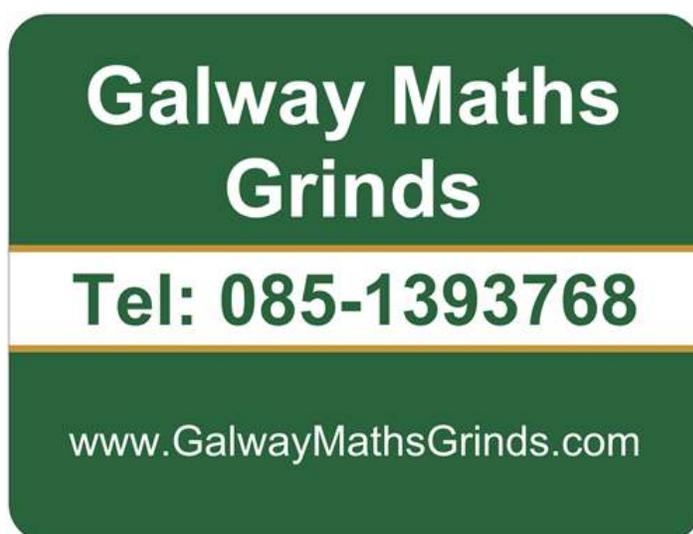


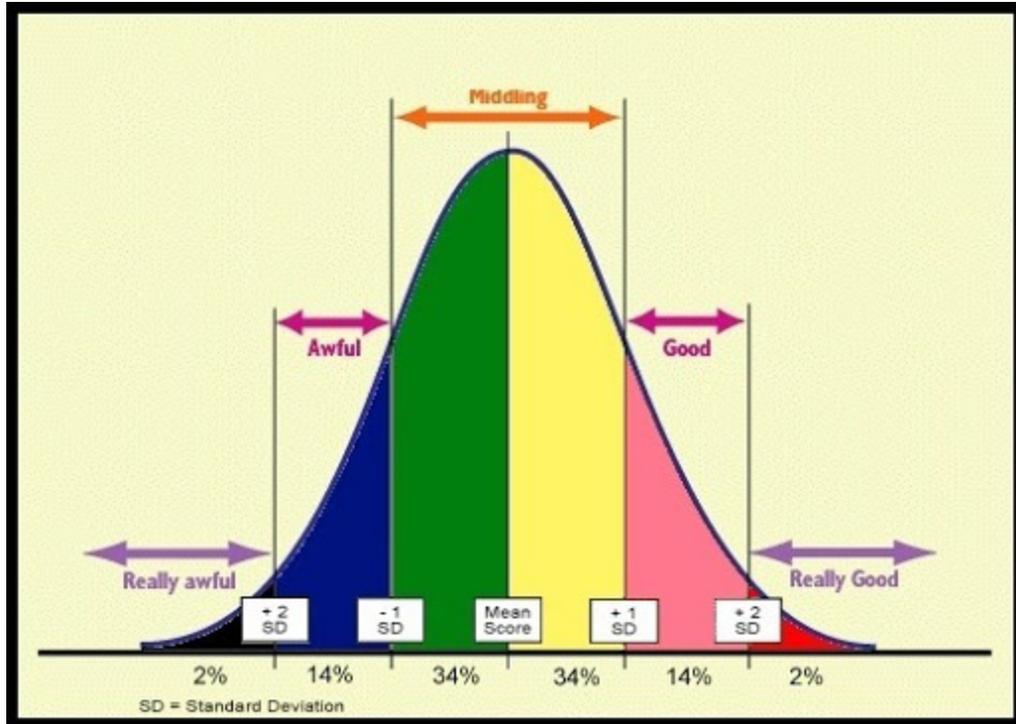
# Marking Schemes - An overview is all you need

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The following comments refer specifically to the junior cert and leaving cert maths exams. There are other exams where an in depth knowledge of the marking scheme can be very useful. Some students keep asking me about the marking schemes and how many marks they could expect based on an attempt they have made at a sample exam type question. I try to downplay the importance of knowing the finer details and instead persuade them that it is more important to understand how to approach the question to get as much of it correct as possible as opposed to trying to find ways of concentrating on the elements that produce the highest mark. They expend a lot of time and mental energy fretting about something over which they have no control, and indeed over which there is not even a definite correct answer.



You may or may not consider it fair, but the overall results will be much the same each year. You can expect the percentages of A's, B's, C's, etc to remain fairly constant from year to year, unless a policy decision is made to do otherwise. If the results should happen to come in with any great variance from the expected standard bell shape the correctors will be made remark them to conform with expectations before final results are issued.

Under Project Maths things are even more uncertain than with the older papers. Paper 2 is marked differently to paper 1. On paper 1 each full question carries a total of 50 marks, generally made up of parts (a), (b) and (c) worth 10, 20 and 30 marks respectively. This scheme is not always followed exactly, so marks can be varied a little between the subsections to allow for an easier or more difficult than normal part to a question.

The marking on the new paper 2 is more complex and less well defined in terms of how many marks will be awarded for each subsection of a question, and indeed on what material will be examined in a given numbered question.

If you really want to know the details you can look at the marking schemes for last year on [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie) but my advise is not to dwell on it. Below is a copy of the marking scheme for part of last year's higher leaving cert paper 2.

## Marking Scheme – Paper 2

### Structure of the marking scheme

Candidate responses are marked according to different scales, depending on the types of response anticipated. Scales labelled A divide candidate responses into two categories (correct and incorrect). Scales labelled B divide responses into three categories (correct, partially correct, and incorrect), and so on. The scales and the marks that they generate are summarised in this table:

Scale label	A	B	C	D	E
No of categories	2	3	4	5	6
5 mark scale		0, 3, 5	0, 3, 4, 5		
10 mark scale		0, 5, 10	0, 4, 8, 10		
15 mark scale					
20 mark scale			0, 7, 18, 20	0, 7, 10, 18, 20	
25 mark scale				0, 15, 20, 22, 25	0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25

A general descriptor of each point on each scale is given below. More specific directions in relation to interpreting the scales in the context of each question are given in the scheme, where necessary.

This does not offer any help in terms of how you should approach the exam. My advice is not to worry about these details. Take a more global approach. To get good marks attempt all parts of all questions you need to answer. Show your work. Even writing down the correct formula from the Tables and Formulae booklet can gain you attempt marks. Once you attempt a question you start with all the marks for that question. Then for each major mistake or blunder you are deducted 3 marks, and for very simple mistakes classed as slips you are deducted 1 mark. The important thing to note is that as long as you write down at least one correct step you get an attempt mark which can be worth 30 to 40% of that part of the question. If you write nothing the examiner can not award any marks.

Part of good preparation for exams and indeed any important project is choosing the right things on which to concentrate your efforts to get best overall results. Fretting about the finer details of the marking schemes for Project Maths is just a distraction. Instead concentrate on understanding the subject matter. And if there is something you do not understand ask for help.