

UMS

Awarding VCE Qualifications

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 a grade 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 unit. Using their professional judgement, and statistical and technical evidence, they decide where to set the raw mark grade boundaries for each unit. Table 1 shows possible raw mark grade boundaries for selected VCE units.

Table 1

Unit	Maximum Raw Mark	Raw mark boundaries					
		A	B	C	D	E	N
H301T	80	54	48	42	36	31	26
H302P	24	19	16	13	10	7	4
H303P	24	19	16	13	10	7	4
H304T	80	63	56	49	42	35	28
H305P	24	19	16	13	10	7	4
H306P	24	19	16	13	10	7	4
H308T	80	59	52	45	39	33	27
H309T	80	56	50	44	39	34	29
H312T	80	54	48	42	37	32	27
H314P	24	19	16	13	10	7	4
H316P	24	19	16	13	10	7	4
H319P	24	19	16	13	10	7	4

The table shows that the minimum raw mark required to obtain each grade can vary between tested units, even when they are marked out of the same total. It should be noted that N will not be published as a grade at any level; it is only used in the conversion of raw marks to uniform marks.

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.

An Advanced VCE (Double Award) is out of 1200 uniform marks. Each unit contributes to one twelfth of the overall qualification.

An Advanced VCE is out of 600 uniform marks. Each unit contributes one sixth of the overall qualification.

An Advanced Subsidiary VCE is out of 300 uniform marks. Each unit contributes one third of the overall qualification.

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

Table 2

Unit	Max UMS	Uniform Mark Boundaries					
		A	B	C	D	E	N
All Units	100	80	70	60	50	40	30

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 the uniform marks.

In unit H308T, all candidates who obtain raw marks of 59 or more receive 80 or more uniform marks, up to a maximum of 100 uniform marks. Those scoring raw marks of 52-58 receive 70-79 uniform marks, raw marks of 45-51, 60-69 uniform marks and so on.

The Conversion to Uniform Marks Illustrated

The conversion below uses unit H308T 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

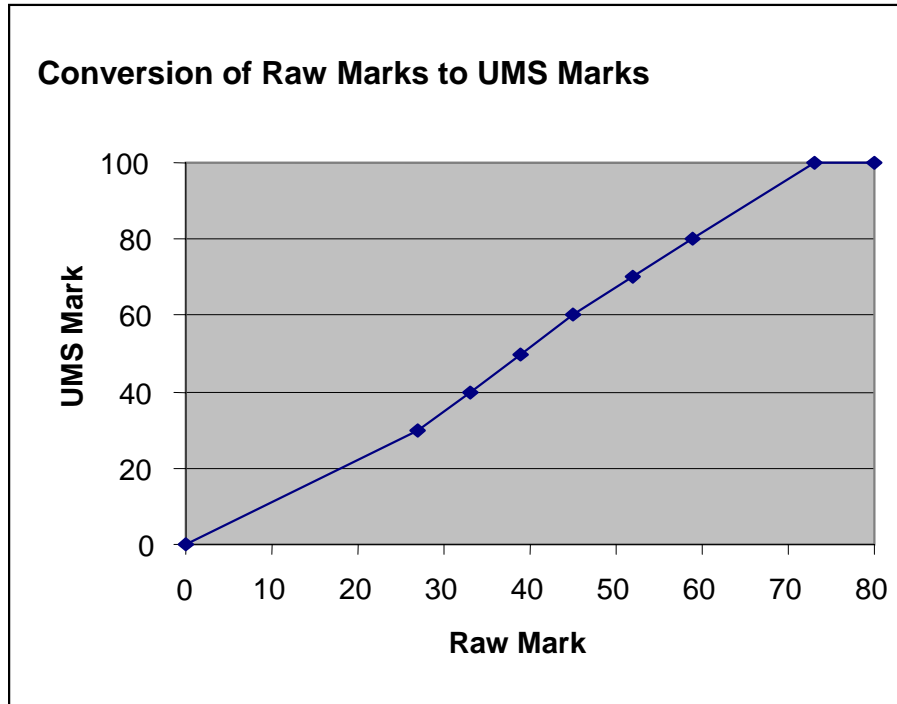
	Boundary at each grade					
	A	B	C	D	E	N
Raw Mark	59	52	45	39	33	27
UMS Mark	80	70	60	50	40	30

Graph 1 shows 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 B 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 80. In fact, the raw mark is 73 when the maximum uniform mark is reached. All candidates who gain 73 or more raw marks will be awarded a uniform mark of 100.

If extending the line connecting Grade A and Grade B 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 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 Advanced Subsidiary VCE, Advanced VCE and Advanced VCE (Double Award). Like the unit boundaries, these are also fixed.

Table 4

	Advanced Subsidiary VCE	Advanced VCE	Advanced VCE (Double Award)	
Maximum mark	300	600	1200	Maximum mark
A	240	480	960	AA
B	210	420	900	AB
C	180	360	840	BB
D	150	300	780	BC
E	120	240	720	CC
			660	CD
			600	DD
			540	DE
			480	EE
			420	U

When a candidate 'cashes-in' for any VCE award then, 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.

Table 5 - Cashing-in for an Advanced VCE (Double Award)

Unit	Raw Mark	UMS Mark
H301T	77	100
H302P	19	80
H303P	17	73
H304T	57	71
H305P	15	67
H306P	11	53
H308T	50	67
H309T	58	83
H312T	39	54
H314P	14	63
H316P	22	92
H319P	9	47
Total UMS		850

H301T: The maximum uniform mark is achieved at 73 uniform marks, therefore with 77 raw marks this candidate would achieve 100 uniform marks.

H302P: A raw mark of 19 falls within the A range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are: 80-100. 19 raw marks convert to 80 uniform marks.

H303P: A raw mark of 17 falls within the B range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are: 70-79. 17 raw marks convert to 73 uniform marks.

H304T: A raw mark of 57 falls within the B range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are: 70-79. 57 raw marks convert to 71 uniform marks.

H305P: A raw mark of 15 falls within the C range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are: 60-69. 15 raw marks convert to 67 uniform marks.

H306P: A raw mark of 11 falls within the D range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are: 50-59. 11 raw marks convert to 53 uniform marks.

H308T: A raw mark of 50 falls within the C range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are: 60-69. 50 raw marks convert to 67 uniform marks.

H309T: A raw mark of 58 falls within the A range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are: 80-100. 58 raw marks convert to 83 uniform marks.

H312T: A raw mark of 39 falls within the D range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are: 50-59. 39 raw marks convert to 54 uniform marks.

H314P: A raw mark of 14 falls within the C range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are: 60-69. 14 raw marks convert to 63 uniform marks.

H316P: A raw mark of 22 falls within the A range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are: 80-100. 22 raw marks convert to 92 uniform marks.

H319P: A raw mark of 9 falls within the E range. The number of uniform marks available in this range are: 40-49. 9 raw marks convert to 47 uniform marks.

Totalling the uniform marks achieved in each of the twelve units gives 850 uniform marks. Reading off from Table 4, it can be seen that the candidate will be awarded Grade BB for the Advanced VCE (Double Award).

Table 6 - Cashing-in for an Advanced VCE

The unit results from Table 5 are used in this example:

Unit	Raw Mark	UMS Mark
H301T	77	100
H302P	19	80
H304T	57	71
H305P	15	67
H309T	58	83
H312T	39	54
Total UMS		455

Totalling the uniform marks achieved in each of the six units gives 455 uniform marks. Reading off from Table 4, it can be seen that the candidate will be awarded a Grade B for the Advanced VCE.

Table 7 - Cashing-in for an Advanced Subsidiary VCE

The unit results from Table 5 are used in this example:

Unit	Raw Mark	UMS Mark
H301T	77	100
H302P	19	80
H305P	15	67
Total UMS		247

Totalling the uniform marks achieved in each unit gives 247 uniform marks. Reading off from Table 4, it can be seen that the candidate will be awarded a Grade A for the Advanced Subsidiary VCE.