This factsheet will help you to understand the marks and annotations you will see on your candidate’s script. It will also help you to understand the reasons why a candidate’s mark may or may not be changed following an enquiry about results.

What is a script and how is it marked?

A script is where a candidate records their answers in the exam – this could be on a question paper or in an answer sheet or booklet. When we mark your candidates’ scripts, we allocate each script to a particular marker – the examiner. In most cases, a candidate has to take more than one component in the same syllabus. Different components are allocated to different examiners who are experts in their field. Each examiner must mark each script according to the mark scheme for that component. Senior examiners check the marking of every examiner to make sure that their marking is consistent across all scripts and in line with the mark scheme.

What will I see on a candidate’s script?

If the candidate’s script is 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 does the mark on the front of the script not match the final mark?

If the candidate’s script is 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.

What are the marks shown on the front of the script?

The different marks awarded to a script during the different marking stages are shown on the front of the script. For scripts marked on-screen, each column on the Candidate Marks Report shows a marking stage described as ‘Mark type’.

At each stage, all marking is carried out according to the marking standard set by the Principal Examiner, who is the most senior examiner marking the paper and is the person responsible for making sure that the mark scheme is applied correctly.
What are the different stages of marking?

**Original**

This is the mark the original examiner gave to the candidate’s work on the script.

**Monitoring (if applicable)**

This is the mark a senior examiner gave to the script.

During the marking period, a senior examiner checks the marking of each examiner. As a result, sometimes we increase or decrease the marks of all candidates marked by a particular examiner for a component. This happens if an examiner’s marking has been consistently slightly generous or slightly severe compared with the agreed marking standard set out by the Principal Examiner.

**Grade review (if applicable)**

This is the mark that a reviewing examiner gave to the script at grade review stage. Grade review is a deliberate re-mark of candidates whose total syllabus mark is close to a grade threshold and whose prospective result gives us some concern under one or more of a number of predetermined criteria. One of these criteria is to review the scripts of candidates who have a grade for one component that is significantly worse than a grade in another component.

**Results enquiry**

This is the mark that a reviewing examiner gave to the script during an enquiry about results. Specific enquiry about results services review the original marking to check the mark scheme has been applied correctly. The mark given by the reviewing examiner at this stage might not be the same as the final mark awarded to a candidate after the enquiry about results. We explain this in the section *Why does the mark on the front of the script not match the final mark?*

**Special consideration**

This stage could happen during the marking process but does not appear on the front of the candidate’s script.

After a successful application for special consideration, we make a post-exam adjustment to a candidate’s mark to allow for any adverse circumstances, for example illness, bereavement or temporary injury. This adjustment will not appear on the front of the candidate’s script and is added to the mark after we have applied the marking tolerance for the component. We explain marking tolerance in the section *Professional judgement in marking and the use of tolerance.*

**Adjustment of final mark – weighting factor**

This stage could also happen during the marking process but does not appear on the front of the candidate’s script.
How to understand the marks on candidates’ scripts

In some syllabuses we apply a weighting factor to the marks. We do this so the marks match the weighting for each paper shown in the syllabus. This makes sure each paper contributes correctly to the overall syllabus grade. This mark does not appear on the candidate’s script but is the candidate’s final mark that contributes to their syllabus grade.

Use of colour in annotation

As described above, the marks that appear on the candidate’s script are the marks that examiners at different stages of the marking process gave the candidate for the work on the script. Examiners may write comments on scripts showing how candidates have met (or 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.

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage in the marking or monitoring process</th>
<th>Colour of annotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original</td>
<td>Green or red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring (if applicable)</td>
<td>Maroon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade review (if applicable)</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results enquiry (if applicable)</td>
<td>Purple</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage in the marking or monitoring process</th>
<th>Colour of annotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original</td>
<td>Green or red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring (if applicable)</td>
<td>Green or purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade review (if applicable)</td>
<td>Green or purple, or another colour if both colours have already been used on the script</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results enquiry (if applicable)</td>
<td>Green or purple, or another colour if both colours have already been used on the script</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. If these checks have led to a change in the candidate’s mark, this will also appear on a candidate’s script in a box that looks like this:

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CLERICAL CHECK ADJUSTMENT

New total Mark
```
The script may also have been marked as part of a grade review. If this has taken place, you may see the following box on the front of the script. This has been filled in as an example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Review</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examiner team &amp; position</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Review mark</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Why does the mark on the front of the script not match 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:

- If the difference between the mark given by a reviewing examiner at the enquiry about results stage and an original examiner’s mark is a matter of professional judgement and the difference is small enough to be acceptable, we do not change the mark. Therefore, the original final mark may be different from the reviewed mark. We explain why we do this in the section *Professional judgement in marking and the use of tolerance*.

- If we made a post-exam adjustment to a candidate’s mark after a successful application for special consideration, this adjusted mark does not appear on the front of the script. This would happen if you made an application for special consideration, and we let you know that your application was successful and that we adjusted your candidate’s mark.

- If the final mark was adjusted applying the weighting factor, this adjusted mark does not appear on the front of the script. Therefore, the mark given at the enquiry about results stage does not reflect the application of the weighting factor.

**When do the marks change following an enquiry about results?**

When we review the marking of a paper via an enquiry about results, we change a mark if we find that there was any of the following:

- If there is an objective error in the original marking, we correct this. During the review of the marking, if the reviewing examiner finds that there is an objective error, we always amend the original examiner’s mark to correct this.

- If there is a subjective difference in marks that is greater than the tolerance, we change the mark. During the review of the marking, if the reviewing examiner awards either a higher or a lower mark that exceeds the level of tolerance, then this reviewed mark becomes the final mark. You can find out more information about the use of tolerance in the section *Professional judgement in marking and the use of tolerance*.

In these situations where a new mark leads to a new total syllabus mark that gives the candidate a different grade, we also change the grade.

**Professional judgement in marking and the use of tolerance**

During the review of the marking, to make sure that our marking is fair we need to differentiate between an objective error in the application of the mark scheme by the original examiner and a legitimate variance of professional judgement between two different examiners.
Objective marking

In some exam questions, we only need to identify 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, we always amend the original examiner’s mark.

Subjective marking

Not all marking is purely objective: some marking requires the use of professional judgement by examiners, for example to mark an essay. This is what we call subjective marking. In these cases, the examiner makes a decision using their professional judgement as they apply the mark scheme. We take great care to train our examiners to apply their professional judgement consistently and have several checks in place to make sure this happens. Where marking involves professional judgement, we recognise that there can be legitimate variance in judgement between two 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 is determined by the nature of the mark scheme and the level of professional judgement involved, and is calculated based on the total mark for the paper.

Tolerance before and after publication of results

Before the publication of results, a senior examiner monitors the marking of each examiner. At this stage, if there is a subjective difference in marks that is within the tolerance for the paper and therefore acceptable, we do not change the mark. However, if the subjective difference in marks is greater than the tolerance for the paper, we change the mark to be that of the senior examiner.

We continue with this same approach after the publication of results. During the enquiry about results process, a senior reviewing examiner looks at the marking for that script and states the mark they would have awarded. If this mark is different from the original examiner’s mark because of a difference in professional judgement, and if this difference is small enough to be within tolerance and therefore acceptable, we do not change the mark. In such cases, changing the mark would be inappropriate because there has been no error in the original application of the mark scheme. However, if this difference is greater than the tolerance for the paper, we change the mark to be that of the senior reviewing examiner.

We apply this principle regardless of whether the reviewing examiner’s mark is higher or lower than the original mark. By applying tolerance during the marking period before results are released and then during the enquiry about results period, we make sure that the same marking standard is applied to all candidates, and that we are fair to all candidates, including those who have not applied for an enquiry about results.
An overview of the journey of a candidate’s script

This example shows all the adjustments that could be made to the marks during all the marking stages. In this example, the candidate’s total original mark (raw mark) is 17 but their final mark is 28.5. In this example, the candidate’s mark was not changed following an enquiry about results review of marking.