

Understanding GCSE (9-1) Grade Boundaries

A grade boundary is the minimum mark at which a numbered grade (between 9 and 1) can be achieved. This GCSE qualification will be graded and certificated on a nine grade scale from 9 to 1 using the total **subject mark**, where 9 is the highest grade. Individual papers are not graded.

With the new grading system, for Foundation Tier grades **1 to 5** are available, and for Higher Tier, grades **4 to 9** are available.

New GCSEs are linear qualifications in which each component (Paper 1, 2, 3, & 4) have a **total raw mark**. When the contribution of components to the qualification is **not equal**, the component raw marks are **scaled** by a **weighting factor**.

The raw marks for papers 1, 3 and 4 in GCSE qualification will be scaled by Pearson to represent the relative weighting of **25%** for each paper.

The raw marks for each component is **multiplied** by the **weighting factor** so that it reflects the contribution of the component mark to the qualification. The **scaled marks** are then added together to form the overall **subject mark** which is rounded to the nearest **whole number** as shown in the tables 2 and 3.

Table 1 - Foundation and Higher tier

Paper	Weighting	Raw marks	Scaling factor	Raw marks multiplied by scaling factor	Scaling mark
1 - Listening	25%	50	1.400	50 x 1.400 =	70
2 - Speaking	25%	70	1.000	70 x 100 =	70
3 - Reading	25%	50	1.400	50 x 1.400 =	70
4 - Writing	25%	60	1.167	60 x 1.167 =	70
Total subject marks					280

Examples

Table 2 - Candidate 1 – Foundation Tier

Paper	Weighting	Raw marks for paper	Scaling factor	Raw marks gained by Candidate	Raw marks multiplied by scaling factor	Scaled mark
Paper 1 F	25%	50	1.400	21	21 x 1.400 =	29.400
Paper 2 F	25%	70	1.000	45	45 x 100 =	45.000
Paper 3 F	25%	50	1.400	33	33 x 1.400 =	46.200
Paper 4 F	25%	60	1.167	31	31 x 1.167 =	36.177
Total subject marks						156.777
Rounded to the nearest whole number						157

Table 3 - Candidate 2 – Higher Tier

Paper	Weighting	Raw marks for paper	Scaling factor	Raw marks gained by Candidate	Raw marks multiplied by scaling factor	Scaled mark
Paper 1 H	25%	50	1.400	29	21 x 1.400 =	40.600
Paper 2 H	25%	70	1.000	57	57 x 100 =	57.000
Paper 3 H	25%	50	1.400	35	35 x 1.400 =	49.200
Paper 4 H	25%	60	1.167	33	33 x 1.167 =	38.511
Total subject marks						185.111
Rounded to the nearest whole number						185

The following table shows the overall grade boundaries for **French GCSE June 2016** series.

Table 4 - French grade boundaries

Overall Grade Boundaries	Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
Foundation	280					162	132	97	62	28	0
Higher	280	225	192	160	137	115	93	71			0

From the above overall grade boundaries, the following are the **marks range** for each grade.

Table 5 - French grade boundaries

Foundation Tier			Higher Tier		
Grade	Marks	Marks range for each Grade	Grade	Marks	Marks range for each Grade
9			9	225	280 - 225
8			8	192	224 - 192
7			7	160	191 - 160
6			6	137	159 - 137
5	162	280 - 162	5	115	136 - 115
4	132	161 - 132	4	93	114 - 93
3	97	131 - 97	3	71	92 - 71
2	62	96 - 62	2		
1	28	61 - 28	1		
U	0	0	U	0	0

Overall Grades for Candidates 1 and 2

Overall grade for Candidate 1 – Foundation Tier

For French Foundation Tier overall grading in Table 4, the grade boundary for a **Grade 5** is **162**, therefore, **162** is the **minimum mark** at which a **Grade 5** can be achieved.

Candidate 1 in Table 2, gained a total scaled mark **157** therefore, his/her overall grade will be grade **4** (equivalent to current grade C).

Overall grade for Candidate 2 – Higher Tier

For French Higher Tier overall grading in Table 4, the grade boundary for a **Grade 8** is **192**, therefore, **192** is the **minimum mark** at which a **Grade 8** can be achieved.

Candidate 2 in Table 3 gained total scaled mark **185** therefore, his/her overall grade will be grade **7** (equivalent to current grade A).

GCSEs - New Grading

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	A*
8	
7	
6	B
5	
4	
3	D
2	
1	
U	
	E
	F
	G
	U