



Enquiries about results, and marks on scripts

This factsheet will help you to understand:

- the reasons why a candidate's mark may or may not change after an enquiry about results
- how we manage differences in examiner judgements at the different stages of marking
- the marks and annotations you will see on a copy of your candidate's script.

If you want to know more about how we mark scripts, please visit

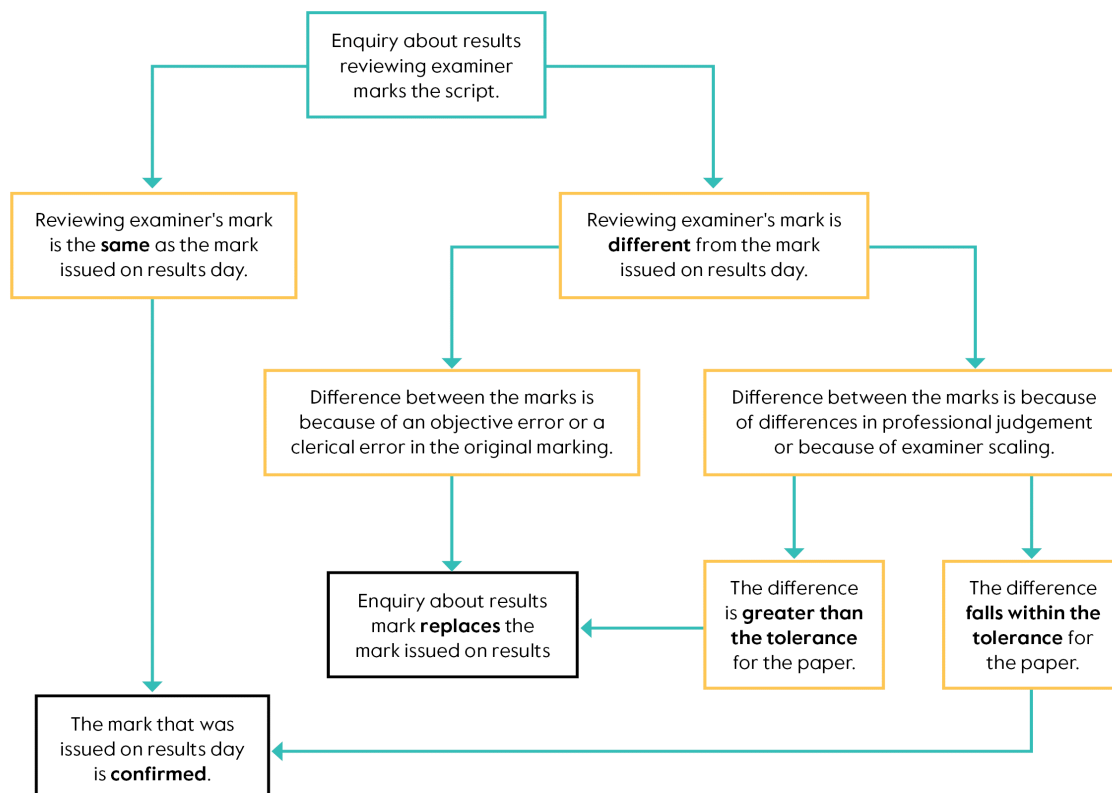
www.cambridgeinternational.org/exam-administration/results/markings-and-grading/.

When does the mark or grade change after an enquiry about results?

When we review the marking of a paper through our enquiry about results service, we change a mark if the reviewing examiner's mark is different from the mark issued on results day, and if this difference is because:

- a clerical error was made in arriving at the total mark
- there was an objective error in the original marking, which is not subject to any debate or judgement
- there was a subjective difference in marks (a difference in judgement), or the difference is because of examiner scaling, and this difference is greater than the tolerance for the paper (see next section).

The diagram below shows the stages that a candidate script can go through as part of the review of marking process.



When we change the mark following an enquiry about results, we also amend the syllabus grade if the new total syllabus mark gives the candidate a different grade.

We will also amend the percentage uniform mark (PUM) where these are available. Following an enquiry about results, a candidate's PUM can go up, go down, or stay the same.

Professional judgement in marking and the use of tolerance

During a review of the marking, to make sure that our marking is fair we need to differentiate between an objective error in marking by the original examiner and a legitimate variance of professional judgement between two different examiners who have both been through the standardisation process.

Objective marking

In some exam questions, we only need to see if a response is correct or incorrect, as specified in the mark scheme. This is what we call objective marking, as in the case of multiple-choice questions. Where there is an objective error in the original marking, we always amend the original examiner's mark.

Subjective marking

Not all marking is purely objective: marking some types of questions requires professional judgement by examiners – for example an essay, or a written answer requiring development or explanation. The examiner needs to make a judgement about the number of marks to award. This is what we call subjective marking.

We take great care to train our examiners to apply their professional judgement consistently in using the mark scheme, and we have checks in place to make sure this happens.

However, where marking involves professional judgement, there can be legitimate variance in judgement between two standardised examiners, without either examiner being wrong. The amount of variance that we consider acceptable is called a 'tolerance' and it is set individually for each paper. The tolerance depends on the level of professional judgement used, and it is calculated based on the total mark for the paper.

If a reviewing examiner's mark is different from the original mark because of a difference in professional judgement, and the difference is small enough to be within tolerance and therefore acceptable, we do not change the mark: the original mark is confirmed. In such cases, changing the mark would be inappropriate because there has been no error in the original application of the mark scheme.

Tolerance before and after the publication of results

When we review marking as part of examiner monitoring (see next section), if there is a subjective difference in marks that is within the tolerance – and therefore acceptable – then we do not change the mark. However, if the subjective difference in marks is greater than the tolerance, we change the mark to be that of the senior examiner. We apply this principle regardless of whether the reviewing examiner's mark is higher or lower than the original mark.

An enquiry about results review of marking uses the same approach after the publication of results, shown in the diagram above. Using the same approach for reviews of marking before and after the publication of results means the same marking standard is applied, so that we are fair to all candidates, including those who have not applied for an enquiry about results.

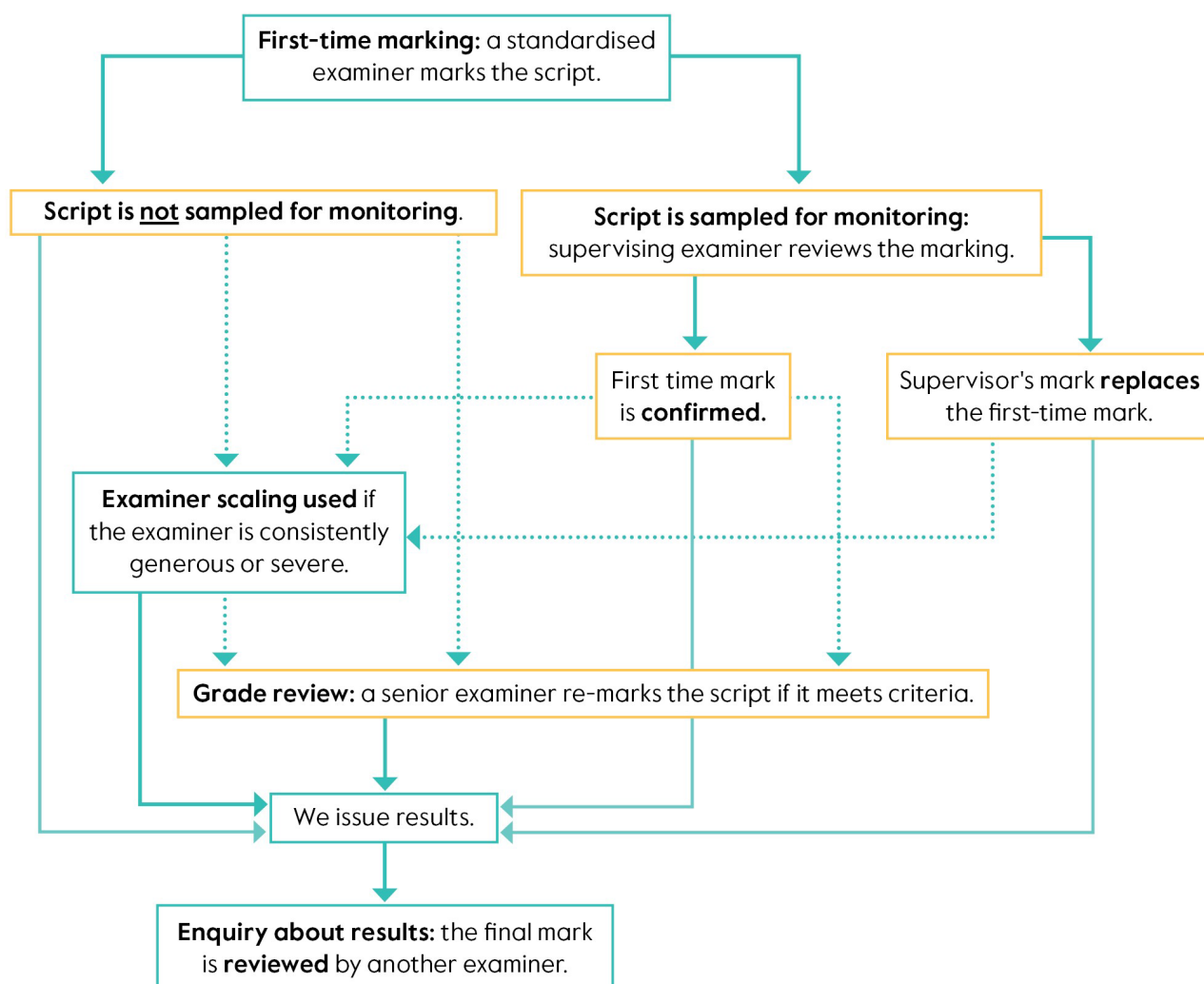
What are the stages of marking a script?

All marking, in all marking stages, is done according to the marking standard set by the Principal Examiner, the most senior examiner marking the paper. The Principal Examiner is the person responsible for making sure that the mark scheme is applied correctly.

First-time marking (all candidates)

This is the mark that the first examiner gave to the candidate's work on the script.

- For many candidates, this mark will lead to their result.
- For some candidates, their script may go through one or more of the stages explained below and shown in the diagram below.



Sampled for examiner monitoring (if applicable)

For each examiner, a sample of their marking is reviewed by their supervising examiner during the marking period. If a script is reviewed by a supervising examiner, either the first-time mark will be confirmed, or the mark will change to the supervising examiner's mark. Whether the mark is confirmed or changed depends on the reason for any differences in the marks and the tolerance of the paper, as explained above in the section 'Professional judgement in marking and the use of tolerance'.

Examiner scaling (if applicable)

We use examiner scaling when our monitoring shows that an examiner's marking is consistently slightly more generous or severe than the agreed marking standard set out by the Principal Examiner. Examiner scaling applies increases or decreases in marks to **all** scripts marked by that examiner to

correct any generosity or severity. If examiner scaling has been applied to a candidate's mark, the adjustment does not appear on the front of the script. However, it is reflected in their final mark.

Grade review (if applicable)

Grade review happens before results are issued and is a targeted re-marking by senior examiners of the scripts of candidates who are most at risk of receiving inappropriate results. Scripts are re-marked at grade review if the candidate is close to a grade threshold at syllabus level and also at risk for at least one other reason from our list of reasons to trigger a grade review.

Enquiry about results – review of marking service (if applicable)

A reviewing examiner marks the script when a centre requests an enquiry about results review of marking service after results are issued. As with scripts sampled for examiner monitoring, whether the mark is confirmed or changed depends on the reason for any differences in the marks and the tolerance of the paper, as explained above in the section 'Professional judgement in marking and the use of tolerance'.

Enquiry about results – Principal Examiner review (if applicable)

Sometimes after an enquiry about results review of marking has been completed by a different examiner, we send the script to the Principal Examiner for a further review. This happens when the Principal Examiner had marked the script before results were issued. The Principal Examiner sets the marking standard, so we must ask them to check and agree or disagree with any changes to a mark that they had awarded. We may also refer an enquiry about results to the Principal Examiner if we need them to resolve an issue concerning the original mark and the reviewing examiner's mark.

What will I see on a candidate's script?

Scripts marked on-screen

The first page of the candidate's script will be a Candidate Marks Report. This report lists the candidate's marks at each stage of the marking process and shows you the mark given by the reviewing examiner at the enquiry about results stage. This may **not** be the final mark awarded to the script. This is explained in the section 'Why is the mark on the front of the script different to the final mark?'

Scripts marked on paper

The first page of the candidate's script will list their marks and will show the marks given to the script by each examiner who has marked it.

Different examiners' marks will be written in different colours. You can find out more information about this in the section 'Use of colour in annotation'.

Use of colour in annotation

The marks that appear on the candidate's script are the marks that examiners gave for the work on the script at the different stages of the marking process.

Examiners may also write comments on scripts showing the way in which candidates have met (or have not met) the requirements of the mark scheme, but they are not required to do so. If these comments are shown on the script, they are intended for other examiners rather than for schools or candidates. The comments you see could be from the original examiner and from any reviewing examiner at the different marking stages. These comments and symbols are called **annotations**.

What do the different colours of annotation mean?

If your candidate's script has been marked on-screen, each stage in the marking or monitoring process could be shown in the following colours:

| Stage in marking or monitoring process | Colour of annotation or comments |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Original marking | Red and green |
| Examiner monitoring (if applicable) | Brown |
| Grade review (if applicable) | Blue |
| Enquiry about results (if applicable) | Purple |

If your candidate's script has been marked on paper, each stage in the marking or monitoring process could be shown in the following colours:

| Stage in marking or monitoring process | Colour of annotation |
|--|--|
| Original marking | Red |
| Examiner monitoring (if applicable) | Green |
| Grade review (if applicable) | Green, or purple if the script was selected for examiner monitoring and green was already used |
| Enquiry about results (if applicable) | Green or purple, or another colour if both colours have already been used on the script |

For scripts marked on paper, we check that all parts of the script were marked and that the marks were totalled correctly. You may see evidence of these checks on a candidate's script.

Why is the mark on the front of the script different to the final mark?

The mark shown on the front of the script may **not** match the candidate's final mark for one or more of the following reasons:

Application of tolerance meant that a previous examiner's mark was used

This is explained in the section 'Professional judgement in marking and the use of tolerance'. If the difference between the original examiner's mark and the mark given by a reviewing examiner during examiner monitoring, or an enquiry about results, is a matter of professional judgement, and the difference is small enough to be acceptable, we do not change the mark.

Examiner scaling

If examiner scaling was applied because the original examiner was found to be consistently slightly generous or slightly severe compared with the agreed marking standard set out by the Principal Examiner, the scaled mark does not appear on the front of the script. The outcome of scaling can be seen in the Adjusted mark on the Component Marks Report.

Applying the weighting factor

In some syllabuses a weighting factor applies to candidates' marks so that each component contributes to the overall grade in a way that matches the weightings in the syllabus. If the final mark was adjusted by applying a weighting factor, this adjusted mark does not appear on the front of the script but is the candidate's final mark that contributes to their syllabus grade. The effect of

the weighting factor will, however, be seen on component marks reports. The weighting factors for all components are listed at www.cambridgeinternational.org/weighting

Special consideration adjustments for present but disadvantaged candidates

After a successful application for special consideration from a school, we adjust a candidate's mark to allow for any adverse circumstances, for example illness, bereavement, disruption, or temporary injury. If we have made an adjustment to the candidate's mark because of a successful special consideration application, this will not appear on the front of the candidate's script. The outcome of a special consideration mark adjustment can be seen in the Adjusted mark on the Component Marks Report.

Access arrangements for candidates dictating to a scribe in a language exam

If, for a language exam, the candidate had an access arrangement to use a scribe and opts out of dictating spelling, the total marks available for the paper do not change, but the marks corresponding to spelling in language exams are not awarded because the candidate does not demonstrate their spelling skills using this access arrangement. This is through a post-exam adjustment and does not appear on the front of the script.