

GRADE SCORE MARKING and CUT SCORES

The following steps are involved when overall grades are being decided using Grade Score Marking (GSM)

Step One: Marking each question and calculating the overall score)

- each question is assigned a grade score (NØ, N1, N2, A3, A4, M5, M6, E7 or E8)
- the scores of all questions are totalled

Step Two: Assigning the overall grade by establishing the cut-scores (actual process for the 'real' exams)

- at/near the end of marking the panel leader and a senior marker meet
- they sort a large sample of papers into total score piles, ideally about 50 papers for each score
- using the standard, and starting at the minimum possible cut-scores, they apply holistic judgement across these actual papers to decide where the actual cut-scores that separate the grades appropriately fall
- the cut-scores are put into the judgement statement

Step B is the one that has not been undertaken for the Sample exams, because the cut-scores are established based on actual scripts from a large number of candidate. However, it's not difficult to work out the minimum possible overall score for A and M and E.

WHY IS THERE A MINIMUM POSSIBLE SCORE FOR EACH GRADE?

Imagine a three question paper in which a candidate gets N2 for each of the three questions.

Their total score is 6 because $N2 + N2 + N2 = 6$.

It would be nonsensical for such a candidate to be awarded A, since they had not demonstrated any A level evidence. The same applies for M ($A4 + A4 + A4$) and E ($M6 + M6 + M6$).

HOW DO YOU WORK OUT THE MINIMUM POSSIBLE SCORE FOR EACH GRADE?

Multiply the number of questions by 8 (the maximum possible score for any question) to give you the maximum possible overall score, then apply the rule below.

Minimum score for A: $\frac{1}{4}$ of the maximum possible overall score + 1

Minimum score for M: $\frac{1}{2}$ of the maximum possible overall score + 1

Minimum score for E: $\frac{3}{4}$ of the maximum possible overall score + 1

For example:

Three question paper

Maximum possible overall score, $8 \times 3 = 24$

Minimum score for A: $\frac{1}{4}$ of 24 + 1 = 6 + 1 = 7

Minimum score for M: $\frac{1}{2}$ of 24 + 1 = 12 + 1 = 13

Minimum score for E: $\frac{3}{4}$ of 24 + 1 = 18 + 1 = 19

Four question paper

Maximum possible overall score, $8 \times 4 = 32$

Minimum score for A: $\frac{1}{4}$ of 32 + 1 = 8 + 1 = 9

Minimum score for M: $\frac{1}{2}$ of 32 + 1 = 16 + 1 = 17

Minimum score for E: $\frac{3}{4}$ of 32 + 1 = 24 + 1 = 25

SO WHAT DO THE JUDGEMENT STATEMENTS LOOK LIKE?

Using the Minimum possible scores calculated above.

Three question paper

	Not Achieved	Achievement	Merit	Excellence
Score range	0 – 6	7 – 12	13 – 18	19 – 24

Four question paper

	Not Achieved	Achievement	Merit	Excellence
Score range	0 – 8	9 – 16	17 – 24	25 – 32