Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries will be published on the following pages of the awarding bodies at 8:00am on Results Days: 18th August for GCEs and 25th August for GCSEs:

AQA: AQA | Exams admin | Results days | Grade boundaries

OCR: Grade boundaries (ocr.org.uk)

Pearsons: Grade boundaries | Pearson qualifications

WJEC: Results and Grade Boundaries (eduqas.co.uk)

How are the Grade Boundaries calculated?

The awarding bodies illustrate/explain how they calculate the grade boundaries:

AQA

A guide to notional component grade boundaries A guide to notional component grade boundaries (aqa.org.uk)

OCR

[A Level Grade Calculations (ocr.org.uk)](ocr.org.uk)

How do we calculate your A Level grade?

OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Linear qualifications

A Levels are 'linear qualifications'. This means all the assessment takes place at the end of the course. Linear qualifications are made up of a number of separate exams or non-exam assessment (coursework) called 'components'.

1 In most cases, we just add the component marks together to get your total mark. For a few qualifications, some components are worth more than the others so we have to work this out first (see next page).

2 We check the total mark against the qualification grade boundaries to get your qualification grade.

Component 1 mark 53 + **Component 2 mark** 54 + **Component 3 mark** 60 = **Total mark** 167

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E
Mark	252	228	194	160	126	92

Grade C

Component marks
The mark you get on each exam paper or non-exam assessment will be your component mark. You don't get a grade for each component – just a mark. This is sometimes called a 'raw' mark.

Total mark
This is the total of your component marks.

Qualification grade boundaries
A grade boundary is the minimum mark you need to get a grade. For example, if the grade boundary for a Grade C is 160 marks, you need to get at least 160 to achieve a Grade C. A mark of 159 would therefore be a Grade D.

Grade boundaries for linear qualifications are set at qualification level. This means it's how you did overall which decides your qualification grade.

Qualification grade
This is your final result and what will appear on your certificate.

Component grade boundaries

We know it's useful to see how you did in each component so we also publish component grade boundaries. These show what the grade would be **if** we gave out grades for components. 'Grades' at component level don't automatically add up to the same grade at qualification level.

What happens if one component is 'worth' more than another?

Weighting factors and weighted marks

Each component contributes a certain percentage to the total qualification mark. In most cases, this contribution is equal – but not always. We use 'weighting factors' to make sure each component contributes the right amount towards the total mark.

For example, a qualification has three components marked out of 60, 60 and 40 and components 1 and 2 are weighted to be each worth 40% of the total marks:

	Component raw mark	Contribution to qualification	Weighting factor	Total marks
Component 1	60	40%	1.333	80
Component 2	60	40%	1.333	80
Component 3	40	20%	1.0	40
Total		100%		200

1 You get your total mark by multiplying your raw marks by the weighting factor and then adding these marks together.

2 We check the total mark against the qualification grade boundaries to get your qualification grade.

Component 1 mark (Raw mark × weighting factor) 64 (48 × 1.333) + **Component 2 mark** (Raw mark × weighting factor) 68 (51 × 1.333) + **Component 3 mark** (Raw mark × weighting factor) 30 (30 × 1.0) = **Total mark** 162

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E
Mark	185	174	152	130	109	88

Grade B

Component marks | **Total mark** | **Qualification grade boundaries** | **Qualification grade**

How do we calculate your GCSE (9–1) grade?

OCR
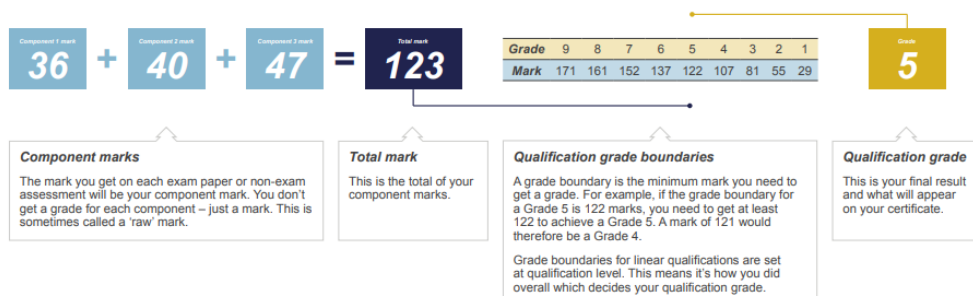Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Linear qualifications

GCSEs are 'linear qualifications'. This means all the assessment takes place at the end of the course. Linear qualifications are made up of a number of separate exams or non-exam assessment (coursework) called 'components'.

1 In most cases, we just add the component marks together to get your total mark. For a few qualifications, some components are worth more than the others so we have to work this out first (see next page).

2 We check the total mark against the qualification grade boundaries to get your qualification grade.

Component 1 mark **36** + Component 2 mark **40** + Component 3 mark **47** = Total mark **123**

Grade	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Mark	171	161	152	137	122	107	81	55	29

Grade **5**

Component marks
The mark you get on each exam paper or non-exam assessment will be your component mark. You don't get a grade for each component – just a mark. This is sometimes called a 'raw' mark.

Total mark
This is the total of your component marks.

Qualification grade boundaries
A grade boundary is the minimum mark you need to get a grade. For example, if the grade boundary for a Grade 5 is 122 marks, you need to get at least 122 to achieve a Grade 5. A mark of 121 would therefore be a Grade 4.

Grade boundaries for linear qualifications are set at qualification level. This means it's how you did overall which decides your qualification grade.

Qualification grade
This is your final result and what will appear on your certificate.

Component grade boundaries

We know it's useful to see how you did in each component so we also publish component grade boundaries. These show what the grade would be **if** we gave out grades for components. 'Grades' at component level don't automatically add up to the same grade at qualification level.

What happens if one component is 'worth' more than another?
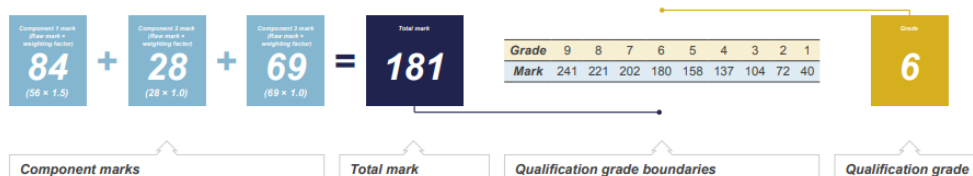
Weighting factors and weighted marks

Each component contributes a certain percentage to the total qualification mark. In most cases, this contribution is equal – but not always. We use 'weighting factors' to make sure each component contributes the right amount towards the total mark.

For example, a qualification has three components marked out of 100, 45 and 105 and component 1 is weighted to be worth half the total marks:

	Component raw mark	Contribution to qualification	Weighting factor	Total marks
Component 1	100	50%	1.5	150
Component 2	45	15%	1.0	45
Component 3	105	35%	1.0	105
Total		100%		**300**

1 You get your total mark by multiplying your raw marks by the weighting factor and then adding these marks together.

2 We check the total mark against the qualification grade boundaries to get your qualification grade.

Component 1 mark (Raw mark × weighting factor) **84** (56 × 1.5) + Component 2 mark (Raw mark × weighting factor) **28** (28 × 1.0) + Component 3 mark (Raw mark × weighting factor) **69** (69 × 1.0) = Total mark **181**

Grade	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Mark	241	221	202	180	158	137	104	72	40

Grade **6**

Component marks

Total mark

Qualification grade boundaries

Qualification grade

Pearson

Pearson have issued a series of mini films to illustrate how they set grade boundaries:

[Understanding marks and grades | Pearson qualifications](#)

WJEC

Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. Whilst exam papers are written to the same level of difficulty, they do vary each year. Grade boundaries ensure that whenever the exam is sat, students receive the same grade for the same level of performance.

For unitised specifications, grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and unit level.

For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the overall subject, rather than for each component/unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.

The 'notional' grade boundaries for each component are also available from 8am on publication of results days. Component boundaries are 'notional' and intended only as a guide, they are not official grades.