Awarding A* at A Level Grading Criteria
Revised A Level specifications - 1st award Summer 2018

The A* grade recognises, and rewards, outstanding performance at A level.

How is A* awarded in revised specifications weighted AS 40% and A2 60%?

An A* grade will be awarded to candidates who have met both of the following criteria:

1st criteria - achieved an A grade at A level; and

2nd criteria - achieved 90%, or more, of the maximum uniform marks (UMS) on the aggregated total of their A2 units.

The table below identifies practical examples of awarding A* across CCEA’s A Level qualifications. A list of all CCEA A Level qualifications, and their structure, is provided in appendix A:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Level</th>
<th>AS UMS</th>
<th>A2 UMS</th>
<th>Total UMS</th>
<th>1st criteria - achieved overall grade A</th>
<th>2nd criteria - 90% aggregation in A2 units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 unit award</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>240+ UMS out of 300 UMS</td>
<td>162+ UMS out of 180 UMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 unit award</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>320+ UMS out of 400 UMS</td>
<td>216+ UMS out of 240 UMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 unit award</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>320+ UMS out of 400 UMS</td>
<td>216+ UMS out of 240 UMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 unit award</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>400+ UMS out of 500 UMS</td>
<td>270+ UMS out of 300 UMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 unit award</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>480+ UMS out of 600 UMS</td>
<td>324+ UMS out of 360 UMS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Double Award specifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Level</th>
<th>AS UMS</th>
<th>A2 UMS</th>
<th>Total UMS</th>
<th>1st criteria - achieved overall grade AA</th>
<th>2nd criteria - 90% aggregation in A2 units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 unit award</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>960+ UMS out of 1200 UMS</td>
<td>A<em>A</em> awarded 90% UMS across all six A2 units 648+ UMS out of 720 UMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A*A awarded 90% UMS in three best A2 units 324+ UMS out of 360 UMS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes:

A* will be awarded for A level qualifications only. It is not awarded at AS level or for individual units.

The A* awarding criteria can result in candidates being awarded an A grade who have scored a higher uniform marks total than candidates awarded A* (as illustrated below).

Both students are entered for a four unit A Level with a max UMS of 400.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roy</th>
<th>Mel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level</strong></td>
<td><strong>Unit</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total UMS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade Awarded</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both students have satisfied the 1st criteria of achieving more than 320 UMS for an A grade. The 2nd criteria, 90% aggregation of their A2 units, determines if A* will be awarded:

- Roy’s aggregation in his A2 units: \(110 + 100 = 210 \text{ out of } 240 = 87.5\%\)
- Mel’s aggregation in her A2 units: \(100 + 116 = 216 \text{ out of } 240 = 90.0\%\)

Despite scoring an additional 24 UMS Roy receives an A grade as the aggregation of A2 units is less than 90% of the UMS available. Mel is awarded the A* grade having achieved 90% of the UMS available in A2 units.

If you have any further queries please contact:

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Appendix A

CCEA A Level subjects and grading structure.

4 unit award with max uniform mark of 300:
History (only)

4 unit award with max uniform mark of 400:
Art & Design (options A to D)  Moving Image Arts
Business Studies  Nutrition & Food Science
Digital Technology  Performing Arts
Economics  Religious Studies
Environmental Technology  Software Systems Development
Government & Politics  Sports Science
History of Art  Technology & Design
Journalism

5 unit award with max uniform mark of 400:
English Literature (only)

6 unit award with max uniform mark of 500:
French
German
Geography
Irish
Spanish

6 unit award with max uniform mark of 600:
Biology
Chemistry
Music
Physics
Health & Social Care (Single Award)
Life & Health Sciences (Single Award)
Applied Business (Single Award)
Applied ICT (Single Award)

12 unit award with max uniform mark of 1200:
Health & Social Care (Double Award)
Life & Health Sciences (Double Award)
Applied Business (Double Award)
Applied ICT (Double Award)