

Basic Excel formulae for markbooks

All formulae in Excel are preceded by an '=' sign. Don't forget to open and close the brackets.

SUM – adds up the values in the cells specified

Type: =sum(and then click and hold to select a series of cells to sum, or click on individual cells whilst holding down the Ctrl key.

AVERAGE – calculates the mean average of the values in the cells specified

Type: =average(and then click and hold to select a series of cells to average, or click on individual cells whilst holding down the Ctrl key.

IF – examines a cell using a logic function (= [equal to], > [greater than], < [less than], >= [greater than or equal to], <= [less than or equal to]) and then returns a given value.

You can use this function to convert raw marks into NC levels or grades. For example, if a student needs to get 7/10 or more in a particular question for Level 4, or if there are a series of questions at different levels and you wish to make a list of the students' highest levels.

The following syntax is used: =if([logic test], [value if true], [value if false])

e.g.

=if(A4=7,"4","N") would return the value 4 in the cell the formula is typed in if cell A4 has a value of 7. If the value of A4 is different, an N will be returned instead.

The real power of the IF function lies in its ability to be combined:

e.g.

=if(A4=7,"A",if(A4=6,"B",if(A4=5,"C","U")))

This formula looks at A4 and if it's 7 it returns an A, if not then it looks to see if it's 6 and returns a B, if not then looks again and if it's 5 then returns a C, if it's not 6, then a is returned.

Practice with Excel markbooks

1. Open the practice spreadsheet.
2. Work out the total for each student.
3. Work out each student's average for each question.
4. Work out the average for each question.
5. Decide on some grade boundaries.
6. Use the IF function to enter the students' grades in another column.
7. Use conditional formatting to highlight outstanding and poor performances.
8. Insert some comments to give detail of what the questions consisted of and also to comment on individual performances.