2013 SCALING INFORMATION SHEET

The purpose of this sheet is to help you understand some of the outcomes from the 2013 marks adjustment (scaling) process.

In 2013 there were 117 course stages examined, including 24 language courses using interstate syllabi. Three WACE courses: Aviation; German; and Marine and Maritime Studies were examined at stage 3 only.

The main steps in the marks adjustment process are:

- The School Curriculum & Standards Authority moderates and standardises school assessments and standardises exam results, then combines the school assessment and exam results to produce combined marks for each course unit pair studied.

  TISC and the School Curriculum & Standards Authority jointly
  - Scale stage 2 and stage 3 combined marks (preliminary scaling) to put them on to a common scale so increments can be added
  - Add increments, where appropriate, to stage 3 results (also to Mathematics 2C/2D, 3A/3B, 3C/3D and Mathematics: Specialist 3C/3D)
  - Combine stage 2 and 3 results within a course to produce a distribution of course results
  - Scale the courses
  - Adjust Standard Deviations (spread of marks) to the Standard Deviations from preliminary scaling to produce Final Scaled Scores


- Once the final scaling has been completed, the average of all scaled scores across all courses is 60.
- A comparison of average scaled scores from 2012 and 2013 courses shows the 2013 averages are similar to 2012.
- Within each course, stage 2 is less academically demanding than stage 3, hence the completion of courses at stage 3 provides a better preparation for university studies. Universities have encouraged students seeking university admission to undertake studies at stage 3 by providing a 15 mark increment added to final combined marks before scaling. In the case of Mathematics the increment is 10 marks between each of the four unit pairs.
- Within a course, the average of stage 2 and of stage 3 scaled scores is different. Approximately 13 marks of the difference between stage 2 and stage 3 scaled score averages is due to the increment of 15. The rest of the difference is attributable to the difference in ability of the students in each stage.
- ATAR
  12,253 school leavers achieved an ATAR in 2013 compared to 12,217 in 2012.
- Movement from Stage 2 to Stage 3

  Number of Courses with more students in stage 2 compared to stage 3
  2010 11 courses
  2011 4 courses
  2012 2 courses
  2013 2 courses (Children, Family and the Community; Food Science and Technology)
Percentage of students with an ATAR, using four scaled scores at stage 3
2010 55.4%
2011 64.2%
2012 69.9%
2013 71.5%

- Mathematics: Specialist
  
The difference in average scaled scores in Mathematics: Specialist 3A/3B and 3C/3D reflects the difference in ability between the students, as well as the increment. Even though it is designated a stage 3 unit pair, Mathematics: Specialist 3A/3B is the lower unit pair of Mathematics: Specialist, in the same way as Physics 2A/2B is the lower unit pair of Physics.

- Mathematics
  
Mathematics is scaled with an increment of 10 between each of the four unit pairs 2A/2B, 2C/2D, 3A/3B, 3C/3D, i.e., 0 for 2A/2B, 10 for 2C/2D, 20 for 3A/3B and 30 for 3C/3D.

In the case of Mathematics, which has a unique structure, the Scaling process has to deal with four unit pairs (2AB, 2CD, 3AB, 3CD), instead of two as for all other courses. Due to its large candidature, mathematics is the archetypal ‘average’ course. These facts together mean that the theoretical highest possible scaled score in Mathematics is constrained to be less than 100, regardless of the ability of the Mathematics candidates at the top end. An adjustment in Mathematics is made at the top end to ensure scaled scores of 100 are achieved; consistent with top scores achieved in Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics: Specialist.

- University competence in English requirement

Competence in English for university admission is normally achieved by a scaled score of 50 in an English course.

The following is the percentage of students achieving a scaled score of 50.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature Stage 3</td>
<td>91.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Stage 2</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Stage 3</td>
<td>80.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EALD Stage 2</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EALD Stage 3</td>
<td>81.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For a number of years the universities have also considered students’ standardised exam or standardised moderated school assessments in determining competence in English, for those students whose scaled score is less than 50. Currently the standardised mark required is at least 55 for Curtin, ECU and Murdoch and 60 for UWA. The standardisation parameters (mean 60, standard deviation 14) means at least 65% (50% for UWA) of English stage 2 students achieve university competence in English.

Overall, 96% of students who have applied for university have achieved university competence in English for at least one university. 82% have achieved competence in English for all four universities.

Students with an ATAR ≥ 55 and who have sat the examination in one of the three English courses (English, Literature, EALD), and have not achieved competence in English for all universities, are usually invited to sit the Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT) early in January to demonstrate their competence in English.

More facts on the marks adjustment process, 2013 scaled scores and ATAR distributions and courses used are at www.tisc.edu.au, under Publications, Reports and Statistics.