Mathematics Paper 01	Raw	100	91	79	67	54	41	29	23	0	0	0
4PM1	Further Pure Mathematics Paper 02	Raw	100	86	74	63	53	43	34	29	0	0	0

Geography

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4GE1	Geography Paper 01	Raw	70	53	48	43	38	33	28	21	14	8	0
4GE1	Geography Paper 02	Raw	105	82	74	66	58	50	43	33	24	15	0

History

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4HI1	History Paper 01	Raw	60	50	45	41	36	32	28	21	14	7	0
4HI1	History Paper 1C	Raw	60	50	45	41	36	32	28	21	14	7	0
4HI1	History Paper 02	Raw	60	48	44	40	36	32	28	21	14	7	0
4HI1	History Paper 2C	Raw	60	48	44	40	36	32	28	21	14	7	0

Human Biology

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4HB1	Human Biology Paper 01	Raw	90	64	58	52	46	41	36	29	22	16	0
4HB1	Human Biology Paper 02	Raw	90	80	74	68	61	54	48	38	29	20	0

ICT

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4IT1	ICT Paper 01	Raw	100	78	72	66	58	50	42	33	24	15	0
4IT1	ICT Paper 02	Raw	100	81	76	71	63	55	47	37	27	17	0

Mathematics A

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4MA1	Mathematics A (Foundation) Paper 1F	Raw	100					74	62	45	29	13	0
4MA1	Mathematics A (Foundation) Paper 2F	Raw	100					75	63	46	29	13	0
4MA1	Mathematics A (Higher) Paper 1H	Raw	100	81	67	54	43	32	22	17			0
4MA1	Mathematics A (Higher) Paper 2H	Raw	100	82	69	56	45	34	24	19			0

Mathematics B

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4MB1	Mathematics B Paper 01	Raw	100	78	65	52	43	34	25	20			0
4MB1	Mathematics B Paper 02	Raw	100	81	67	54	45	36	28	24			0

Physics

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
4PH1	Physics Paper 1P	Raw	110	94	83	73	65	58	51	43	35	27	0
4PH1	Physics Paper 2P	Raw	70	54	50	46	43	41	39	32	25	18	0

Science (Double Award)

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	99	98	88	87	77	76	66	65	55	54
4SD0	Science (Double Award) Paper 1B	Raw	110	87	82	78	73	69	64	60	56	52	48
				44	43	33	32	22	21	11			U
		Raw		44	40	36	32	29	25	22			0

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	99	98	88	87	77	76	66	65	55	54
4SD0	Science (Double Award) Paper 1C	Raw	110	96	90	84	78	72	67	63	58	54	49
				44	43	33	32	22	21	11			U
		Raw		45	40	35	30	25	20	15			0

Notional component grade boundaries			Max Mark	99	98	88	87	77	76	66	65	55	54
4SD0	Science (Double Award) Paper 1P	Raw	110	94	88	83	78	73	69	65	61	58	54
				44	43	33	32	22	21	11			U
		Raw		51	47	43	39	35	31	27			0