OCR Procedures for Awards

2014

Revised May 2014

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0. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The *GCSE, GCE, principal learning and project Code of Practice* is published by the Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual), the Welsh Government and the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). All awarding bodies have a statutory duty to adhere to the Code of Practice.

The purpose of grade endorsement is to ensure that OCR fulfils the Code of Practice requirement that the grades awarded represent continuity and parity of standards across years, across similar specifications and with those of other awarding bodies. The Code requires that a single named person is responsible to the awarding organisation's governing council for the quality and standards of its qualifications. For OCR this person is the Director of Assessment Standards (referred to in this document as DirAS) who reports to the OCR Board via the Award Sign-off Meeting. The awarding process is designed to enable the DirAS to fulfil this duty. In order to carry out this responsibility the DirAS is aided by a screening process the purpose of which is to satisfy the DirAS that the outcomes of the award are appropriate and will stand up to public scrutiny.

The basic requirements for the conduct of all awards are set out in the body of these procedures with qualification specific appendices at the end. The appendices also detail processes for marking review, boundary determination for the Entry Level Certificate (which is not covered by the Ofqual code), confirmatory (SRB) and Skills and Employment awards.

These procedures apply to scripts marked electronically (in scoris) or traditionally (paper-based) as well as controlled assessments and coursework. It is expected that where scripts are marked electronically, they will be awarded remotely.

0.1 Purpose of the Awarding Process

The purpose of the awarding process is to set grade boundaries for all components/units of a specification for which candidate performance is consistent over time and comparable across components/units and similar specifications. Where a new specification replaces an existing or legacy specification the primary principle is the preservation of qualification standards. This may mean an adjustment at component/unit level.

0.2 Phases of the Awarding Process

There are three phases to the awarding process.

Phase 1   *Pre-award period*
Prior to the award:
- Material for the pre-award and award is prepared.
- Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators propose preliminary mark ranges for boundaries.
- A pre-award takes place to identify boundary ranges for scrutiny at the award.

Phase 2   *The award*
Awards for specifications on scoris are normally held remotely, whilst awards for specifications not on scoris are held face-to-face. In both awards, senior examining personnel scrutinise candidates' work and make judgements regarding the quality of the scripts they have seen. The Chair of Examiners then summarises the judgements of the examiners, and uses statistical evidence to recommend grade boundaries. For non-scoris units this takes place at the award meeting, whereas for units on scoris it takes place at the Grade Threshold Meeting.

Phase 3   Grade endorsement and final checks
Proposed boundaries are statistically screened by technical experts. Changes may be proposed at this stage. The DirAS then reviews the grade boundaries and may make further changes. The Special Considerations Team in Risk and Compliance review candidates who have special consideration and the Operations Results Team make final clerical checks.

0.3   People Involved in the Awarding Process

People	Code of Practice Responsibility	Main Tasks
Chair of Examiners (known as The Chair)	manage all stages of the awarding process and responsible to the awarding body for maintaining standards	- collate all statistical evidence required; - lead the pre-award; - chair grade threshold meeting and/or award; - make the final decisions on boundary recommendations to the Accountable Officer.
Post Assessment Services Team and Operations Results Team	support the chair in managing the stages of the awarding process	- organise materials needed; - provide administrative and technical support;
Chief Examiner	responsible to the Chair for ensuring the examination as a whole meets the requirements of the specification and maintains standards year on year	- act as Principal Examiner/Principal Moderator for at least one unit; - attend or be in contact for pre-award; attend award / attend or be in contact for grade threshold meeting[1]; - attend marking review (if required).
Principal Examiner[1]	advise the awarding committee on how the question paper functioned and recommend preliminary boundary ranges	- assist in making boundary recommendations on-line or at award; - provide feedback to the awarders on how the assessment functioned; - attend marking review (if required).
Principal Moderator	advise the awarding committee on how the internally assessed unit/component functioned and recommend boundary marks/preliminary boundary ranges	- attend scaling / award preparation meeting if required; - assist in making boundary recommendations on-line or at award; - provide feedback to the awarders on how the assessment functioned.
Overlap member (if necessary)	consider the consistency of the boundary recommendations in the light of standards applied in other specifications	assist in making boundary recommendations on-line or at award for specifications in the same subject and for cognate specifications.
Screener	assist the DirAS in reviewing the Chair's boundary recommendations	- scrutinise award outcomes; - discuss any boundaries of concern with the Chair; - recommend boundaries to the DirAS (this may involve changes to Chair's initial recommendations).
Director of Assessment Standards	accountable for the quality and standards of OCR qualifications	- consider all boundary recommendations; - consider with the Chair and/or screeners particular boundaries of concern. This may involve changes to boundaries; - ratify all boundaries; - undertake a cognate review if necessary.
Special Considerations Team	Collect and report to the regulators data concerning special considerations	process any applications for special considerations

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[1] A grade threshold 'meeting' may be a traditional award meeting or it may takes place after awarders have made their boundary decisions on-line and consists of a review of those decisions to determine final boundary recommendations.

[1] Some Principal Examiners may be Principal Examiner Setters or Markers, but both must assist in boundary determination.

0.4   Grading Schemes (highest grade first)

Qualification	Level	Pass grades
GCE AS & A2 units	component/unit/AS qualification	A, B, C, D, E
GCE A level	Qualification	A*, A, B, C, D, E
GCSE - untiered	component/unit/qualification	A*, A, B, C, D, E, F, G
GCSE - tiered[2]	component/unit/qualification	A*, A, B, C, D and allowed E – Higher tier C, D, E, F, G – Foundation tier
Level 2 award	unit/qualification	Distinction, Merit, Pass
ELC	component/ qualification	Entry 3, Entry 2, Entry 1 (where applicable)
Level 1 PL and Project	unit/qualification	A*, A, B
Level 2 PL and Project	unit/qualification	A*, A, B, C
Level 3 PL and Extended Project	unit/qualification	A*, A, B, C, D, E
FSMQ	unit/qualification	A, B, C, D, E
Cambridge Nationals (single level)	unit/qualification	Distinction* L2, Distinction L2, Merit L2, Pass L2, Distinction L1, Merit L1, Pass L1.
Cambridge Nationals (Level 2)	unit/qualification	Distinction* L2, Distinction L2, Merit L2, Pass L2.
Cambridge Nationals (Level 1)	unit/qualification	Pass L2 (exceptionally), Distinction L1, Merit L1, Pass L1.

There are no overlapping grades between levels for PL or Project.
Any performance not achieving at least the minimum grade is given a U (unclassified).

0.5   Key Grade Boundaries

These are the unit/component boundaries considered at the award. Other boundaries are calculated arithmetically from the key grade boundaries.

Qualification	Key grade boundaries in order of determination
GCE (all units)	E/U, A/B
GCSE - non-tiered	C/D, A/B, F/G
GCSE - tiered	C/D, A/B (higher tier only) C/D, F/G (foundation tier only)
Level 2 award	Pass/U, Distinction/Merit
ELC	Entry 1/Entry 2, Entry 3/U
Level 1 PL and Project	B/U, A*/A
Level 2 PL and Project	C/U, A*/A
Level 3 PL and Extended Project	E/U, A*/A
FSMQ	E/U, A/B
Cambridge Nationals (single level)	Pass L2/Distinction L1, Distinction L2/Merit L2, Pass L1/U
Cambridge Nationals (Level 2)	Pass L2/U, Distinction L2/Merit L2
Cambridge Nationals (Level 1)	Pass L1/U, Distinction L1/Merit L1

All OCR specifications, except GCSE Mathematics B, are unitised and are aggregated through the mechanism of uniform marks. Although all boundaries are set at component level most units are comprised of only one component and this effectively means that almost all subjects

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[2] Unitised specifications are all untiered at qualification level as are coursework/controlled assessment units/components.

are assessed and graded at unit level alone, including options. There are some exceptions. All tiered GCSE specifications have external assessments which consist of two components, one for higher tier written papers and one for foundation tier. These have separate boundaries. Where other components are offered it is usually for operational purposes, i.e. between OCR repository and postal internally assessed components or between CBT and written paper options. These components will always have the same boundaries. This is also true of the GCE MFL speaking options.

The exceptions to the above are History A, History B and D&T Electronics and System Control (at GCSE), and History A (at GCE). These units have components within units which apply to separate, mutually exclusive options. GCE Critical Thinking has two components whose weighted raw mark boundaries are added to form the unit boundary. The same process is used to aggregate GCSE Mathematics B, the only remaining linear specification, to determine the qualification boundary.

The procedures for boundary determination are the same whether applied to single assessment units, units within which are separately assessed and graded options/tiers or units which consist of components which are separately graded before the weighted raw boundary marks are aggregated to construct the unit boundary. Level 2 awards are treated in the same way as level 2 Principal Learning although there is only one arithmetic grade instead of two.

0.6   Equivalences

For the Principal Learning and Project/Extended Project qualifications, equivalent grades have been established for archival and judgemental purposes as follows:

PL and Project	GCSE/GCE
Level 1 A*, B	D-E, F-G
Level 2 A*, C	A*, C
Level 3 A*, A, E	A*, A, E

For the Cambridge Nationals qualifications, equivalent grades have been established for archival and judgemental purposes as follows:

Cambridge Nationals	GCSE/GCE
Level 1 Distinction, Merit, Pass	D-G
Level 2 Pass, Distinction*, Distinction, Merit	A*-C

1.1   The duties of those involved in the pre-award and the award

The information below sets out the duties for each person or team involved.

1.1.1 Duties of the Post Assessment Services Team (Operations)

Task – Prepare Materials for the pre-award and award

Pre-award:

Provide the following materials for the Chairs and collate in the Chairs' Hub Awarding Documents (HAD) folder:

- SRS form, completed with the PE/PM recommendations
- The Awarding Meeting Report (AMR), fully populated with historical data and populated as far as possible with statistical data from the current series (the evening before the pre-award)
- The pre-award script request form for Chairs' use.

Following the pre-award access the completed summary template and either pull scripts via EPS (non-scoris) or action upload in scoris of a range of scripts for publication to remote awarders.

Remote Award:

E-mail remote awarders saying that scripts are ready to judge, with instructions on how to access awarding and archive scripts and confirmation of scripts selected for each threshold, with a table showing which assessor should look at which scripts. Included in the e-mail:

- Introduction to Remote Awarding (for new Awarders)
- The procedure to be used in making judgements as outlined in paragraph 6.15 of the Code of Practice
- The document: Awarding with Web Assessor
- SRS
- AMR
- Performance Descriptors
- Copies of the question paper and mark scheme (also available in awarding pack)
- Controlled Assessment scripts (if not supplied separately on disc) plus blank judgements form where relevant.

Collate scoris and controlled assessment judgements and file in Chairs' HAD folder the afternoon prior to the Grade Threshold meeting (GTM). Ensure the draft PE/PM Reports to Centres are added to HAD folder for the GTM.

Traditional (face-face) Award:

- Provide hard copy grade descriptors, AMR, blank judgement forms for each awarder

- Organise for DC10 to deliver awarding scripts direct to meeting (For coursework, this applies if the PM has delivered the award sample to DC10; in many cases PM will bring the scripts themselves to the meeting – PAS will check this)
- Organise for DC10 to deliver hard copy archive scripts direct to meeting
- Provide green archive cover sheets for PE use at the meeting

1.1.2 Duties of the Assessment Materials – Logistics Team (Operations)

To provide, for all awarders, in advance of the pre-award, an awarding pack containing:

- Archive CD
- Admin. CD (to include Code of Practice and OCR Procedures for Awards)
- Mark Scheme(s)
- Question paper(s)

1.1.3 Duties of the Chair

Before the award, the Chair must ensure s/he is conversant with the overall standard of work associated with key grades in previous examination series. The Chair will provide, where appropriate, statistical information in order to allow PE/PMs to make informed recommendations of key boundary ranges, particularly in situations where the PE has limited evidence from marked scripts. This statistical information could include the mean and standard deviation from the current and previous examinations and item level data for scoris units. The Chair will need to check that the PE/PM has access to any relevant communications from Centres which could impact on awarding decisions.

(i) Task – Prepare for the pre-award
The Chair will need to collate, or have access to the following materials for the pre-award. Some of these will have been provided by the PAS Team (see 1.1.1).

- The AMR
- The SRS form, completed with the PE/PM recommendations
- The blank pre-award script request form
- Mark distributions and associated graphs for each unit
- Question papers and mark schemes as provided in the awarding pack from Operations
- ILD for scoris marked units
- Information on the performance on the common questions (and others) for each pair of papers, if appropriate
- For GCE qualifications and units, putative distributions based on prior attainment
- The distribution of mean GCSE scores for GCE units
- For GCSE qualifications, predictions based on prior attainment
- Results from the inter-board screening exercise where appropriate
- Relevant unit pair distributions

(ii) Task – Obtain modelled aggregation data
For unitised schemes, provide the OCR Technical Advisory Group (TAG) team with suggested key boundaries to allow aggregation modelling.

To consider the boundary ranges proposed in the light of modelled subject/option outcomes.

The Chair will use the above materials and model(s) to complete the pre-award summary template and save it to the Chairs' HAD folder on the X drive.

(iii)   Task – Prepare for the Award

The Chair will need to collate, or have access to the following materials in addition to those detailed above:

- Details of any relevant factors which may affect the standards of the awards such as letters from centres
- Information from relevant Ofqual monitoring reports, comparability studies or OCR internal reports
- Any written instruction from the regulators specifying particular evidence that must inform the awarding process for a particular series
- The Ofqual Code of Practice
- A copy of the specification
- A copy of these OCR Procedures for Awards.

(Other material will be provided by the PAS Team as listed in 1.1.1)

For Traditional (face-face) Awards the following may also be required:

- Where they exist, a selection of Ofqual or other exemplar material and performance descriptions
- For new specifications, archive material from a cognate/relevant subject

1.1.4   Duties of the Chief Examiner/Principal Examiner/Principal Moderator

Before the pre-award, the Chief Examiner/Principal Examiner/Principal Moderator must ensure s/he is conversant with the overall standard of work associated with key grades in previous examination series. In addition, where provided they should consider the item level data for their own question papers and use this analysis to make key boundary recommendations on the SRS form. The SRS includes a section for recording any relevant observations from the Item Level Data to inform awarders, also for any points arising from a comparison with the archive scripts and for any information relating to comments from centres. It is the Principal Moderator's duty to ensure that there is sufficient coursework/controlled assessment evidence available for consideration at the award.

(i)   Task - Make advance recommendations of key boundary ranges
To consider:

- reports from Team Leaders/Assistant Examiners/Assistant Moderators
- candidates' work seen during marking
- archive material
- any statistical evidence that may have been provided by the Chair
- comments from Centres.

Provide an electronic confidential report (SRS) to the awarders, including proposed grade boundary mark ranges for the award of each key grade in each unit. Submit the Draft Report for Publication to Centres (RTC) for consideration at the award. These must be returned to OCR in advance of the pre-award (SRS) and in advance of the award (RTC).

1.1.5 Duties of the TAG team

(i)   Task – Provide statistical information for the pre-award and award
To be available throughout the pre-award and award period to provide statistical and technical support, and to provide modelled aggregation outcomes for the summer awards.

To provide additional data as required by Ofqual and respond to any reasonable specification specific requests for data from the Chairs' team.

(ii)   GCE data
Provide on the X drive, for access by Chairs, all putative data at unit and qualification level[3]. Mean GCSE score distributions including age/option breakdowns are also provided for each GCE unit.

(iii)   GCSE data
For new GCSE units, entries by age will be provided. Centre distributions and predictions based on prior attainment for all new GCSE qualifications (full and short course) will be provided.

(iv)   Principal Learning data
For PL units, an age breakdown of the cohort will be provided. If the entry is sufficiently large at Level 3, mean GCSE scores may also be provided.

(v)   Cambridge Nationals data
For Cambridge Nationals units, an age breakdown of the cohort will be provided. If the entry is sufficiently large, mean KS2 scores may also be provided if there is a sufficient match.

1.2   Pre-Award

The Chair leads the pre-award, and the Chief Examiner participates if possible. The Chair is responsible for the final identification of the key boundary ranges.

The purpose of the pre-award is to consider, in advance of the award, all the statistical and technical data available in order to determine the ranges of scripts/candidates' work selected for consideration at the award[4]. If units have been stable over time, the Chair may decide to proceed with a confirmatory award (this should be done in conversation with the Head of Assessment Standards). For this a Statistically Recommended Boundary (SRB) is identified (for details see Appendix 3). Scripts in a three mark range are presented to the awarders, but because the awarders may choose to proceed to a wider award, a full range of scripts must still be chosen. **A confirmatory award is not suitable for new specifications.** The script ranges should ensure consistency (standards remaining constant over time) and comparability (equivalent standards across units/cognate specifications).

Requests for selection of scripts, for pulling in EPS or scoris, will be finalised after the pre-award.

Consideration must be given to the demand of the question paper using:
- Principal Examiner report (as shown on the SRS form)
- Principal Examiner boundary recommendations (as shown on the SRS form)
- mean and standard deviation
- historic statistics (data on AMR from previous sessions is captured at the time of freezing boundaries after DirAS sign-off)
- mark distributions

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[3] Putative data refers to predicted grade distributions based, for GCE qualifications, on the mean GCSE scores of candidates.

[4] For a traditional award where scripts need to be selected often in advance of the pre-award, this will be a confirmatory exercise.

- item level data for scoris units.

Consideration must be given to the nature of the unit cohort using:
- centre distribution (for consortia-led Principal Learning and Projects this will be of limited use);
- mean GCSE scores where appropriate;
- forecast grades;
- putative (predicted) unit distributions where provided.

Consideration must be given to comparability across units/components using:
- unit pairs;
- information about the variation in the nature of the cohort and demand of the question paper.

Consideration must be given to specification outcomes where appropriate using:
- aggregation modelling;
- putative (predicted) grade distributions (summer series only);
- information from inter-board screening data;
- common centre distributions (GCSE, summer series only).

Consideration must be given to coursework/controlled assessment boundaries using:
- Principal Moderator report;
- Principal Moderator boundary recommendations;
- whether any changes are needed to boundaries which have been stable over two or more series (provided there has been an entry of 500 or more) and for which there have been no changes in the specification.

It is important to establish that sufficient coursework/controlled assessment at the appropriate marks will be available for the award.

The range of scripts for each key boundary normally includes the Principal Examiner's recommended range/boundary mark. However, priority must be given to the statistically indicated boundary, and where the initial range chosen does not encompass that of the Principal Examiner, the range of scripts to be considered should normally be extended to include this range/mark.

It is important to remember that statistical data can change in a short period of time and script ranges may need to be reviewed before the award as more marks are loaded.

For existing AS/A Level qualifications and GCSE units, the starting points for this consideration should normally be the final raw mark boundaries chosen for the previous similar series, e.g. June 2013 should be taken as the reference point for the June 2014 series provided there are no other changes.

The available information listed above will assist in arriving at the most suitable range of scripts by providing evidence of the extent to which the judgemental boundaries for the component/unit under consideration are likely to vary from the starting position (the boundaries set in the previous series with reasonable entries or targeted boundaries for new or small entry units).

In interpreting this evidence, it may be helpful to consider some of the following questions:
- Are the statistics across the two series comparable for all components/units?
- Are there significant entry differences?
- Were changes made to component/unit boundaries in the previous series to address the effects of regression when aggregating?
- How have the mean and standard deviation changed? How much of this can be accounted for by changes in the cohort of candidates and/or differences in the demand of the papers?

- For unitised schemes, is the performance of re-sit candidates consistent across series?
- For AS/A Level, is the percentage of candidates in each mean GCSE category comparable across all options within a component/unit?
- For unitised schemes, is the mean mark of the common candidates shown on component/unit pairs very different from that of the mean mark for all candidates for particular component(s)/unit(s)?
- Are the qualification outcomes in line with previous years, allowing for any change in the nature of the cohort? Is there any additional evidence which justifies any changes?
- Are there any regulatory directives which might influence the priority of the indicators (e.g. putatives)?

The width of the final range chosen will depend not only on the total number of marks available but also on the closeness of the previous series' boundary marks, the design value of the boundary for the paper and the middle mark of the Principal Examiner's/Principal Moderator's recommendation.

Once a range of marks round each key grade boundary has been chosen, a sample of 10 scripts (if available) are selected at each mark point in that range. In order to allow for the possibility that the range might not encompass the boundary mark, according to awarders' judgement, further scripts may also be chosen which lie outside the initial range. For small entry components (i.e. less than 300 candidates) all scripts may be selected.

For a traditional award the ten scripts (if available) must have been marked by an examiner whose marks have not been scaled and/or have not been identified as lingering doubt examiners (neither category exists in scoris marked scripts). Arrangements must be made for additional scripts to be made available at the award should the awarding committee need to consider evidence outside the proposed ranges.

For an internally assessed unit where the boundaries have been carried forward for the previous two series and where the Principal Moderator/Chair are satisfied the same boundaries will be carried forward, there should be at least two pieces of work provided for inspection at each boundary.

For an internally assessed unit where the boundaries have not been carried forward for the previous two series or where the Principal Moderator/Chair are not satisfied the same boundaries will be carried forward, there should be at least two pieces of work at each mark in the proposed boundary range. The work should be clearly marked with the Principal Moderator's mark, which may be different from the Centre's mark.

If there is clearly a discrepancy in the statistical indicators, the pre-award must consider carefully whether to extend the initial range of scripts to be considered at the award.

The Chair must also prioritise the statistical indicators to be used for the award taking into account any Ofqual directives. In general for GCE awards, priority must be given to the putative outcomes at subject level. For GCSEs, the prioritised indicators are the predictions based on prior attainment, and the previous year's grade distribution from centres requesting certification, irrespective of awarding body. Further guidance will be given regarding Ofqual directives as and when they arise.

Each specification except ELCs must have a formal award which follows (or is informed by for remote awards) the agenda as set out in Appendix 6. Awards will normally be held remotely unless scripts are not marked on scoris or paper-based coursework/controlled assessments are being considered.

2.1 Membership

The awarding committee for a specification includes the Chair, the Chief Examiner, all Principal Examiners and the Principal Moderator(s) (if any).

For a quorate award, the committee must have at least three members in addition to the Chair. If a member of the awarding committee is unable to take part, deputising arrangements must be made. The deputy should be the most senior assessor available for the appropriate component/unit.

The awarding committee must, in addition to the members above, include overlap members where there are:
- two or more specifications in a subject;
- related specifications (e.g. GCSE and applied GCSE or applied GCSE and PL);
- common components/units across specifications.

The overlap members are the Chair and at least one further member. Where Diploma Principal Learning or Project qualifications are being awarded, there must be an overlap member between Level 1 and Level 2. In addition, a common Chair should preside over the awards at all levels either for the projects or for the PL in a Line of Learning (LoL).

2.2 Purpose of the Award

The awarding committee:
- ensures that the required standards are applied to each examination component/unit and to the specification as a whole. Such standards should include due consideration of the maintenance of standards over time, and the alignment of standards with other awarding bodies;
- assists the Chair in arriving at recommended boundary marks for each key component/unit boundary;
- selects the archive – two scripts at each key boundary (for scoris awards the PAS Team will archive 5 scripts at each key boundary for the examined units by referencing the signed-off AMR and using any directives provided by the awarding committee).

(It is **not** the task of the awarding committee to deal with adjustments to the marks of individual assessors, or with such matters as absences, special consideration for abnormal circumstances in particular Centres, special consideration for individual candidates, missing scripts, etc.)

The question addressed in the awarding process is:

For any judgemental boundary, what is the mark for which the performance of candidates is considered equivalent to that achieved by candidates at the boundary mark for the same grade in the previous series?

Where there have been significant changes to the assessment structure or mark schemes, it is appropriate to address the additional question:

For any judgemental boundary, what is the mark for which the performance of candidates is considered equivalent to that achieved by candidates on other units at the same level, in the same specification and at the same grade, ensuring that the aggregated outcomes are acceptable at qualification level?

These questions assume the appropriateness of the standards of the previous summer series. When there has been a change in structure it is also of value to consider:

What level of performance on this unit is good enough to merit the award of a given grade taking regression effects into account?

When the Chair has decided it is appropriate to use the confirmatory method of awarding where awarders are presented with a three mark range and are required to confirm, or otherwise, that the middle mark of the range is an appropriate boundary for the grade under consideration, the question they are asked to address is:

Can you confirm that the scripts on the statistically recommended boundary mark are a good representation of the expected performance of a borderline candidate at that grade?

2.3   Number of Marks Entered on EPS

For an award to proceed there should be a minimum of 85% of the marks on the system for each component/unit.

If there are 60-85% of marks on the system, permission to proceed with the award must be sought from one of the following:
- the Head of Assessment Standards
- the Head of Research and Technical Standards.

If there are fewer than 60% of marks on the system **the award must not proceed without the permission of the Director of Assessment Standards.**

2.4   The Award

The award may either be conducted remotely, where scripts can be viewed on-line, or an awarding meeting is held. At the award[5], a decision will be taken to determine the single mark which best represents the grade boundary for each of the key boundaries (those set judgementally) for each component/unit, using professional judgement on candidates' work around the grade boundaries and informed by statistical evidence detailed in 1.2. These are the provisional grade boundaries.

The key boundaries are shown in the table below. All other boundaries are determined arithmetically (see Appendix 2).

Qualification	Key boundaries in order of grading
AS/A2	'e'/'u' 'a'/'b'
GCSE untiered	'c'/'d' 'a'/'b' 'f'/'g'
GCSE tiered	'c'/'d' foundation tier [but see note below] 'c'/'d' higher tier 'a'/'b' 'f'/'g'

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[5] See Awarding Agenda in Appendix 6.

Qualification	Key boundaries in order of grading
	(all boundaries on the foundation tier are then arithmetically determined)
	[where the size of the entry for the lower tier is very small and/or evidence is sparse at the relevant part of the mark range, the higher tier boundary may be awarded first]
ELC	Entry 1/Entry 2, Entry 3/'u'
Level 2 award	Pass/'u', Distinction/Merit
Level 1 PL and Project	'b'/'u', 'a*'/'a'
Level 2 PL and Project	'c'/'u', 'a*'/'a'
Level 3 PL and Extended Project	'e'/'u', 'a*'/'a'
FSMQ	E/U, A/B
Cambridge Nationals (single level)	Pass L2/Distinction L1, Distinction L2/Merit L2, Pass L1/U
Cambridge Nationals (Level 2)	Pass L2/U, Distinction L2/Merit L2
Cambridge Nationals (Level 1)	Pass L1/U, Distinction L1/Merit L1

2.4.1 Setting key component/unit boundaries (remote)

Awarders will be clearly instructed on the time frame in which they have access to awarding scripts on screen. They will each be provided with an Individual Record Sheet which indicates the mark range covered by the scripts (confirmatory (SRB) remote awards are not permitted) and accessible scripts outside the initial range.

A provisional grade boundary must be set separately for each component/unit for each judgemental grade. The provisional grade boundaries must be determined by the use of the candidates' total marks for the component/unit, including marks awarded for written communication where appropriate.

In considering the quality of candidates' work, reference should be made to grade descriptions and (where they exist) to Ofqual/awarding body performance descriptions, to the examination scripts, to marking criteria and mark schemes concerned, to archive material and (where they exist) to Ofqual exemplar materials. Awarders will use the information on the SRS form, any technical and statistical data and archive material as appropriate in making decisions on individual scripts.

Each committee member views at least two scripts on each mark point covering the boundary range within the time frame allowed. These scripts will normally be different for each awarder. Each member is asked to reach a personal judgement as to whether each script is worthy of the higher grade or not. If necessary, work outside the recommended ranges may be considered. Decisions are recorded on the zone recording sheets. All recording sheets are considered later at the grade threshold meeting by the Chair (in consultation with the Chief Examiner) to determine the final boundary recommendation.

For every unit, for every key threshold, a decision is recorded for every mark in the range, either on the Individual Record Sheet or in scoris. If the awarder is not confident that the boundary lies within the chosen range of scripts, (s)he may extend their consideration to the scripts which lie outside the initial range.

Boundary decisions are returned to OCR by the date specified. Collated recording sheets are then prepared for each key boundary on each component/unit by the PAS Team, indicating the judgements of all members of the awarding committee. The Chair and Chief Examiner will hold a grade threshold meeting (which could be by webinar or teleconference) to review all the statistical and technical evidence, and the zone recording sheets, in order to set provisional key boundaries for each unit. A record of

this meeting will be kept on the Awarding Report and on the OCR monitoring form if appropriate.

Copies of all electronic communications for the awarding process will be kept as part of the documentation for the awarding process.

2.4.2 Setting key component/unit boundaries (traditional)

Where the award is not held remotely the Principal Examiner's Confidential Report (SRS) and statistically recommended boundaries (where they exist) are presented to the Awarding Committee. The Principal Examiner will make reference to the general standard of the candidates based on reports from examiners and the general level of difficulty of the component/unit, and may illustrate these points by reference to the scripts selected at each key boundary. The Principal Examiner will mention any substantial alteration made to the mark scheme during the standardisation process.

The Committee may then discuss this report in the light of the archive scripts or exemplar materials, the performance descriptions, and grade descriptors, the current papers and their particular views about possible grade boundaries formed during their preparations for the meeting.

For a coursework/controlled assessment component/unit in an established specification, where there have been no changes in assessment criteria, assessment personnel or in nature or size of cohort for two or more series for which the entry has been over 500[6], grade boundary marks for the same component/unit may be carried forward from year to year. However, this must be subject to review in the light of feedback from the Principal Moderator and the technical, statistical and archive evidence available.

In setting grade boundaries, the procedure used must ensure that a selection of scripts or work at each mark point in the boundary range determined by the Chair as suitable for the committee's consideration is inspected with reference to the archive (this range may be less wide than that encompassing all the pulled scripts). One of three strategies may be used to determine the zone of uncertainty. Within each strategy, each awarder must work independently at this stage in the process.

a) Strategy A

Working from the top of the mark range, scripts at each mark are considered in turn, being exchanged between awarding committee members as necessary so that, where possible, each considers at least two scripts at each mark point. If the quality of the work is considered worthy of the higher grade by the committee, scripts for the next mark in the range are considered. The lowest mark at which a consensus is achieved is determined. This is known as the upper limiting mark. Then, working up from the bottom of the range, the committee considers scripts to identify the highest mark for which there is consensus that the quality of the work is not worthy of the higher grade. One mark above this mark is known as the lower limiting mark.

b) Strategy B

Each committee member is provided with a number of scripts covering the boundary range, and sufficient time is allowed to consider, where possible, at least two scripts at each mark point. Each member is asked to reach a personal judgement as to whether each script is worthy of the higher grade. The available scripts are shared between committee members so that the maximum number of scripts are viewed. Then, working down the mark range, the committee identifies the lowest mark for which there is consensus that the work is worthy of the higher grade. This defines the upper limiting mark. Working up from the bottom of the range, the committee identifies the highest mark for which there is consensus that the quality of the work is not worthy of the higher grade. One mark above this mark is the lower limiting mark.

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[6] For components where the maximum entry is less than 500 then an informed decision must be made

c) Strategy C (confirmatory awards used only for stable specifications)
Each committee member is required to review at least six scripts – two on the statistically recommended boundary (SRB), two on the mark above and two on the mark below. Each member is asked to confirm, or otherwise whether the scripts on the SRB fairly represent a grade boundary performance (see Appendix 3). If there are any doubts expressed then the award must proceed, extending the range as detailed in the appendix, using whichever method (strategy A or B) is appropriate.

During this process, the Chair keeps a record of the awarders' judgements made on each mark on an electronic Boundary Recording Form these records are retained (after the meeting until the outcomes for the specification have been signed off. The scripts on any particular mark may be looked at more than once if appropriate. The boundary zone is determined by the upper and lower limiting marks defined above and the range of marks between them. These zones are recorded on the Boundary Record Form and are shared with the committee.

The Chair of Examiners must then weigh up all the available evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, and recommend a single mark (normally within this zone, but which must lie within the range of scripts considered) which best represents the grade boundary in the light of the technical and statistical evidence. This judgement will include consideration of previous series' statistical outcomes for the component/unit at the boundary in question, where this is relevant, and other data including forecast grades, unit pair comparisons and consideration of the relative ability of the entry given by mean GCSE score, centre type, KS2 predictions or concurrent GCSE data (if available). Before finalising a unit boundary decision, the impact on the qualification outcome must also be taken into account. If there is any doubt about setting the boundary within the script range available, the range must be extended.

If a member of the committee is present in the role of overlap with a cognate specification, this member must consider the consistency of the key boundary recommendations in the light of standards applied to the cognate specification.

Awarding committees must ensure that they see work at every point in the mark range, in particular the mark which is eventually chosen as the boundary.

Five archive scripts for each key boundary are selected by the PE during the award.

2.4.3   Order of boundary consideration
The boundaries must be considered in the order laid down in Appendix 2.

In GCE, untiered GCSE and PL/Project specifications, the awarders should normally consider all the key boundaries for one component/unit before moving on to another component/unit.

In tiered GCSE units, the boundary for grade 'c' should be considered on both foundation and higher tier components, foundation tier first, before proceeding to the next grade. Particular attention should be paid to comparability of standards at 'c' when the same grade is awarded on both foundation and higher tier.

Since evidence gathered from one component/unit is likely to assist in the setting of grade boundaries for others, awarders should take this into account as grading proceeds.

Where a component/unit is common to more than one specification, it should always contribute the same raw mark grade boundaries.

Where there is more than one route to a grade within a unit e.g. foundation and higher tier, the awarding committee must ensure that the standards for awards of grades derived from each route are comparable.

Once the key grade boundaries have been determined for a component/unit, all other boundaries are determined arithmetically (see Appendix 2). This is done automatically on EPS. These arithmetic component boundaries may, in certain circumstances, be changed (see below).

2.4.4   Setting grade boundaries when there is more than one component[7]

If a unit consists of more than one component, key grade boundaries must be determined for each component separately. The unit boundaries are calculated automatically on EPS using an aggregate of the weighted component boundary marks.

Once the unit key grade boundaries have been calculated, arithmetic grade boundaries which are set at unit/option level **must not** be changed. Judgemental unit boundaries are first determined from the appropriate component boundaries using the straight aggregate of the weighted component boundary marks. The other unit/option boundaries are then determined arithmetically in the usual way. Sometimes, due to rounding effects, the arithmetic unit/option boundaries are not the same as the aggregated component boundaries; this is shown in EPS by a warning message. This is only of concern if a unit/option boundary is above the weighted aggregate component mark for that grade. In these circumstances the arithmetic **component** boundaries should be adjusted until the component aggregate mark is either the same as or above the unit/option arithmetic boundary. The unit/option arithmetic boundaries **must** not be changed.

The marks chosen to represent the key grade boundaries and the resulting arithmetically derived boundaries for a unit will automatically be converted to uniform mark boundaries which are pre-set, as are subject uniform mark boundaries. This mapping determines the conversion of all raw scores to uniform marks for each unit.

Candidates' overall grades for the qualification are determined by adding up their uniform marks for each unit.

2.4.5   A* (GCE and GCSE only)

For all GCE A2 units, and GCSE specifications the A* (a*) boundary is provisionally set as follows:

If the mark interval between the A boundary and the maximum mark is more than twice the mark interval between the A and B boundaries, the A* boundary is set the same number of marks above A as B is below A.

If the mark interval between the A boundary and the maximum mark is less than or equal to twice the mark interval between the A and B boundaries, the A* boundary is set halfway between the A and the maximum mark. If this is not a whole mark (e.g. 78.5) the A* boundary is rounded down to the lower whole mark (e.g. 78).

Where a review of technical and statistical evidence leads the awarders to judge that the A* boundary should be set at a different mark, this should be discussed with the Head of Assessment Standards or the Head of RTS; if agreed this evidence should be noted in the awarding documentation.

For GCSE it is normally expected that the number of A* candidates should lie in a range between 10% and 40% of the total number of candidates obtaining an A at qualification level.

For GCE, the percentage of A* candidates is calculated from the performance on the A2 units and will only be awarded to those candidates obtaining an A on the GCE as a whole and a total of 90% UMS or more for their A2 units. Putative data will inform the award if an adjustment to the 'a*' conversion point at unit level is indicated (see Appendix 2 for the rules governing the movement of the 'a*' conversion point), although it should be noted that a* is not a reported grade at unit level.

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[7] This procedure is also used for setting the qualification boundaries for GCSE Mathematics B.

2.4.6 Small entry components/units

Common sense must be applied to the determination of grade boundary marks for small entry components/units where there are **very few (or no) scripts** in a key boundary region. It is relatively common to find that there is plenty of script evidence at one judgemental boundary and none at another so this procedure may not apply to all boundaries within a component/unit. If the entry is less than 300 all scripts should be selected for awarding.

Where there are small entry options within a specification, boundaries chosen for the larger entry options should be used and the choice confirmed by considering the scripts that are available for the option concerned.

If there are no scripts within the area of a judgemental grade boundary:
* the Principal Examiner's recommendation should be considered;
* the previous series boundary mark may be carried forward;
* boundaries at the design (i.e. targeted) threshold may be considered.

In some very small entry cases, each script may be graded individually and suitable boundary values estimated.

Where scripts are available, the committee should confirm that they fall into the correct grade ranges and adjustments should be made if necessary.

2.4.7 Legacy specifications

A particular example of small entry components/units is that which arises when a specification has been replaced but for which a final re-sit opportunity is offered. Although, in this case, question papers are often a clone of several past papers it is not normally possible to recommend boundaries from those set on the relevant past papers and the procedure in 2.4.6 should be followed.

For stable specifications, the Code of Practice has approved the use of a confirmatory award (using SRBs) for the key grades in order to reduce the burden of awarding (for traditional Face-face awards only). At the pre-award Chairs will determine an SRB for every component/unit based on predicted outcomes supplied by the TAG team and other statistical indicators. At the award the awarders will consider scripts on this mark, one mark above and one mark below (a range of three marks) as detailed in Appendix 3. If there are any concerns about recommending the SRB as the grade boundary, then the awarders must consider further scripts as described in Appendix 3.

2.4.8 Internally assessed components/units

For units consisting of coursework, controlled assessment, projects, practicals, orals, etc., the Principal Moderator will make recommendations for the key boundaries to the awarding committee. As stated in Section 1.2, for established specifications these boundaries may be carried forward from series to series provided that this accords with Principal Moderator recommendations and with statistical evidence.

Where the grade boundaries recommended for a coursework/controlled assessment component/unit are carried forward, the Chair should consider the recommendations of the Principal Moderator to be able to confirm to the awarders that the standards represented are comparable. Exemplar work and statistical data must be available for inspection.

For new units of this type or where it is considered that standards are not consistent with previous series, boundaries are determined in the same way as for externally assessed units (see Section 2.4.1). The Principal Moderator should have available at the award examples of candidates' work. Each should be labelled with the mark which has been confirmed by the Principal Moderator. Ideally these should be drawn from centres where the Principal Moderator

is able to approve the marks awarded, but, where this is not possible, the confirmed marks may be different from the marks awarded by the Centre. It is expected that there will be two or three examples of work at each mark point in the recommended grade range.

Where boundaries have been determined at an earlier meeting and recommendations are made to the awarders, exemplar work and statistical data must be available for inspection.

In cases where evidence is ephemeral, there should be a report from the Principal Moderator or Examiner describing examples of the standard of work achieved by the candidates. Any relevant information from other members of the awarding committee should also be taken into account.

> **Where there is a formal award meeting (i.e. not remote), at the end of the award there should be a review of all the grade boundaries in the light of qualification outcomes before component/unit grades are finalised and the committee members leave the meeting. As a general rule, qualification outcomes that are outside tolerances specified by Ofqual will need to be justified on the Awarding Report.**

2.4.9   The Awarding Meeting Report

Once the component/unit grade boundaries and the specification grade distribution have been determined, the electronic Awarding Meeting Report (AMR) must be checked. This is normally done by another member of Staff or Deputy Chair. An Awarding Report must be included, **which must make reference to unexpected decisions on boundaries not obvious from the statistics.**

The Chair confirms the AMR and the Awarding Report as an accurate record of the award decisions. The Chair also confirms that the standards applied to the assessments of all component/units and specifications in the subject are comparable.

The Chair emails the AMR and Awarding Report to the 'GEM Processing' email address (for consideration by the screeners and the DirAS).

An example of the Awarding Report is shown in Appendix 7.

3. PHASE 3 – GRADE ENDORSEMENT AND FINAL CHECKS

3.1 Grade endorsement

The purpose of grade endorsement is to ensure that the Director of Assessment Standards fulfils the Code of Practice requirement that the grades awarded represent continuity and parity of standards across years, across different specifications and with other awarding bodies.

In order to carry out this responsibility the DirAS is aided by a screening process the purpose of which is to satisfy the DirAS that the outcomes of the award are appropriate and will stand up to public scrutiny. The people involved in the screening process are nominated representatives of the DirAS.

Immediately the award is complete, the Chair forwards to the GEM Processing e-mail account:

(i)   the Awarding Meeting Report (AMR);
(ii)   the Awarding Report;
(iii)   any additional data used in the award and required by Ofqual prior to publication of the results.

Further documentation e.g. question papers and mark schemes, may need to be supplied by the PAS team or Chair at the request of the screening team.

The Chair's recommendations are reviewed, by the screeners, in the light of all available statistical and technical evidence and Chair's comments in the Awarding Report. If screeners are happy with the Chair's recommendations, the AMR and Awarding Report are passed to the DirAS for final approval.

If screeners do not agree with a recommendation, they will contact the Chair to discuss possible changes to the recommendation. Any changes to a key boundary at this point must be agreed with the Chair (this may include consultation with the Chief or Principal Examiner/Moderator); the Chair confirms agreement by email on receipt of the Grade Endorsement Screening Form that details the change. The Chair makes the necessary change(s) on EPS and emails an amended AMR and an updated Awarding Report (to include the agreed change(s)) to the GEM Processing email account. This is checked by the screeners for accuracy and then passed to the DirAS for final approval.

Should the screeners wish to make changes to boundaries outside the range of scripts considered and the Chair agrees, then the Award must be re-convened and the regulatory authorities informed.

If the Chair is unable to support the screeners' recommendations, then the matter must be referred directly to the DirAS. If the final arbitrated decision is unsupported by the Chair, then again the regulatory authorities must be informed and the DirAS will review OCR's position before presentation to the Award Sign-off meeting.

At any point before final ratification by the DirAS and subsequent to the award, a Chair may make changes to a boundary as, for example, more marks come on to the system and the mark distribution changes. The Chair will send details to GEM processing on the Chair's Change form. A new AMR and updated Awarding Report will be produced by the Chair and passed to the screening team.

Final approval may occasionally be delayed if the DirAS wishes to carry out a cognate review. In this case, final approval cannot be received until the last awarded subject in the cognate group has been through the screening and final ratification process.

Notification that boundaries have received final approval will go directly from the DirAS to the Chair. DirAS approval will only be made only when there are sufficient marks on the system. At this point the Chair will carry out any final checks and will then freeze the approved boundaries for each component/unit/specification and aggregation. Once EPS has graded all the candidates (usually over-night) partial absence candidates will then be included in the aggregated distributions.

Once the boundaries for a component/unit have been ratified through the grade endorsement process, no changes may be made without reference to both the Chair and the DirAS.

The awarders must be advised of any changes to recommended grade boundaries as soon as possible after the endorsement process and before publication of results. The Operations PAS Team have responsibility for this.

Outcomes for GCE and GCSE specifications, for both OCR and other awarding organisations, will be discussed with the regulator, before results are sign-off.

Immediately prior to the final date for marks load, a final review of the awards is carried out by the Award Sign-off meeting.

3.2   Final checks

Following endorsement by the DirAS, post-results integrity checks will be made by the Operations Results Team (with any necessary consultation with RTS in Assessment Standards) to confirm that OCR procedures have been followed, that the data recorded is accurate and that UMS conversions are correct.

The Special Considerations Team in Risk and Compliance will process any applications for special consideration which did not require the subject specific input of the assessors who undertook marking review. (Individual special consideration cases may subsequently be identified as requiring re-marking at the marking review by the Special Requirements Section.)

THE MARKING REVIEW

Purpose

Marking review takes place at unit level for traditionally marked scripts only[8] and is based on re-marking a random sample of the work of lingering doubt examiners. It can proceed as soon as scripts have been received and examiners identified. No re-marks are keyed unless the examiner is classified as aberrant or the re-marked script is considered a "rogue". All re-marks proceeding in this way must be keyed as required by the Code of Practice.

The purpose of marking review is:

- to re-mark samples of scripts marked by examiners over whom some lingering doubt has been identified.
- to determine if any further action is required for these examiners.

Marking review is conducted either remotely or at a meeting. As much of the marking review as possible needs to take place before the award.

People

An OCR Officer is responsible to the relevant Chair for the conduct of the marking review and for determining the action to be taken for each lingering doubt examiner. The Chief Examiner is responsible for supervising all of the professional aspects of the work. The marking review team will consist of the Principal Examiner(s), supplemented as necessary by Team Leaders, experienced Assistant Examiners and the Principal Moderator(s).

Tasks

(a)   To receive a briefing from the OCR Officer on the purpose of the marking review and the examiners identified as being of lingering doubt.

(b)   To review the marking of any examiner about whose reliability there is lingering doubt and to decide by the re-marking of a targeted sample of scripts whether any further action is necessary.

(c)   To submit to the Head of Assessment Standards a report on the work of examiners whose scripts had to be re-marked.

(d)   To consider matters which arose at the award and were referred to marking review for a decision.

(e)   To keep <u>records</u> of:
- examiners whose scripts have been re-marked;
- the action taken for each examiner so identified;
- the marks of all re-marked scripts whether the mark changed or not;
- all scripts marked by an examiner deemed aberrant as result of the marking review process, which were <u>not</u> available at marking review, so that appropriate action can be taken as soon as possible after the meeting.

(f)   To ensure that marks for all scripts that have been re-marked have been recorded accurately and that the mark sheets are passed to the Post Assessment Services (PAS) Team.

(g)   To ensure that all scripts are re-packaged along with the contents list at the end of the meeting.

(h)   To ensure that no examiners identified as aberrant are included on the Enquiries About Results panels.

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[8] There is no marking review for ELC or scoris marked scripts

Evidence

The following should be available to the Marking Review:

(a)   appropriate samples of scripts marked by examiners identified as lingering doubt;
(b)   instructions and forms for recording:
   (i) the Centres, candidates and marks for scripts that have been re-marked;
   (ii) decisions made about examiners over whom some lingering doubt was identified;

Identification of Lingering Doubt Examiners

Aberrant examiners
A distinction is to be drawn between an examiner who has been determined to be **aberrant** and one about whom there is some lingering doubt. Aberrant examiners should be identified during the supervision process. All the scripts of candidates whose work has been marked by an examiner identified as **aberrant** must be re-marked by the Principal Examiner or a reliable examiner, if possible **before** the award, and the new examiner's mark recorded.

Examiners aberrant on particular questions
Similarly, where an examiner has proved to be aberrant on the marking of one or more particular questions, the answers to those questions which have been marked by that examiner should be re-marked at the Marking Review (and preferably before the award), and the new total mark recorded.

How to identify a lingering doubt examiner
It is the Monitoring and Support Team's (in consultation with the Chair) responsibility to decide which examiners should be treated as lingering doubt.

The category of examiners not thought to be aberrant but about whom there is some **lingering doubt** must be identified before the award and the Monitoring and Support (M&S) Team must identify the examiners on EPS using the marking review screen.

A lingering doubt examiner may be identified on the basis of discrepancies which are identified by the Team Leader/Principal Examiner during the supervision of an examiner's marking on the SEM form, or subsequently by Assessment Standards (M&S Team in consultation with the Chair). To support such judgement the following may be considered:
   • Statistical comparisons of an examiner's mark distribution with the distribution of marks for the component/unit as a whole (bearing in mind that the average and range of the ability of the candidates apportioned to different examiners may be genuinely different);
   • Examiners whose marking is broadly within tolerance but who nevertheless show some inconsistency;
   • Any examiner who has been scaled must be considered as a *possible* lingering doubt examiner;
   • Any examiner for whom the scaling recommendation at the Batch 2 stage is markedly different from that at the Batch 1 stage must be regarded as a lingering doubt examiner.

The Marking Review

Script selection - Unitised specifications
For each lingering doubt examiner, identify a sample of scripts which:
   • covers the widest possible mark range, including scaled marks where appropriate;
   • normally includes the top and bottom candidates in the rank order and an additional 18 candidates chosen proportionately from the rank order;

- does not contain any candidates re-marked by a team leader at the earlier stages of feedback and monitoring;
- has scripts available for picking via script management;
- This script list can be generated automatically from EPS.

Exceptionally, other criteria than the default ones outlined above may be chosen by Assessment Standards where appropriate, eg more than 20 candidates or concentration across a narrower part of the mark range. The M&S Team must gain the authorisation of the relevant Chair before altering the default criteria at this stage. Unless an examiner is classified as aberrant, or the script is identified as a "rogue" none of the re-marks will be keyed.

The review
Where there is a meeting, for an example of the agenda, see Appendix 6.

The sample of scripts identified above is re-marked in brown. The priority here is to be able to dispel any lingering doubt about the examiner in question. The re-marker should enter the marks on the Pulling List Mark Sheet.

If the re-mark identifies a major problem with the original marking, the examiner must be classed as aberrant. The re-mark is then extended to all that examiner's apportionment.

The OCR Officer briefs the marking review team, indicating that the purpose of the marking review is to ensure that samples of scripts marked originally by lingering doubt examiners are, in fact, re-marked in accordance with the mark scheme, and that the marking criteria (after examiner scaling) were applied accurately and consistently. The OCR Officer will make it clear that new criteria for marking or grading must **not** be introduced at this stage. The work is allocated to the members of the Team.

Further action
The re-marker also transfers the new marks into the appropriate boxes [Column Y] on the Mark Review Recommendation Sheet, fills in the Difference [Y-X] Column and looks for patterns to inform any recommendation as to whether further action may be required.

The re-marker is required to make an appropriate recommendation on the EPS Mark Review Recommendation Sheet after discussion with the Principal Examiner and/or Chief Examiner and the OCR Officer, in consultation with the Chair as appropriate. These forms are to be collected by the OCR Officer for filing within the M&S Team.

The recommendation may take one of three general forms.

1. If the re-mark reveals that there is no substantive basis to maintaining the 'lingering doubt' label attached to a particular examiner, and perhaps confirming that any scaling applied previously is appropriate, then no further action is required.

2. If the re-mark identifies a major problem with the original marking, the examiner must be classed as aberrant. The re-mark is then extended to all of that examiner's apportionment.

3. If some doubt persists but it is deemed inappropriate to move straight to a complete re-mark, then the recommendation may be to consider further investigation or another approach. In these circumstances, the OCR Officer (in consultation with the Chair as appropriate) may consider a range of possible actions, for example, requesting a further sample, perhaps with a concentration on a particular part of the mark range where the original marking is deemed in doubt.

In exceptional circumstances, the amendment or removal of any scaling initially imposed, or the addition of scaling, may be considered. When considering this option

after the award has taken place, the M&S Team must consult with the Chair, who will seek final permission from the Head of RTS in Assessment Standards..

Recording Marking

The transfer of marks from scripts to the mark input sheet [Pulling List Mark Sheet] must be checked and initialled by a colleague. Each sheet must be checked to ensure that the marks and unit/component details are clearly recorded and accurate and it must also be initialled by the Chief Examiner or his/her representative.

Because the marking review is based on sampling methodology, if no further action is identified on the basis of the sample of 20, then none of the marks from the sampled scripts will be changed. A red sticker should be fixed to these mark sheets. Where there is a meeting, the accurate recording of marks is the Chief Examiner's responsibility. The transfer of mark input sheets to the PAS Team is the responsibility of the OCR Officer.

Continuation of the Process

If some scripts are not available at the time of the Marking Review, but a sufficient number were re-marked to enable a lingering doubt examiner to be classified as reliable, then no further action need be taken.

Where there is a meeting, all the scripts identified for re-marking which cannot be dealt with must be taken away by one of the marking review team, or sent by post to an appropriate examiner. This must only be a last resort as meetings often take place close to the final deadline for input of marks. The OCR Officer must complete the form provided and supply this to the PAS Team.

The Marking Review Report

The OCR Officer prepares a report for the Head of Assessment Standards. A copy of the report form is attached (see Appendix 9). This report must be attached to the checklist for the specification.

Implementation of Mark Amendments and Grade Changes

The input of these amendments must be completed by the date specified in the Results Processing Schedule issued by Operations.

UNITISED SPECIFICATIONS

Setting Arithmetic Grade Boundaries

This is done automatically on EPS.

For A/AS component/units

For A/AS components/units, after the 'e'/'u' and 'a'/'b' boundary decisions have been made, the mark interval between the 'a'/'b' and 'e'/'u' boundaries is divided by four to define the mark ranges for 'b', 'c', 'd' and 'e'. Where there is a remainder of one, it should be added to the 'b' mark range. If there is a remainder of two, a mark should be added to both the 'b' and 'c' mark ranges, with a remainder of three extending the mark ranges for 'b', 'c' and 'd' by one. All raw marks are converted to uniform marks for aggregation purposes. The 'a*'/'a' boundary is provisionally set at unit level on A2 units only as in paragraph 2.4.5.

For GCSE component/units

For GCSE component/units, after the 'c'/'d', 'a'/'b' and 'f'/'g' boundary decisions have been made, all other boundaries are determined arithmetically. The following procedures are adopted.

For untiered GCSE component/units

The sequence of determining judgemental boundaries is 'c'/'d', 'a'/'b' then 'f'/'g'. The 'b'/'c' boundary is determined by dividing the mark interval between the 'a'/'b' and 'c'/'d' boundaries by two. If there is a remainder of one it should be added to the 'b' mark range. The mark ranges for 'd' and 'e' are determined by dividing the mark interval between the 'c'/'d' and 'f'/'g' boundaries by three. If there is a remainder of one it should be added to the 'd' mark range, and if there is a remainder of two it should be added to the 'd' and 'e' mark ranges. 'g' is calculated by subtracting the 'f' mark range from the 'f' boundary value.

For tiered GCSE component/units

i)   The sequence of determining judgemental boundaries on tiered component/units is:
      • 'c'/'d'   foundation tier;
      • 'c'/'d'   higher tier;
      • 'a'/'b'   higher tier;
      • 'f'/'g'   foundation tier.

ii)   Higher tier - The 'b'/'c' boundary is obtained by dividing the mark interval between the 'a'/'b' and 'c'/'d' boundaries by two. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade 'b' interval.

iii) Foundation tier - The 'd'/'e' and 'e'/'f' boundaries are obtained by dividing the mark interval between the 'c'/'d' and 'f'/'g' boundaries by three. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade 'd' interval. Where there is remainder of two, one extra mark is added to each of the grade 'd' and grade 'e' intervals.

iv)   Higher tier - The 'd'/'e' boundary is set as follows: if the mark range below 'c'/'d' is equal to, or greater than, twice the 'b'/'c' to 'c'/'d' mark range, the grade 'd'/'e' boundary on the Higher tier is provisionally set as far below the grade 'c'/'d' boundary as the grade 'b'/'c' boundary is above the grade 'c'/'d' boundary. If the mark range below 'c'/'d' is less than twice the 'b'/'c' to 'c'/'d' mark range, the grade 'd'/'e' boundary is provisionally set half way

between the 'c'/'d' boundary and zero. Where this gap does not divide evenly, the 'd'/'e' boundary will be rounded down to the lower mark (e.g. 15.5 would become 15).

v)   Higher tier - The 'e'/'u' boundary on the higher tier is provisionally set by subtracting half the mark interval between the 'c'/'d' and 'd'/'e' boundaries (rounding up half marks) from the 'd'/'e' boundary. When a review of technical and statistical evidence leads the awarders to judge that the 'e'/'u' boundary should be set at a different mark, the Chair of Examiner's grade boundary recommendation will provide evidence that justifies this proposal.

v)   Foundation tier - The 'g'/'u' boundary is the same number of marks below the 'f'/'g' boundary as the 'e'/'f' boundary is above the 'f'/'g' boundary.

For Cambridge Nationals units covering Level 1 and Level 2

Once the boundaries for Distinction at Level 2, Pass at Level 2, and Pass at Level 1 have been set, the other boundaries are set arithmetically. The Merit at Level 2 boundary is set at half the distance between the Pass at Level 2 boundary and the Distinction at Level 2 boundary. Where the gap does not divide equally, the Merit at Level 2 boundary is set at the lower mark (e.g. 45.5 would be rounded down to 45). The Distinction* at Level 2 boundary is located as far above Distinction at Level 2 as Merit at Level 2 is below the Distinction at Level 2 boundary.

To set the Distinction at Level 1 boundary and Merit at Level 1 boundary, the gap between the Pass at Level 1 boundary and the Pass at Level 2 boundary is divided by 3, and the boundaries set equidistantly. Where this division leaves a remainder of 1, this extra mark will be added to the Distinction at Level 1/Pass at Level 2 interval (i.e. the Distinction at Level 1 boundary will be lowered by one mark). Where this division leaves a remainder of 2, the extra marks will be added to the Distinction at Level 1/Pass at Level 2 interval, and the Merit at Level 1/Distinction at Level 1 interval, i.e. the Distinction at Level 1 boundary will be lowered by 1 mark, and the Merit at Level 1 boundary will be lowered by 1 mark. For example, if Pass at Level 2 is set judgementally at 59, and Pass at Level 1 is set judgementally at 30, then Distinction at Level 1 is set at 49, and Merit at Level 1 is set at 39.

For Cambridge Nationals units covering Level 1 only

Once the boundaries for Distinction at Level 1 and Pass at Level 1 have been set, the other boundary is set arithmetically. The Merit at Level 1 boundary is set at half the distance between the Pass at Level 1 boundary and the Distinction at Level 1 boundary. Where the gap does not divide equally, the Merit at Level 1 boundary is set at the lower mark (e.g. 35.5 would be rounded down to 35).

For Cambridge Nationals units covering Level 2 only

Once the boundaries for Distinction at Level 2 and Pass at Level 2 have been set, the other boundaries are set arithmetically. The Merit at Level 2 boundary is set at half the distance between the Pass at Level 2 boundary and the Distinction at Level 2 boundary. Where the gap does not divide equally, the Merit at Level 2 boundary is set at the lower mark (e.g. 55.5 would be rounded down to 55). The Distinction* at Level 2 boundary is located as far above Distinction at Level 2 as Merit at Level 2 is below the Distinction at Level 2 boundary.

Rules for moving the 'a*'[9] conversion point

1.   In both A level and GCSE, the a* raw mark conversion point (A level) or raw mark boundary (GCSE) is provisionally set on each unit as follows.

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[9] It is accepted that there is a sensitivity about calling this point at GCE unit level 'a*'. However, for the purposes of this document it Is the clearest way of ensuring that there are no misunderstandings.

(i)   Where the mark width from the grade a raw mark boundary to the maximum mark is more than twice the width from a to b, a* is the same width above a as b is below a.

(ii)   Where the mark width from the grade a raw mark boundary to the maximum is less than or equal to twice that from a to b, a* is halfway between a and the maximum, rounded down where necessary to the nearest whole number below.

2.   In order to maintain standards for A* at subject level, it may be necessary to adjust the a* conversion point / boundary on some units[10].

3.   If adjustments are needed, the maintenance of subject standards at the judgemental grades must be the first priority.

4.   For specifications where there are more than 500 matched entries and where the cumulative number of matched candidates at grade A is more than 100, the tolerance between predicted and actual (matched) outcomes at grade A* is ± 2%. There is no tolerance where one or both numbers do not exceed these thresholds.

5.   Adjustments to the a* conversion points / boundaries should not normally be made in winter series, even if the thresholds in paragraph 4 are exceeded. Possible exceptions should be discussed in advance with the regulators and other awarding bodies.

6.   Before any changes are made to an a* conversion point / boundary, consideration should be given to moving one or more boundaries at the judgemental grades (normally grade a), in order to bring the subject outcome at grade A* within tolerance. Subject outcomes at the judgemental grades must, of course, remain within tolerance.

7.   Because of the large numbers of internally-assessed units, for which boundaries are normally carried forward, tolerances are not normally used for the judgemental grades in Applied GCEs. Therefore the ± 2% tolerance is not used for grade A* in these specifications.

Adjustments to the a* boundaries / conversion points must be agreed by discussion between Chair of Examiners and the Head of Assessment Standards but do not need to be discussed by the whole awarding committee.

The 'a*'/'a' boundary is provisionally set at unit level as in paragraph 2.4.5.

Uniform marks

All unit raw marks in unitised specifications are converted to uniform marks for aggregation purposes. Some of the rules governing the conversions, especially at the top (capping) and bottom of the mark range are quite complex and are set down in the JCQ document on UMS conversions. This will be found in the Knowledge Bank on *In*site.

For Principal Learning and Project units

It is recommended that, where possible, in a Line of Learning or Project award, Level 1 should be awarded first followed by Level 2 with Level 3 last to ensure appropriate progression.

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10   For A level, this applies only to A2 units.

Level 1

The sequence of determining judgemental boundaries is 'b'/'u' then 'a*'/'a'. The 'a'/'b' boundary is determined by dividing the mark interval between the 'a*'/'a' and 'b'/'u' boundaries by two. If there is a remainder of one it should be added to the a mark range.

Level 2

The sequence of determining judgemental boundaries is 'c'/'u' then 'a*'/'a'. The mark ranges for a and a are determined by dividing the mark interval between the 'c'/'u' and 'a*'/'a' boundaries by three. If there is a remainder of one it should be added to the 'a' mark range, and if there is a remainder of two it should be added to the 'a' and 'b' mark ranges.

Level 3

After the 'e'/'u' and 'a*'/'a' boundary decisions have been made (in that order), the mark interval between the 'a*'/'a' and 'e'/'u' boundaries is divided by five to define the mark ranges for 'a', 'b', 'c', 'd' and 'e'. Where there is a remainder of one, it should be added to the 'a' mark range. If there is a remainder of two, a mark should be added to both the 'a' and 'b' mark ranges, with a remainder of three extending the mark ranges for 'a', 'b' and 'c' by one. If there is a remainder of 4 then the mark ranges for 'a', 'b', 'c' and 'd' are all extended by one.

All raw marks are converted to points for aggregation for the Principal Learning qualification. To obtain the diploma grade the PL points are added to those gained for the Project/Extended Project.

For Level 2 award units

The judgemental boundaries are, in order of determination, pass (P) and distinction (D). Merit (M) is set arithmetically halfway between P and D. If the number of marks is odd, the remainder is added to the D/M mark range.

PROCEDURES FOR A CONFIRMATORY AWARD USING STATISTICALLY RECOMMENDED BOUNDARIES (NON-SCORIS UNITS)

1.   Pre-award meeting

The purpose of this meeting is to consider, in advance of the awarding meeting, all the statistical and technical data available in order to determine the ranges of scripts/candidates' work selected for consideration at the award. These ranges should ensure consistency (standards remaining constant over time) and comparability (equivalent standards across units/cognate specifications). At the pre-award, the Chair needs to decide on the basis of the evidence provided and the agreed JCQ guidance (see end of this Appendix) whether there can be a confirmatory award for which a statistically recommended boundary (SRB) needs to be determined. These boundaries will be based, where they exist, on predicted outcomes for each component/unit using measures of prior attainment provided by the TAG team together with all other available data as set out in paragraph 1.2 of these procedures. These SRBs will define the range of scripts to be considered and may only be applied to units/specifications which have been stable.

Awarding script ranges will not normally be confirmed until after the pre-award meeting.

If there is clearly a discrepancy between the SRBs and other statistical indicators, the meeting must consider carefully whether the awarding process set out below is still valid.

For each key grade boundary, once the SRB has been determined and confirmed by the other statistical indicators, a full range of scripts (as laid down in para 1.4) will be chosen for possible consideration at the award.

2.   The award

The award will follow the procedures set out in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.4 with one major difference. In setting grade boundaries, the Chair first makes known the SRB to members of the committee. Each member of the awarding committee then considers at least two candidates' scripts on the SRB and two scripts on the marks immediately on either side of it. If the consensus of the committee is that the SRB fairly represents a grade boundary performance, this mark is selected. If the awarding committee do not support the SRB, the Chair can choose to move to a full award, or extend the range of scripts in the direction in which there was uncertainty. For example, if the work on the SRB which has already been considered is rejected as worthy of the higher grade, the extension to the range is restricted to those marks above the range already considered. If work on the SRB is considered more than worthy of the higher grade, the extension to the range is restricted to marks below the initial range. The three mark range will thus be extended one mark at a time, until the boundary mark is agreed. For example, if the original three-mark range of 79-80-81 was viewed, and 80 was deemed too low to be the boundary, the awarders would next consider 80-81-82. If the 81 was rejected, the awarders would next consider 81-82-83, and so on[11].

3.   Rules for conducting a confirmatory award

(i)   The SRB at each judgemental grade of a unit will be determined using a predicted outcome based on the relationship between prior attainment and the outcome in the unit

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[11] Note however that if the SRB is rejected and the awarding committee chooses a mark some distance from it, the context in which the confirmatory approach was deemed appropriate would need to be seriously considered.

and subject in the preceding year. Given that new GCSE specifications are unlikely to have reached stability yet, it is most likely that a confirmatory approach would be used for GCE specifications. SRBs should be used only for standards maintenance, not standards setting.

(ii)   For each judgemental grade, scripts will be provided on three consecutive marks, of which the SRB is the middle mark.

(iii)   Each awarder will scrutinise scripts across this range, considering at least two scripts from a range of scripts on each of the three mark points.

(iv)   If there is consensus that performance on the SRB mark fairly represents a grade boundary performance and matches the archive, then the SRB will be confirmed as the boundary. A zone of uncertainty will not be determined in these circumstances, and tick sheets are not required.

(v)   If the awarders cannot reach consensus to set the boundary at the SRB, then the procedure in Section 2 of this Appendix should be used to determine that grade boundary.

Best practice for determining which specifications or units within a specification are suitable for an award using the SRB method

1.   The prediction matrix (from last year) and the current cohort contains at least 500 matched candidates.

2.   The alignment of the units in the specification needs no adjustment.

3.   There are no substantial inter-board screening recommendations on this specification.

4.   Modelling of boundaries using SRBs produces overall outcomes compatible with the prediction for the specification.

AWARDING ENTRY LEVEL CERTIFICATE QUALIFICATIONS

The Ofqual *Statutory regulation of external qualifications* lays down a minimum requirement for the determination and reporting of results for Entry Level Certificates. These procedures are OCR's interpretation of these requirements.

The regulations require, amongst other things, that the awarding body:
- determines how pass marks and/or grade boundaries are established;
- ensures that results are determined on the basis of sufficient evidence;
- maintains comprehensive records of decisions taken and standards achieved;
- ensures standards are comparable from year to year, across Centres and across qualifications in the same subject;
- reviews decision and adjusts results in cases where errors are identified;
- ensures the bases on which decisions are made are open to monitoring by the regulatory authorities;
- ensures the administration of the awarding process provides the technical and professional support that the awarders need to secure accurate judgements.

The awarding of Entry Level Certificate grade boundaries is by means of a standards review. The purpose of the standards review is to ensure that the regulations above are followed and to set grade boundaries for all components that reflect candidate performance which is consistent over time and comparable across Centres and qualifications in the same subject.

The grades reported are Entry 1 (where available), Entry 2 and Entry 3 (with Entry 3 the highest). An unclassified performance is identified by the letter U. Entry 1 and Entry 3 are the key grade boundaries subject to the standards review, with the Entry 2 boundary being determined arithmetically where appropriate. It is set half way between Entry 1 and Entry 3. Where there is an odd number of marks between Entry 1 and Entry 3, the distance between the Entry 1 and Entry 2 boundaries is one mark less than that between the Entry 2 and Entry 3 boundaries.

There is no Awarding Meeting or screening for an ELC unless it is a new specification or there are doubts about standards set in a previous series.

The people involved in the Standards Review are the Chair, the Principal Examiner, the Principal Moderator, a screener (where necessary) and the DirAS (*see para 0.3).*

Standards Review

The Standards Review is usually held either immediately before the linked GCSE specification attended by the relevant personnel.

The materials provided to the Standards Review are:

- a copy of any relevant question papers;
- a copy of any final mark schemes;
- a copy of any coursework/controlled assessment mark schemes;
- copies of the specification;
- relevant comments from Centres;
- relevant evidence from the regulatory authority reports, comparability studies and internal monitoring reports;
- copies of the Standards Review Report for each member of the standards review completed as far as possible to show, for each component, option and specification;
- complete statistics from previous series:
  - the mean and standard deviation;

- the number of missing marks;
- size of entry;
- forecast grades;
- centre type information;
- distribution of marks for each component/unit;
- archive material;
- two scripts/examples of internally assessed work at each key grade boundary from the previous summer series;
- for new specifications, archive material from a cognate/relevant subject;
- a sample of candidates' work at each of the recommended boundary marks. It is recommended that two scripts/pieces of coursework/controlled assessment should be available to the standards review committee to provide evidence of performance at the recommended boundary.

The Principal Examiner/Principal Moderator should provide a confidential report for the standards review including proposed grade boundary marks for each key grade in each component/unit.

The purpose of the Standards Review, which may take the form of a meeting when the specification is first awarded, is to consider all the statistical and technical data available in order to confirm the Principal Examiner/Principal Moderator's boundary marks in the light of evidence of candidate performance where appropriate. These marks should ensure consistency (standards remaining constant over time) and comparability (equivalent standards across components/cognate specifications).

Entry Level Certificates have many formats and may consist of only one component, often internally assessed. Where there is more than one component, the statistical data relating to each should be considered in turn and the boundaries confirmed by reference to script/coursework/controlled assessment evidence. On occasion, tests taken for the ELC are very similar to multiple choice tests and are internally marked. In these cases, only statistical evidence need be considered.

Where a component is a written paper, consideration must be given to the demand of the question paper using:
- the SRS form with boundary mark recommendations;
- mean and SD interpreted in the light of the nature of the cohort (number of candidates, centre distribution, forecast grades if a single component, mean GCSE scores);
- historic statistics;
- mark distributions;
- item performance (if relevant).

Where a component is coursework/controlled assessment, consideration must be given to coursework/controlled assessment performance using:
- the SRS form with boundary mark recommendation;
- Principal Moderator boundary mark recommendations;
- mean and SD interpreted in the light of the nature of the cohort (number of candidates, centre distribution, forecast grades if a single component, mean GCSE scores);
- historic statistics;
- mark distributions.

Should the review take place before 85% of marks are on the system, final boundary recommendations should not be submitted for endorsement until confirmed after the 85% benchmark has been reached.

Entry 1 and Entry 3 boundaries are reviewed, in that order. The standards review in reaching a decision regarding boundary values should confirm the recommendations by considering candidates' performances at those boundary marks where it is possible to do so. If there is

insufficient evidence at either Entry 1 (or Entry 3), then Entry 2 may be reviewed instead. The missing boundary value is extrapolated from Entry 2 using the number of marks between Entry 2 and Entry 1 (or Entry 3) which are added to (or subtracted from) the Entry 2 value to give a mark for Entry 3 (or Entry 1).

Where there is more than one component in the assessment, once the procedures above have been followed for each, Entry 1 and Entry 3 qualification boundaries are determined by the (weighted) addition of the component boundaries. Entry 2 is determined arithmetically (see 0.3). A review of qualification outcomes against statistical indicators must be made before the decisions are finalised.

If there is any doubt about the standards exemplified by the scripts and/or the statistical evidence, then the standards reviewer(s) should refer the boundary determination to the full GCSE awarding committee in the relevant subject when the GCSE awarding procedures should be followed.

These procedures should apply to all new ELC qualifications, and to existing qualifications where possible. However, where the existing qualification is internally assessed and this rule would produce an inconsistency with previous series, then Entry 2 boundaries may be carried forward.

Grade Endorsement

All boundary decisions must be ratified by the DirAS. In exceptional circumstances, which might include a new specification, boundary decisions will be screened before submission to the DirAS. After ratification, final checks and freezing will be carried out by the Chair.

AWARDING SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT QUALIFICATIONS

There is no requirement under the Statutory Code of Practice for vocationally related qualifications to go through a formal awarding process. However OCR has recognised that for some of these qualifications, currently CPC, Young Enterprise, Functional Skills and Business Administration, the application of a formal award can enhance the boundary decision making process. In general the procedures followed should be the same as that for GCE/GCSE, although some deviations, outlined in this Appendix, indicate where changes from the GCE/GCSE awarding process occur.

At the meeting representatives will normally have had an involvement in either setting or marking the papers under consideration.

a) *purpose*
To establish grade boundaries (cut scores) for the examination.

b) *people*
The Skills and Employment awarding committee must have at least four members and will normally include, as a minimum:
- Chair
- Chief Co-ordinator
- Chief Examiner for each unit(s)
- Additional member (overlap/marker/reviser) if required

plus the appropriate awarding body officer.

c) *evidence*
Evidence for the award will come from the Chief Examiner's recommendations, performance descriptions, archive scripts, historical and current data for the qualification available from CAMS.

The judgemental boundaries are as follows:
- CPC: Pass/Fail
- Business Administration: Pass/Fail and Distinction/Credit grades in that order
- Functional Skills: Pass/Fail
- Progression: Pass/Fail
- Young Enterprise: Distinction/Merit and Pass/Fail.

Credit/Pass will be arithmetically determined.

d) *Grade Endorsement*
All boundary decisions must be ratified by the DirAS.

There is no Marking Review for these qualifications.

AGENDAS

Model (Traditional) Awarding Agenda for GCE, GCSE, FSMQ, PL and Project Qualifications

The content of this Agenda can also inform the procedures to be followed and information required in a Remote Award followed by a GTM.

1. Introduction and apologies for absence.

2. Briefing by Chair, including reference to:

    (a) section 6 of the GCSE, GCE, principal learning and project Code of Practice;
    (b) appropriate regulatory authority reports;
    (c) the OCR Procedures for Awards;
    (d) any instruction(s) from OCR;
    (e) archive material available to the committee;
    (f) Ofqual exemplar material(s) – where appropriate;
    (g) performance descriptions for the qualification – where appropriate.

3. Reference may be made to the following before the first component/unit is graded:

    (a) any written comments received from Centres;
    (b) confidential report(s) of the Principal Examiner(s)/Moderator(s) and Principal Examiners' recommended grade boundaries;
    (c) information resulting from the pre-award considerations;
    (d) information on the mean and the standard deviation both for this series and previous series for each component/unit – where appropriate;
    (e) grade/performance descriptions for the key boundaries – where appropriate;
    (f) information from any Ofqual monitoring reports or comparability studies;
    (g) any changes in the specification or the size or composition of the cohort;
    (h) statistics from interboard screening;
    (i) comparable OCR specifications where appropriate;
    (j) item level data (where appropriate);
    (k) Reports to Centres.

4. Scripts
    For the first key boundary in the first component/unit to be considered, inspection of a sufficient number of candidates' scripts on each mark in the boundary range determined at the pre-award.

5. Where a confirmatory award is being held, the limiting marks are predefined and the decision to be made is whether the script on the SRB is representative of expected boundary performance. If awarders cannot reach consensus on the SRB then steps 4 and 6 must be followed.

6. Limiting Marks
    These are defined for the first key boundary in the first component/unit to be considered.

7. Provisional determination of the first key boundary in the light of:

    (a) further statistical information about current and past series including component/unit pairs if appropriate;
    (b) archive and exemplar materials;
    (c) grade/performance descriptions.

8.   Repetition of items 4 to 6 for the remaining judgemental boundaries in the first component/unit as laid down in section 0.5.

9.   Calculation of the arithmetically determined boundaries.

10.   Repetition of items 4 to 9 for all the other components/units within the specification.

11.   Consideration of the aggregation outcome for the options/tiers/specification or PL as appropriate in the light of:

(a)   previous series' grades across all Centres;
(b)   predicted/putative grade distributions – where calculated;
(c)   summary of forecast grades;
(d)   any relevant evidence considered in item 3 above, e.g. centre type information.

12.   Review of the provisional decisions on component/unit grade boundaries in the light of the aggregation outcome(s).

13.   Any special instructions for the Marking Review.

14.   Completion of the Awarding Meeting Report (AMR)

15.   Completion and signing of the Awarding Report.

16.   Any other business.

Standards Review of Entry Level Certificate Agenda

1.   Introduction

2.   Reference by Chair to:
     (a)   paragraph 63 of the Ofqual document *The statutory regulation of external qualifications;*
     (b)   the OCR *Procedures for the Review of Entry Level Certificate Standards;*
     (c)   any instruction from OCR;
     (d)   archive material;
     (e)   Principal Examiner/Principal Moderator proposed boundary marks;
     (f)   component and qualification statistics from this assessment;
     (g)   Report to Centres.

3.   Reference may be also be made to the following:
     (a)   any written comments from Centres;
     (b)   the confidential reports of the Principal Examiners/Moderators;
     (c)   statistics from last year in the same (or similar where revisions have been made) ELC;
     (d)   information from any comparability studies, scrutinies or probes;
     (e)   any changes in the specification or the size or composition of the entry.

4.   Review of the Entry 1 boundary for the first component in the light of the statistical evidence about current and past series.

5.   Confirmation of the Entry 1 boundary from script evidence and archive material.

6.   Repetition of items 4 and 5 for the same key boundary on the other components.

7.   Consideration of the outcome for qualification at Entry 1 grade in the light of:
     (a)   last year's percentage gaining Entry 1;
     (b)   average of last 3 years' percentages at Entry 1;
     (c)   summary of forecast Entry 1 grades;
     (d)   any relevant evidence considered in item 3 above.

8.   Repetition of steps 4 to 7 for the Entry 3 boundaries.

9.   Review of all provisional decisions on grades.

10. Any other business.

Marking Review Agenda

All Unitised Specifications

1. To note that the OCR Officer is responsible to the Head of Assessment Standards for the conduct of the meeting and the Chief Examiner is responsible for supervising all of the professional aspects of the work.

2. To note the Membership, i.e. the Principal Examiners (including the Chief Examiner), supplemented as necessary by Team Leaders, and experienced Assistant Examiners.

3. (a) To receive the OCR Officer's briefing on the documents available;
    (b) To receive the OCR Officer's estimate of the amount of work to be done, and to make a preliminary list of priorities. The OCR Officer will have consulted with the M&S Team and Chair as appropriate

4. To note the methods of keeping records of examiners, Centres and candidates.

5. To re-mark a sample of scripts (in brown) marked by an examiner about whose reliability there is lingering doubt and record the marks on the Pulling List Mark Sheet.

6. To decide for each lingering doubt examiner whether any further action is necessary by transferring marks onto the Mark Review Recommendation Sheet and recording a recommendation after discussion with senior examiners and the M&S Team in consultation with the Chair.

7. To keep records of:
    *   examiners whose work has been sampled and re-marked;
    *   the marks of all re-marked scripts, whether the mark changed or not;
    *   completed Mark Review Recommendation Sheets;
    *   all scripts which were not available at marking review, so that appropriate action can be taken as soon as possible after the meeting.

8. To note arrangements for:
    *   recording, checking and signing of Pulling List Mark Sheets;
    *   transfer of completed Pulling List Mark Sheets to the PAS Team;
    *   ensuring that all scripts are correctly repackaged, along with the blank copies of the Pulling List Mark Sheet, for collection and storage.

9. To submit to the Head of Assessment Standards a marking review report on the work of examiners whose scripts had to be re-marked.

10. To ensure that no examiners identified as aberrant are included on the EAR panels.

11. To make arrangements for the consideration of any missing scripts which would have been considered at the marking review.

12. Any other business.

June 2014 Boundary Recording Form

Specification		Unit		Grade boundary		Boundary Range		zone		Agreed mark	

Mark point									Cum %	Zone

Working notes

OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

COVER PAGE

Examination Series: **June 2014**

Qualification Type: Insert

AWARDING REPORT

Specification Title: Specification Code:

Components/Units Awarded/Reviewed:

Date of Award/Review:

Participants:List each individual and their status e.g. Chair of Examiners, Chief Examiner, Principal Examiner, Principal Moderator, etc. [Please include Remote Awarders]

Name	Status	Name	Status

Apologies   (List each individual and their status.)

Name	Status	Name	Status

COMMENTARY PAGE

(a)   Difficulties encountered at the Award/Review:

Were there any instances of non-compliance at, or reported at, the   YES   NO
Award/Review?
(Delete as appropriate.)

If YES, please give details:

Were there any other difficulties?   YES   NO
(Delete as appropriate.)

If YES, please give details:

(b)   Key issues relevant to the Award/Review:

Please insert your commentary on the Award/Review here

(c)   Report on letters/emails of criticism on any aspect of this series' examination:

Were any letters/emails of criticism received?   YES   NO
(Delete as appropriate.)

If YES, please give details:

(d)   Awarding Report accuracy check:

We can confirm that all grade boundaries and this Awarding Report have been jointly checked
for accuracy and completeness:

Name: Name: Please insert name of checker

Post title: Chair of Examiners   Post title:

GRADE ENDORSEMENT SCREENING FORM

Specification Title: Insert	Names of Screeners: Insert Insert
Specification Code: Insert	Date: Insert

The screeners, having received and considered the recommendations of the awarding committee, agree, with the support of the Chair of Examiners, to the following:

Insert*   No changes

Insert*   Changes to the boundaries as outlined **below.**

* Please insert YES in the relevant box.

This section must be completed if changes are recommended to grade boundaries contained in the Awarding Meeting Report.

Chair of Examiners: URGENT - Please make the change(s) listed below on EPS, and email a copy of the amended awarding meeting report to the GEM Processing email account as soon as possible.

Unit/Component	Boundary	Original		Screening		Reason for change (See below for codes and separate list for full description)
		Mark	%	Mark	%	
(eg) F315	A	61	80.2%	60	81.1%	(Enter relevant number, plus a or b as appropriate)

Codes:
1=Unit pairs analysis; 2=Mean/SD comparison; 3=Limited candidature/evidence; 4=Alignment with cognate subjects
5=Comparability of options; 6=Maintenance/adjustment of qualification outcomes; 7=Change in entry; 8=Change in statistics post-award
9=Alignment with putative
a=Within zone of uncertainty; b=Within range of scripts available

The Director of Assessment Standards, having received and considered the recommendations of the awarding committee and the screeners, has agreed to the above recommendations.

Insert Signature*	Insert Date*

Director of Assessment Standards' Comments:

Insert*

OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

[Series]

MARKING REVIEW REPORT

Specification Title ....   Specification Code ....

Conducting Office ....OCR Officer...

Dates of Marking Review: from .... to ....

ABERRANT EXAMINERS COMPLETELY RE-MARKED: (normally this will take place before or in parallel with the Marking Review)

Give number and name:

LINGERING DOUBT EXAMINERS
State for each whether they came into category:
(a)   Examiners defined as lingering doubters as result of SEM form and Team Leader Reports.
(b)   Examiners defined as lingering doubters as result of scaling meeting.
(c)   Examiners defined as lingering doubters as result of analysis of forecast v actual information.
(d)   Other [please explain briefly in Column 3 below].

Component/Unit	Number and name of Examiner	Category (a), (b), (c) or (d)	Notes [State if only the initial sample of 20 was re-marked. If further investigation was undertaken, describe it, give the rationale and explain the outcome.]

Component/Unit	Number and name of Examiner	Category (a), (b), (c) or (d)	Notes [State if only the initial sample of 20 was re-marked. If further investigation was undertaken, describe it, give the rationale and explain the outcome.]

The Marking Review was conducted in accordance with OCR procedures.

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Signed …………………………………………………… (Chief Examiner)

Date ………………

Signed …………………………………………………… (OCR Officer)

Date ………………

This signed form must be attached to the checklist which is submitted by the OCR Officer on or before the final deadlines for mark input.

Further reference documents

1.   A Guide to Technical Information and Awarding Statistics for Chairs and Qualification Managers/Leaders (2010) Elizabeth Gray, OCR [updated February 2013]
(Distributed to all Chairs and can be obtained from Assessment Standards)

2.   GCE Entry, Aggregation and Certification Rules (2009) JCQ
X:\OCR\Exam_Series\Technical_Guidance

3.   GCSE Entry, Aggregation and Certification Rules (2011) JCQ
X:\OCR\Exam_Series\Technical_Guidance

4.   UMS Points Conversion Rules for GCSE GCE Diploma (2009)
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5.   Setting Standards – Awarding Process (2012)
X:\OCR\Exam_Series\Technical_Guidance

6.   Setting Standards – Technical Issues (2012)
X:\OCR\Exam_Series\Technical_Guidance

GLOSSARY

Aggregation
The name given to the process of adding component weighted marks or unit uniform marks/points to arrive at a total mark for a qualification. It is this mark which determines a candidate's grade.

ELC
Entry Level Certificate – an entry level qualification awarded at three levels – Entry 1, Entry 2 and Entry 3, with Entry 3 the highest.

FSMQ
These qualifications are designed to provide candidates with recognition for their ability to use their mathematical knowledge to make sense of and describe real world situations and to solve problems. Both of OCR's Free Standing Mathematics Qualifications have been designed to offer mathematics learning that complements study in a range of other subjects. The Advanced FSMQ, Additional Mathematics, is worth UCAS points for university admissions, and introduces students to the power and elegance of advanced mathematics. The Intermediate FSMQ, Foundations of Advanced Mathematics (MEI), is designed to provide access to AS/A Level GCE Mathematics for those not yet ready to take them.

GCE
General Certificate of Education – a unitised level 3 qualification of two distinct parts AS and AS plus A2 (for the full GCE). GCE Double Awards are available in some applied subjects.

GCSE
General Certificate of Secondary Education – a level1/level 2 qualification. Some GCSEs consist of two tiers. Double awards are available for some applied subjects.

ILD
Item Level Data – these are data which show the facility values (how many candidates answered the item correctly) and discrimination values (how well the item correlates with the test total).

Mean
This is the average mark scored by candidates in a component/unit. It should lie between 50% and 60% of the total marks for that component/unit/qualification.

Ogives
These are cumulative frequency charts that show for each examiner the range of marks they gave in their marking. If apportionment is random, it is expected that the ogives for each examiner will be similar. If an examiner's ogive looks different from the norm, it may be an indication of unreliable marking.

PL
Principal Learning – this is one component of the diploma although, like the Project, it is a qualification in its own right. It is a qualification which is set at one of three non-overlapping levels (1 to 3) and consists of a number of units.

Project
As with the PL it is a diploma component and is set at one of three non-overlapping levels (1 to 3). It is a single unit qualification.

Putative data
These are data which predict GCE or GCSE outcomes on the basis of prior attainment of candidates. The prior attainment will normally be defined by a cohort's Key Stage 3 performance (when predicting GCSE outcomes) or mean GCSE score (for GCE outcomes).

Raw mark
The mark awarded to a script based on the application of an agreed mark scheme.

Scoris
The name of the bespoke software which OCR uses for marking and managing the marking of scripts on-line.

SRB
Statistically recommended boundaries – these are grade boundaries which are determined purely on the basis of statistical evidence without any judgemental input. They can be very useful in identifying expected boundary values for established qualifications.

Standard deviation
This is a measure of the spread of marks in a component/unit/qualification. It should be about 15% of the marks for that component/unit/qualification.

Unitised specifications
Specifications which are assessed at unit level. Marks for the units are converted to uniform marks for aggregation to determine the qualification grade. Units may be assessed at different series throughout the course.

Uniform mark
This it the mark into which raw marks are converted in unitised schemes of assessment. It allows marks from different series to be aggregated and is the mark reported to candidates.

Unit pairs
This is a data table which identifies, for a common cohort, performances on two different units. It is particularly helpful in indicating equi-percentile grade boundaries and the performance of re-sit candidates

Weighted mark
The mark which is used in the aggregation of two components within a unit (or linear specifications where they exist) to reflect the correct weighting of each component.