

T Level Technical Qualifications

Grading Guide

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1. Introduction

This document provides information on the structure, grading and awarding of the T Level Technical Qualifications (TQs) as well as further detail on the rules a candidate's first attempt and re-takes of the Core component. It is aimed at providers delivering City & Guilds TQs to better understand the processes we carry out to derive candidate grades. Additional information (eg how grade boundaries are determined) is for information only and can be found in the Appendix.

1.1. Terminology

All TQs are structured in a similar manner. Common terminology is used to refer to specific aspects of the TQ. This common terminology is used throughout this guide as well as other materials including the candidate's 'Results Slips'.

A TQ is broken into two components, the 'Core' and the 'Occupational Specialism' (OS). The 'Core' is then broken into an 'Exam' sub-component and 'Employer-Set Project' (ESP) sub-component. Paper 1 and Paper 2 are combined together to form the Exam sub-component.

1.2. Other sources of information

This document provides general grading information for T Level Technical Qualifications provided by City & Guilds. 'Core Reports' and 'Occupational Specialism (OS) Reports' can be found on the relevant qualification of the City & Guilds website after the issuing of results.

These provide feedback and support for providers delivering these assessments along with the grade (and notional) boundaries for each assessment in the relevant assessment series.

2. Core Component

2.1. Grades and weightings

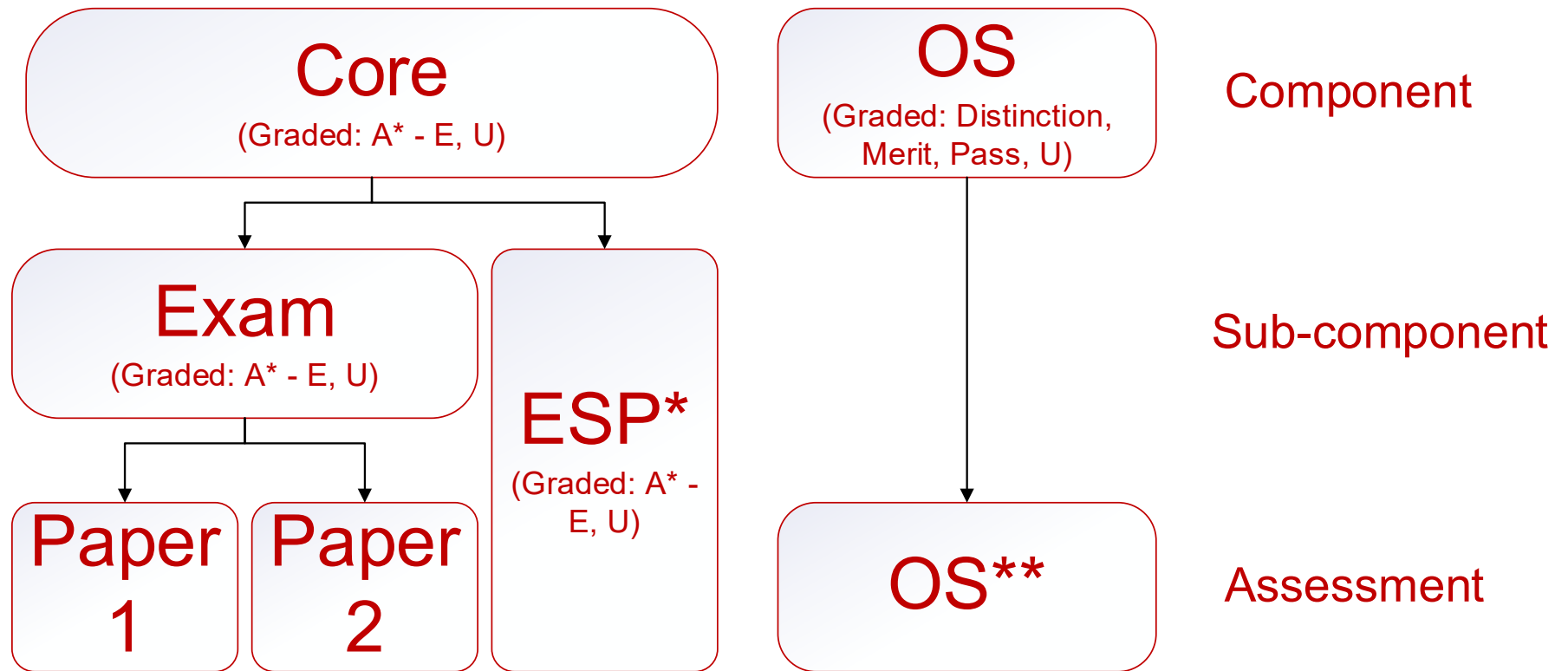
The overall Core is graded as A* to E, and Unclassified (U). This grading is also applied to the Exam and Employer-Set Project (ESP) sub-components.

Where a candidate fails to meet the requirements in taking sufficient assessments (and within specific series) for the Exam sub-component or the overall Core, an 'X – No Result' will be issued.

A '#' on the Results Slip will indicate where an Exam sub-component grade is derived from only one paper. For example, if a candidate was absent or disqualified for one paper, that paper would be treated as a zero mark and aggregated with the mark of the paper that was sat. In this scenario the candidate would only be able to access half the total marks available for the exam sub-component.

Weightings of the sub-components as per the table below will be applied, and compensation across the sub-components is used meaning a candidate performing poorly in the ESP can still achieve the overall Core if performance in the Exam sub-component is strong enough to compensate.

Technical Qualification	Exam sub-component weighting	ESP sub-component weighting
8710 Building Services Engineering for Construction	70% (Paper 1 and Paper 2 have equal weighting)	30%
8711 Onsite Construction		
8712 Maintenance, Installation and Repair for Engineering and Manufacturing		
8713 Engineering, Manufacturing, Processing and Control		
8714 Design and Development for Engineering and Manufacturing	60% (Paper 1 and Paper 2 have equal weighting)	40%
8715 Management and Administration		



* For the ESP, there is only one assessment, so the assessment = the sub-component.

** For some pathways within BSE, the OS are paired.

2.2. Awarding

For individual assessments, the grade boundaries for the judgmental grades of E and A are set through a process of professional judgement by technical experts. They use a range of evidence which includes looking at candidates' work. In order to recommend the judgemental boundaries, technical experts will determine the lowest mark at which the relevant grade standard is demonstrated for each assessment. The grade descriptors for A and E, and other relevant information (eg archived samples of candidate work and statistical evidence) will be used to determine the mark at which candidate performance in the assessment best aligns with the grade descriptor in the context of the qualification's purpose. Boundaries will be set for each version of each assessment to take into account relative difficulty.

2.3. Notional grade boundaries (Paper 1 and Paper 2)

Candidates receive a grade for the Exam sub-component as whole, and although there are no official grades for the individual assessments within the Exam sub-component, it can be useful for providers and candidates to see how the Exam sub-component grade was achieved.

The grade boundaries given for Paper 1 and Paper 2 are known as 'notional grade boundaries', as they are for illustrative purposes only. The judgemental A and E boundaries for Paper 1 and Paper 2 (notional grade boundaries) are added up to determine the corresponding Exam sub-component grade boundary.

2.4. Uniform Mark Scale (UMS)

Candidates' raw sub-component marks will be converted to a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). The UMS is used to convert the sub-component 'raw' marks into uniform marks. This is done to standardise marks from one series to another as assessments may vary in difficulty. For example, a candidate who achieves the lowest mark for a B grade in the Employer Set-Project in one series will receive the same uniform mark as a candidate achieving that same grade and level of performance in another series, regardless of their raw marks.

The UMS values achieved incorporate the weighting for the relevant sub-component, so these cannot be compared across sub-components. For example, for many TQs, the Exam sub-component is worth 70% of the Core weighting so the corresponding UMS will be that much larger than that of the ESP.

2.5. Core Grading

The best UMS value from the Exam and the ESP sub-components will be combined to calculate their total UMS. This is then used to determine a candidate's overall Core grade. The boundaries may differ across TQs. The E grade is always 40% of the maximum UMS value, and A is always 80% of the maximum UMS value. The actual boundaries are available in the relevant Core report (from the first assessment series).

Candidates that obtain an E grade or better in the overall Core, can be considered achieving the component – but they may wish to re-take sub-component(s) to improve their grade. There is no cap on the number of re-takes a candidate can have while on programme.

2.6. Compensation within the Core

As the Core is graded using the best UMS achieved for each sub-component, it is not necessary to achieve an E grade or better within both sub-components. Compensation within the Core means that strong performance in one sub-component may ‘compensate’ for weaker performance in the other sub-component – however the weighting of each sub-component must be taken into consideration. Below shows two scenarios of this compensation.

Candidate 1:

Sub-component / Component	Grade	UMS
Exam	A	250
Employer-Set Project	Unclassified	40
Core	B	290

Candidate 2:

Sub-component / Component	Grade	UMS
Exam	Unclassified	100
Employer-Set Project	A	100
Core	D	200

2.7. Special consideration

The specific information on how special consideration applies to the Core is listed below. For detailed information on when candidates are or are not eligible for special consideration, please refer to the JCQ [Guide to the special consideration process](#).

1.1.1. Candidates who are present for the assessment but disadvantaged

Candidates should complete assessments, in full, wherever possible. If candidates complete an assessment but are disadvantaged, they may be eligible for special consideration. If a candidate sits one of the papers for the Core exam, but is disadvantaged, special consideration applies as described in the JCQ document.

1.1.2. Absence from assessments for acceptable reasons

When a candidate has missed one of the exam papers for acceptable reasons, but completes the other exam paper in the same series, they may be eligible for special consideration. Where the centre is prepared to support an application, an adjustment may be made to their grade for the Core. This is available in the candidate's first and subsequent series, as the two exam papers cannot be retaken separately.

When a candidate has missed one of the sub-components for acceptable reasons, an adjustment can only be made to the terminal grade. The assessment(s) must have been missed in the terminal series and the minimum requirements must be met.

In all cases, candidates must have been fully prepared and covered the whole course.

2.8. Re-take Rules

Candidates can re-take in any assessment window following their first sitting. Candidates may re-take:

- the Core Exam (ie Paper 1 plus Paper 2)
- the Employer-Set Project, or
- the whole Core.

Where a candidate re-takes the Exam, they must re-take **both** exam papers and must do so in the same assessment window. However, where a candidate re-takes both the Exam and the Employer-Set Project, they do not need to retake both in the same assessment window. For clarity, where a candidate re-takes the Core Exam, they are not required to retake the Employer Set Project, and vice versa.

2.8.1. The candidate's first series

The rule for the Core is that each candidate **must** take both sub-components (ie Exam and ESP) in their first series. The rules that apply if they miss one or more assessments are listed below.

Scenarios	Absent with good reason	Results issued
Candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> misses both exam papers and completes project or	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'X – No Result' for missing sub-component Grade for completed sub-component 'X – No Result' for overall Core
	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'X – No Result' for missing sub-component Grade for completed sub-component 'X – No Result' for overall Core
Candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> misses one exam paper sits the other exam paper 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculated result for the missing exam paper Grade for Exam Grade for Employer-Set Project Grade for overall Core
	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero marks for missed exam paper Grade for Exam Grade for Employer-Set Project Grade for overall Core

2.8.2. Subsequent series

Following their first series, a candidate can re-take either the Exam or the Employer-Set Project, they do not need to re-take both in the same assessment window. The candidate can also re-take a sub-component to improve their grade. If the candidate is re-taking the Exam, they must take both exam papers in the same series. It is not possible to re-take one exam paper and not the other. The result for the Exam is always based on the two papers from same assessment series. The rules if they are absent from an assessment are listed below.

Scenarios	Absent with good reason	Results issued
Candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is entered for, but misses both exam papers, or is entered for, but doesn't complete project 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'X – No Result' for missing sub-component Result for overall Core based on best result for each sub-component
	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'X – No Result' for missing sub-component Result for overall Core based on best result for each sub-component
Candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> misses one exam paper sits the other exam paper 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculated result for the missing exam paper Grade for Exam Result for overall Core based on best result for each sub-component
	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero marks for missed exam paper Grade for Exam Result for overall Core based on best result for each sub-component

2.8.3. The candidate's terminal series

This is defined as the final series in the candidate's two-year T Level programme. The results that can be issued for that series are as follows:

Scenarios	Absent with good reason	Results that can be issued for that series	Results for the Core are based on
Candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> misses both exam papers, and completes project or	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculated result for missing sub-component Grade for completed sub-component 	The best result for each sub-component
	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'X – No Result' for missing sub-component Grade for completed sub-component 	The best result for each sub-component
Candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> misses one exam paper sits the other exam paper 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculated result for the missing exam paper Grade for exam Grade for Employer-Set Project 	The best result for each sub-component
	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero marks for missed exam paper Grade for exam Grade for Employer-Set Project 	The best result for each sub-component

3. Occupational Specialism (OS) Component

This section will be updated ahead of the summer 2023 results day.

4. Technical Qualification Grading

The overall T Level Programme grade will be an aggregation of the candidate’s achievement in the two components of the T Level Technical Qualification, ie the Core and Occupational Specialism.

The T Level Programme will be reported on a four-grade scale: Pass, Merit, Distinction, Distinction*. **Note:** All mandatory aspects must be achieved before a grade is issued by the Department for Education (DfE), this includes the Industry Placement and any other mandatory aspects.

The calculation of the grade will be based on performance in the Core component and Occupational Specialism, as set out below.

Calculation of the T Level Qualification Grade				
	Occupational specialism grade			
		Distinction	Merit	Pass
Core component grade	A*	Distinction*	Distinction	Distinction
	A	Distinction	Distinction	Merit
	B	Distinction	Merit	Merit
	C	Merit	Merit	Pass
	D	Merit	Pass	Pass
	E	Pass	Pass	Pass

4.1. Paired Occupational Specialisms

For some TQs, candidates are required to take two Occupational Specialisms. These are known as ‘paired’ OS, as they must always be taken together.

Where a candidate is required to take two OS assessments, they:

- must pass both OS assessments
- will receive separate grades for each specialism on their City & Guilds issued Results Slip which will also be listed separately on their T Level certificate (not issued by City & Guilds).

A single combined occupational specialism grade will be used to calculate the overall T level grade. The calculation of the overall combined grade for the occupational specialism component will be based on performance in each specialism, as set out in the table below.

		Occupational Specialism 1		
Occupational Specialism 2		Distinction	Merit	Pass
	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction	Merit
	Merit	Distinction	Merit	Pass
	Pass	Merit	Pass	Pass

5. Appendix

5.1. Core: Determining the A*, B, C and D grades

Grades A*, B, C and D are arithmetic grade boundaries and are calculated based on the A and E boundary recommendations. There are rules that all awarding organisations must follow for setting these, based on the A and E judgemental boundaries.

The B, C and D boundaries are set arithmetically so that they fall as evenly as possible between A and E. If the difference between the A and the E boundaries is not exactly divisible by four, the remainder of the marks are allocated to each of the intervals between the boundaries for A and B, B and C, and C and D – in that order.

The A* boundary is set the same number of marks above the A boundary as there is between the A boundary and B boundary, or halfway between the A boundary mark and the maximum mark, whichever is lower¹. Where the halfway point between the A boundary mark is not a whole number, this is rounded down to the mark below.

The same principles are used to calculate the notional boundaries (Paper 1 and Paper 2) for grades A*, B, C and D for each of the papers individually, based on the notional A and E boundaries for those papers. This does sometimes lead to scenarios in which the notional paper-level grade boundaries for these grades do not add up to the Exam sub-component grade boundaries.

¹ On occasions there may be technical and statistical evidence that suggests that the Core Exam A* boundary should be set at a different mark, in these instances the arithmetic calculation would not apply

5.2. Core: Grading Example

Sample Core Exam and notional assessment grade boundaries in a Core Exam is provided below for illustrative purposes only:

	Max mark	A* Athematic boundary	A Judgemental Boundary	B Athematic boundary	C Athematic boundary	D Athematic boundary	E Judgemental Boundary
Core Exam grade boundaries	200	180	160	140	120	100	80
Paper 1 notional grade boundaries	100	87	75	65	56	47	38
Paper 2 notional grade boundaries	100	92	85	74	63	52	42

Explanation for these calculations is given below:

5.2.1. Grades A and E

The technical experts recommend marks at the key boundaries A and E for Paper 1 and Paper 2, which add up to the corresponding grade A and E boundaries for the Core Exam.

Grade A paper 1 notional boundary is 75 marks and Grade A paper 2 notional boundary is 85 marks.

$75 + 85 = 160$ marks which is the 'A' boundary mark for the Core Exam

Similarly, the notional grade E paper 1 and paper 2 boundary marks add up to the Core Exam E boundary mark ($38 + 42 = 80$ marks).

5.2.2. Arithmetic boundaries: B, C and D

There are 80 marks between the Core Exam boundary for grade A (160), and the Core Exam boundary for grade E (80). The B, C and D Core Exam boundaries are therefore set at 20 mark intervals ($80 \div 4 = 20$), at 140, 120 and 100 respectively.

Using the B grade as an example, notional boundaries are calculated as follows:

Paper 1 grade A notional boundary is at 75 and Grade E notional boundary at 38, which gives a difference of 37.

$37 \div 4$ can be split into $36 \div 4 = 9$ with remainder 1

The remainder 1 is allocated to the A-B interval, ie the grade B boundary is set 10 marks lower than the grade A, ie the **Grade B** boundary is **65 marks**

Using the same principles for Paper 2, where the difference between notional Grade A and notional Grade E is 43 marks. $43 \div 4$ can be split into $40 \div 4 = 10$ with remainder 3.

This remainder of 3 marks is applied equally to each of the intervals between boundaries: A-B, B-C and C-D.

Therefore, the grade B boundary is 11 marks lower than the grade A boundary, ie the **Grade B** boundary is **74 marks**.

In this scenario, for grade B, the sum of the individual notional paper boundary marks (139) is not equal to the corresponding core exam grade boundary (140).

5.2.3. What about the A*?

The A* boundary for the Core Exam is set the same number of marks above the A boundary as there is between the A boundary and B boundary, or halfway between the A boundary mark and the maximum mark, whichever is lower². In this example both give a 20 mark interval. Where the halfway point between the A boundary mark is not a whole number, this is rounded down to the mark below.

The A* notional boundaries for the papers are set so that they are in the same relative position as the Core Exam grade A* boundary. Where the relative position is not a whole mark, the notional boundary is rounded down to the mark below.

In the example above, the A* grade boundary for the core exam (ie 180) is halfway between the A (ie 160) grade boundary and the max marks (ie 200). Therefore, Paper 1 A* notional boundary is calculated as 87 marks and paper 2 A* notional boundary is calculated as 92 marks, which are also halfway between the A notional grade boundary and max marks for each paper (rounded down).

Again, for the A* grade in this scenario, the sum of the individual notional paper boundary marks (179) is not equal to the corresponding core exam grade boundary (180).

² On occasions there may be technical and statistical evidence that suggests that the Core Exam A* boundary should be set at a different mark, in these instances the arithmetic calculation would not apply

Get in touch

The City & Guilds Quality team are here to answer any queries you may have regarding your T Level Technical Qualification delivery.

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Web chat available [here](#).

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