

IGCSE Edexcel IGCSE Mathematics A

Spec code: 4MA1 · Command Word Guide & Grade Boundary Tracker

Grade Thresholds

Session	Max	A*	A	B	C	D	E
Jun 2024 Higher (1H+2H)	240	163	135	107	84	61	38
Nov 2024 Higher (1H+2H)	240	163	136	110	88	67	46
Jun 2024 Foundation (1F+2F)	200	—	—	—	146	121	88
Jun 2024 Higher (Resit)	200	167	138	110	86	62	39

4MA1 Higher tier: Papers 1H + 2H (100 marks each, both calculator). 4MA1 Foundation: Papers 1F + 2F (C is highest available grade). Note: 4MA1 (Maths A) is a different specification from 4MB1 (Maths B) — confirm your specification code before using these boundaries. Source: Pearson Edexcel published grade boundaries. Always verify at [qualifications.pearson.com](https://www.pearson.com/qualifications).

Command Word Mastery

Mark schemes attach specific meaning to each command word below. Misreading one of these costs marks that working had already earned.

Command Word	What It Demands	Common Student Error	Workshop Fix
Show	Demonstrate the stated result is correct. All intermediate steps must be visible — marks are in the method, not the final line.	Jumping to the given answer in one step without showing the route. Even if correct, no intermediate working = no marks.	Students cover the given answer and prove it independently, then uncover to check. The route must be reconstructable from their working alone.
Hence	Use the previously established result. Reference to that result must be visible in the working.	Re-deriving from first principles instead of using the previous part. Misses the method link mark.	After completing each part, students write "Result: ..." before moving to the next. "Hence" questions must cite this explicitly.
Prove	Formal proof — work from one side only, or work both sides independently. The result cannot be assumed.	Cross-multiplying or rearranging as if the equation is already true. This is circular and earns zero.	Workshop introduces the two valid structures: LHS→RHS only, or LHS independently and RHS independently. Students categorise questions first.
Find	Calculate the required value, showing the method clearly. Both method and accuracy marks are available.	Stating the answer without a method line. With no working, a wrong answer leaves zero; a correct answer on a multi-mark question still loses method marks.	Students are required to write "Method:" before beginning any "Find" question. The method line is peer-reviewed before the answer is checked.
Write	State the answer, typically with no working required. The value should be directly readable from context.	Writing extensive working for a "write" answer, then contradicting the working with the final answer.	Students circle "Write" before reading on and apply the 45-second rule.

Solve	Find all values satisfying the equation or inequality. For quadratics, both roots must be stated. Check signs carefully.	Finding one root of a quadratic and stopping, or solving but not clearly stating both values.	Two-root checklist: after solving, students substitute both answers back. Peer reviewer checks substitution before marking complete.
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How EMI uses this: Edexcel 4MA1 differs critically from UK GCSE 1MA1: both papers allow calculators (no non-calculator paper), and the specification covers different content. EMI workshops address this distinction from session one. Students are coached on the specific question types where 4MA1 examiners report the greatest mark loss — particularly "Show" and "Prove" questions where working is non-negotiable regardless of whether the answer is given.