Look at the following example:

	Paper 1	***Paper 2***	***Subject mark***
Weighting (*W*)	50%	50%	
Mean (μ)	40	50	
Standard deviation (SD) (σ)	15	10	
Candidate A	85	60	145
	(μ+3σ)	(μ+σ)	
Candidate B	55	80	135
	(μ+σ)	(μ+3σ)	

Candidate A's Paper 1 mark (85) is 3 S.D.s above the mean (40). So is Candidate B's performance in Paper 2. Similarly, Candidate A's Paper 2 performance is the same as that of Candidate B in Paper 1. Since both papers have equal weighting, logically their subject marks should be identical. However, direction addition of the paper marks gives 145 and 135 as the subject marks of Candidates A and B respectively. This is unfair to Candidate B. (Candidate A has an advantage under the direct-addition method because his strength lies in a paper with a greater spread of marks.)

As illustrated above, it is important to standardise the marks between different papers to ensure comparability of standards across papers within a subject when calculating the final subject mark from the paper marks, thus ensuring that the subject mark reflects fairly the performance of the candidates in different papers of the subject.