

# UMS

## Awarding GCSE Religious Studies

### INTRODUCTION

UMS stands for Uniform Mark Scale. The Uniform Mark Scale is used to convert candidates' component 'raw' marks into uniform marks. This is done in order to standardise marks from year to year. For example, a candidate who just achieves an A in a unit one year will receive the same uniform mark as a candidate achieving that same level the following year, regardless of their raw marks.

### THE CONVERSION PROCESS

#### Raw marks to Grades

Following the marking of scripts, a committee of senior examiners reviews the quality of the work submitted for each individual paper. Using their professional judgement, and statistical and technical evidence, they decide where to set the raw mark grade boundaries for each unit. Table 1, as an example, shows possible raw mark paper boundaries for selected GCSE Religious Studies units.

Table 1

Unit	Maximum Raw Mark	Raw mark boundaries							
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
5562	120	98	83	68	53	42	31	20	9
5582	120	100	89	76	64	51	39	27	15

This table shows that the minimum raw mark required to obtain each grade can vary between units, even when they are marked out of the same total.

#### Raw Marks to Uniform Marks

The raw mark grade boundaries and all the candidates raw marks are entered into Edexcel's computer. The computer converts the raw marks into uniform marks. Each unit is out of 100 uniform marks.

A full course GCSE in Religious Studies is out of 200 uniform marks with each unit contributing one half of the overall qualification.

A short course GCSE in Religious Studies is out of 100 uniform marks, therefore one unit contributes 100% of the overall qualification.

The uniform grade boundaries for each unit are fixed and are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

All Units	Maximum UMS	Uniform mark boundaries							
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20

It is important to note that the scaling is not a single linear scale of maximum raw mark to maximum uniform mark. This is because the intervals between consecutive raw mark grade boundaries are not necessarily constant, however they are fixed for uniform marks.

In unit 5582 all candidates who obtain raw marks of 100 or above receive 90 or more uniform marks up to a maximum of 100. Those scoring raw marks of 89-99 receive 80-89 uniform marks, those with raw marks of 76-88 receive 70-79 uniform marks, and so on.

### The Conversion to UMS Marks Illustrated

The conversion below uses unit 5582 as an example. Table 3 shows the raw marks and the uniform marks. These marks have been taken from Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 3

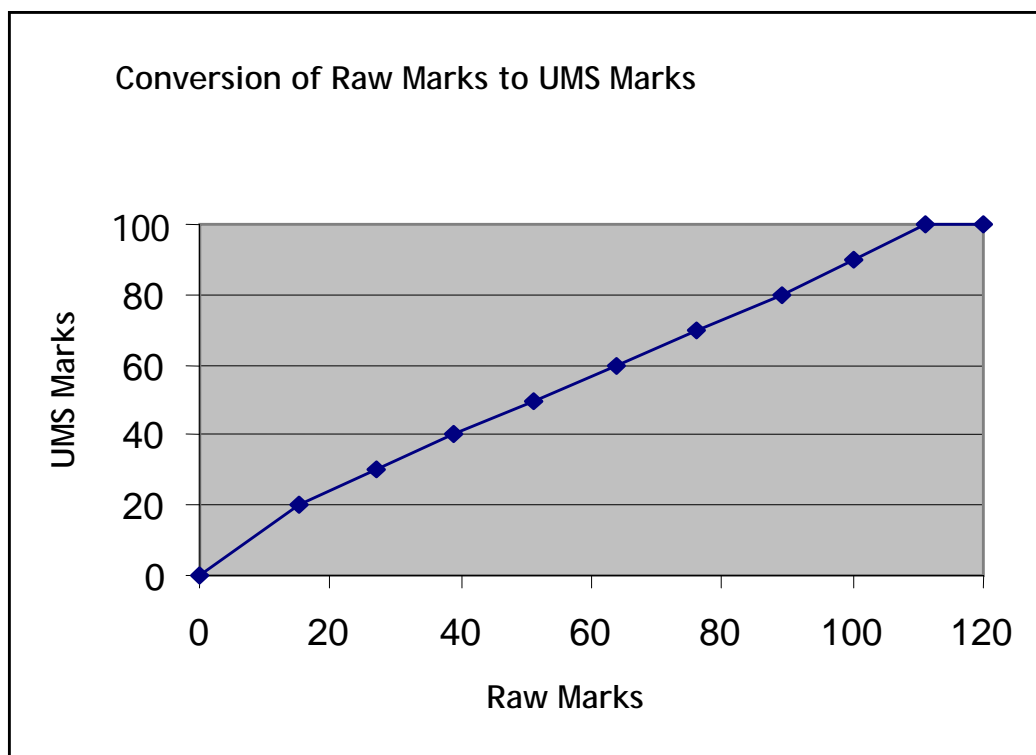
	Maximum Mark	Boundary at each grade							
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Raw Mark	120	100	89	76	64	51	39	27	15
UMS Mark	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20

Graph 1 shows the pairs of marks plotted with the raw mark on the horizontal axis against the uniform mark on the vertical axis. Straight lines join adjacent points. The line connecting the points for Grade A\* and Grade A is extended to give the raw mark at which the maximum of 100 uniform marks is reached.

For any raw mark, the uniform mark can be read off the graph. In this example, the maximum uniform mark is awarded for a raw mark below the maximum of 120. In fact, the raw mark is 111 when the maximum uniform mark is reached. All candidates who gain 111 or more raw marks will be awarded a uniform mark of 100.

If extending the line connecting Grade A\* and Grade A results in the maximum raw mark converting to less than the maximum uniform mark then this extension is not used. Instead, a point is plotted of maximum raw mark against maximum uniform mark. A straight line is drawn from Grade A\* to this point and the resulting line is used to read off the uniform marks in this range.

Graph 1



### MAKING THE AWARD

Cashing-in

Table 4 shows the number of uniform marks required to achieve each grade in GCSE Religious Studies. Like the unit boundaries, these are also fixed.

Table 4

Grade	Uniform Mark Boundaries	
	Full Course	Short Course
A*	180	90
A	160	80
B	140	70
C	120	60
D	100	50
E	80	40
F	60	30
G	40	20

When a candidate ‘cashes-in’ for a GCSE in Religious Studies, assuming eligibility rules are satisfied, the uniform marks from the contributing units are simply totalled to give a final subject mark.

### Examples

Using the earlier examples of raw grade boundaries, these examples show how candidates’ raw marks for each unit convert to their overall qualification grade.

Table 5 - Cashing-in for a full course GCSE

Unit	Raw Mark	UMS Mark
5562	85	81
5582	67	63
<b>Total UMS</b>		<b>144</b>

5562: A raw mark of 85 falls within the A range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are 80-89. 85 raw marks convert to 81 uniform marks.

5582: A raw mark of 67 falls within the C range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are 60-69. 67 raw marks converts to 63 uniform marks.

Totalling the uniform marks achieved in each unit gives 144 uniform marks. Reading off from Table 4, it can be seen that the candidate will be awarded a grade B in the full course in Religious Studies.

Table 6 - Cashing-in for a short course GCSE

Unit	Raw Mark	UMS Mark
5582	49	48
<b>Total UMS</b>		<b>48</b>

5582: A raw mark of 49 falls within the E range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are 40-49. 49 raw marks convert to a uniform mark of 48.

Reading off from Table 4, it can be seen that the candidate will be awarded a grade E in the short course in Religious Studies.