

Uniform mark (UMS) guidance: an example for GCSE English Language

What are uniform marks and why do we use them?

Grade boundaries are set using raw marks. Raw marks are mapped to uniform marks to make a GCSE from the best recorded results for your student from any given examination series.

Uniform marks are used to ensure that the standard required to gain a particular grade is the same from year to year.

Below we have exemplified what the use of uniform marks means in GCSE English Language (2EN01).

Milan and Jelilat are both re-taking GCSE English Language Unit 2 higher tier this series.

Unit 2 (5EN2H) is out of 96 raw marks and has a total UMS of 120.

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

Unit 2	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Mark boundary this exam series	96	82	72	62	52	41				
Raw mark boundary last exam series	96	84	73	63	53	42				
Uniform Mark boundary	120	108	96	84	72	60				

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 A the raw boundary mark was 73 last series; this series it is 72. However, you will also notice that A will always have a uniform mark of 108.

Why do raw mark boundaries change?

Raw mark boundaries change from series to series since examination papers can vary in how they perform with students. 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 this exam series, the paper was more challenging, while the ability of the students remained consistent.

In the last examination series when Milan and Jelilat took this exam for the first time, Milan scored 52/96 and Jelilat scored 60/96 in raw marks.

This series, Milan scores a raw mark of 52/96 and Jelilat scores 62/96.

Calculating Results - GCSE English Cash in code: 2EN01

Milan achieved 72 uniform marks in his unit 2 resit. He has also taken units 1 and 3 this series.

Milan achieved:

Unit	Uniform Mark	
	This series	Last series
1	35	n/a
2	72 (resit)	70
3	73	n/a

Milan's total score is 180 uniform marks. With reference to the table below, he will achieve a grade C.

Qualification Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Uniform mark grade threshold	270	240	210	180	150	120	90	60

The maximum UMS for 2EN01 is 300