

The Joint Insolvency Examination - candidates' marks and the determination of results

Introduction

The Joint Insolvency Examination Board ("the Board") thinks that it would be helpful to remind all those interested in the examination how marks are awarded to candidates who sit a paper set by the Board and how the marks awarded are adjusted to arrive at candidates' final marks as promulgated on results day.

The purpose of each paper set by the Board is to provide the Board with the means of assessing a candidate's performance and determining whether a candidate has demonstrated a thorough working knowledge of relevant law and guidance sufficient to enable them to carry out the functions of an authorised insolvency practitioner. If the Board considers that a candidate sitting a paper has demonstrated that they have the required knowledge and abilities, they will pass that paper.

The Board does not set quotas or targets to predetermine how many candidates, or what percentage of a year's cohort, should pass a paper. Each candidate's individual performance is measured against the criterion set out in the previous paragraph.

The Board hopes that this reminder will assist not only candidates themselves but also their employers, the tutoring organisations and others.

How marks are awarded

All papers set by the Board comprise 4 compulsory questions for which there is a total of 100 marks available. Questions 1,2 and 3 in each paper are for 20 marks each and question 4 is for 40 marks. The examination team determines how many marks should be awarded to a candidate for their answer to each question and consequently how many marks out of 100 a candidate has earned.

In addition to determining a candidate's mark out of 100 for the paper, the examination team awards a holistic marks for each answer to each question, as set out in the regulations published by the Board. Between 0 and 5 holistic

marks are awarded for the answer to each question: accordingly, there are up to 20 holistic marks available to be awarded to every candidate on every paper.

The marks awarded out of 100 are added to the holistic marks awarded to arrive at a candidate's overall mark out of a maximum possible total mark of 120.

First adjustment to candidates' marks – scaling back to 100

Once the marks out of a 120 have been determined for all candidates, the first of two arithmetic adjustments is made to all candidates' marks.

All candidates' marks out of 120 are multiplied by a factor of 5/6ths to scale back the mark out of 120 to a mark out of 100, where necessary rounding up or down to the nearest whole number. A candidate's mark arrived at in this way is referred to as their "scaled mark". The actual pass mark for a paper is set by reference to the scaled marks achieved by all the candidates who sat that paper.

Second adjustment to candidates' marks – referencing marks to the published pass mark

The second arithmetic adjustment is to adjust all candidates' scaled marks to arrive at their final marks as published and communicated to them on results day.

The Board publishes all candidates' results by reference to a fixed published pass mark of 45. The published pass mark of 45 may be the same as the actual pass mark for a paper but when it is not (as is usually the case) an adjustment is made to reference all candidates' results for that paper to the published pass mark.

To illustrate the second adjustment, take the example of a paper where the actual pass mark has been set at 51. All candidates whose scaled marks are 51 or more will be awarded a pass. So that the results for the paper are published relative to the published pass mark, all candidates' scaled marks are reduced by 6 marks (the number of marks by which the actual pass mark of 51 exceeds the published pass mark of 45). A candidate whose scaled mark is 54 (3 marks above the actual pass mark and therefore a candidate who has passed the paper) will have a published mark of 48 (3 marks above

the published pass mark). A candidate whose scaled mark is 47 (4 marks below the actual pass mark and therefore a candidate who has failed the paper) will have a published mark of 41 (4 marks below the published pass mark).

The effects of the first and second adjustments on the pass/fail decision

The first and second adjustments are applied in exactly the same way to all candidates' marks and do not play any part in the decision as to whether a candidate passes or fails a paper. Their purposes are as described.

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