

Cambridge International AS & A Level

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

9239/04

Paper 4 Research Report

October/November 2025

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 85

Published

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the October/November 2025 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

This document consists of **17** printed pages.

PUBLISHED**Generic Marking Principles**

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptions for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

PUBLISHED**GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:**

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

PUBLISHED**Social Science-Specific Marking Principles
(for point-based marking)****1 Components using point-based marking:**

- Point marking is often used to reward knowledge, understanding and application of skills. We give credit where the candidate's answer shows relevant knowledge, understanding and application of skills in answering the question. We do not give credit where the answer shows confusion.

From this it follows that we:

- a** DO credit answers which are worded differently from the mark scheme if they clearly convey the same meaning (unless the mark scheme requires a specific term)
- b** DO credit alternative answers/examples which are not written in the mark scheme if they are correct
- c** DO credit answers where candidates give more than one correct answer in one prompt/numbered/scaffolded space where extended writing is required rather than list-type answers. For example, questions that require n reasons (e.g. State two reasons ...).
- d** DO NOT credit answers simply for using a 'key term' unless that is all that is required. (Check for evidence it is understood and not used wrongly.)
- e** DO NOT credit answers which are obviously self-contradicting or trying to cover all possibilities
- f** DO NOT give further credit for what is effectively repetition of a correct point already credited unless the language itself is being tested. This applies equally to 'mirror statements' (i.e. polluted/not polluted).
- g** DO NOT require spellings to be correct, unless this is part of the test. However spellings of syllabus terms must allow for clear and unambiguous separation from other syllabus terms with which they may be confused (e.g. Corrasion/Corrosion)

2 Presentation of mark scheme:

- Slashes (/) or the word 'or' separate alternative ways of making the same point.
- Semi colons (;) bullet points (•) or figures in brackets (1) separate different points.
- Content in the answer column in brackets is for examiner information/context to clarify the marking but is not required to earn the mark (except Accounting syllabuses where they indicate negative numbers).

PUBLISHED**3 Calculation questions:**

- The mark scheme will show the steps in the most likely correct method(s), the mark for each step, the correct answer(s) and the mark for each answer
- If working/explanation is considered essential for full credit, this will be indicated in the question paper and in the mark scheme. In all other instances, the correct answer to a calculation should be given full credit, even if no supporting working is shown.
- Where the candidate uses a valid method which is not covered by the mark scheme, award equivalent marks for reaching equivalent stages.
- Where an answer makes use of a candidate's own incorrect figure from previous working, the 'own figure rule' applies: full marks will be given if a correct and complete method is used. Further guidance will be included in the mark scheme where necessary and any exceptions to this general principle will be noted.

4 Annotation:

- For point marking, ticks can be used to indicate correct answers and crosses can be used to indicate wrong answers. There is no direct relationship between ticks and marks. Ticks have no defined meaning for levels of response marking.
- For levels of response marking, the level awarded should be annotated on the script.
- Other annotations will be used by examiners as agreed during standardisation, and the meaning will be understood by all examiners who marked that paper.

Annotations guidance for centres

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Research Log Annotations
SEEN	Log Entry Sampled
	Research Report Annotations
	AO1a Question and perspectives
TE	Developed Theme/Context
■ (highlight)	Identifies theme/context in the introduction
NAQ	Not Answering title question
SC	Synthesis/Corroboration
P	Partial awareness of the links between sources
CON —	Compares arguments
CON	Comparison of Perspectives

Annotation	Meaning
CON +	Analyses differences between perspectives
CON ++	Evaluates differences between perspectives
	Contrast Established
	AO1b Sources
	Source used to support argument/perspective
C	Source used to challenge argument/perspective
NGE	Source referenced but not enough engagement/Source used to support claim
A	Assertive Critical Evaluation
A	Partially Developed point of Critical Evaluation
DEV	Developed point of Critical Evaluation
	AO1c Concepts, research methods, judgements
KU -	Identifies concepts
KU	Engages with concepts
KU +	Evaluation of concepts
MR -	Identifies Methods/Methodology
MR	Assesses Research Methods
MR +	Identifies Methodology
MR ++	Justifies Methodology

Annotation	Meaning
J -	Judgement (partially supported)
J	Judgements (supported)
J +	Judgements (supported by evaluation of evidence)
	AO2 Reflection
IR -	Reflection on Influence of perspectives
IR	Reflection on Influence of perspectives
IR +	Developed Reflection on the relationship between the report and perspectives
IR + +	Evaluative Reflection on the relationship between the report and perspectives
RE -s	explains conclusion
RE	Identifies S&L of conclusion
RE +	Discussion of S&L of conclusion
RE + +	Discussion in detail S&L of conclusion
	AO3 Communication
	No annotations

Instructions for examiners

Marking of work should be positive, rewarding achievement where possible, but clearly differentiating across the whole range of marks, where appropriate.

The marker should look at the work and then make a judgement about which level statement is the most appropriate. In practice, work does not always match one level statement precisely so a judgement may need to be made between two or more level statements.

Once the most appropriate level statement has been identified, the marker should use the following guidance to decide on a specific mark:

- Where the candidate's work **convincingly** meets the level statement, you should award the highest mark.
- Where the candidate's work **adequately** meets the level statement, you should award the most appropriate mark in the middle of the range.
- Where the candidate's work **just** meets the level statement, you should award the lowest mark.

The total mark for this paper is 85. The marks are divided between the two parts of the task:

- 1 Research log (10 marks)
- 2 Research report (75 marks).

The marks are awarded as follows.

Assessment objective	Total marks for AO	Marks for Research log	Marks for Research report
AO1 Research, analysis and evaluation	55	5	50
AO2 Reflection	17	5	12
AO3 Communication	13	0	13

The levels of response marking grids are divided into assessment objectives. For the Research log, candidates are assessed on AO1 and AO2. For the Research report, candidates are assessed on AO1, AO2 and AO3.

The Research report should not exceed 5000 words. Work beyond 5000 words should not be marked. The word count excludes the title, bibliography, references and citations.

Research log (10 marks)

Examiners should award up to 10 marks for the research log; up to 5 marks for AO1, and up to 5 marks for AO2.

AO1 Use of research log	AO2 Reflection on research
Records information throughout the research process and plans actions consistently 5 marks	Evaluates the research findings and decisions 5 marks
Records information throughout the research process and plans actions at times 4 marks	Analyses the research findings and decisions 4 marks
Records information throughout the research process 3 marks	Makes developed comments about the research findings and decisions 3 marks
Records information relating to some parts of the research process 2 marks	Makes developed comments about the research findings 2 marks
Gives limited evidence of the research process 1 mark	Makes simple comments about the research findings 1 mark
No creditable response 0 marks	No creditable response 0 marks

Research report (75 marks)

Examiners should award up to 75 marks. Marks for each AO should be decided separately.

- AO1 – up to 50 marks
 - Question and perspectives – 20 marks
 - Sources – 10 marks
 - Concepts, research methods and judgements – 20 marks
- AO2 – up to 12 marks
- AO3 – up to 13 marks

AO1 Research, analysis and evaluation AO1a Question and perspectives

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides sustained analysis of the implications of the chosen question • Builds contrasting perspectives with sustained synthesis of sources • Evaluates differences between perspectives 	17–20
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyses some implications of the chosen question • Builds contrasting perspectives by synthesising sources • Analyses differences between perspectives 	13–16
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies some implications of the chosen question • Builds contrasting perspectives through the juxtaposition of individual sources • Compares perspectives 	9–12
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies a specific question • Builds contrasting arguments through the juxtaposition of individual sources • Compares arguments 	5–8
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies a generic topic of enquiry • Builds arguments that are lacking in contrast • Provides limited comparison of arguments 	1–4
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No creditable response 	0

AO1b Sources

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses sources consistently to support and challenge arguments and perspectives • Consistently evaluates how the sources support arguments and perspectives in the report using criteria which are relevant to them 	9–10
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses sources to support and challenge arguments and perspectives • Evaluates whether some of the sources support arguments and perspectives in the report using criteria which are relevant to them 	7–8
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses sources to support arguments and perspectives • Evaluates the appropriateness of sources against one or more criteria 	5–6
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses sources to support claims • Asserts the appropriateness of sources 	3–4
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies sources • Makes limited reference to the appropriateness of sources 	1–2
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No creditable response 	0

AO1c Concepts, research methods and judgements

Level	Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyses and evaluates relevant concepts • Argues for a methodology and uses this to justify the research methods used and applies those methods to evidence • Makes judgements which are consistently supported by an evaluation of the evidence presented 	17–20
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently analyses relevant concepts • Identifies a methodology and uses this to assess the strengths and/or weaknesses of the research methods used and applies those methods to evidence • Makes judgements which are consistently supported by the evidence presented 	13–16
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some analysis of relevant concepts • Assesses the strengths and/or weaknesses of the research methods used and applies those methods to evidence • Makes judgements which are mostly supported by the evidence presented 	9–12
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies relevant concepts • Identifies some research methods and applies them to evidence • Makes judgements which are partially supported by the evidence presented 	5–8
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies concepts which may not be relevant • Identifies some research methods • Asserts judgements which are unsupported 	1–4
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No creditable response 	0

AO2 Reflection

Examiners should award up to 12 marks for AO2.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides sustained evaluation of how the perspectives explored in the report have influenced its argument Discusses in detail the strengths and limitations of the conclusions reached in the report and their broader implications 	10–12
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets out in detail how the perspectives explored in the report have influenced its argument Discusses in detail the strengths and limitations of the conclusions reached in the report 	7–9
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes some connections between the perspectives explored in the report and how the perspectives have influenced its argument Identifies some of the strengths and limitations of the conclusions reached in the report 	4–6
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some explanation for the perspectives explored in the report Provides some explanation for the conclusions reached in the report 	1–3
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No creditable response 	0

AO3 Communication

Examiners should award up to 13 marks for AO3.

Level	Descriptors	Marks
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report's structure is consistently effective The report uses appropriate terminology and consistently makes it accessible to the reader Citation and referencing of sources are complete, consistent and in an appropriate format 	11–13
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report is mostly effectively structured The report uses appropriate terminology and mostly makes it accessible to the reader Citation and referencing of sources are mostly complete and consistent and in an appropriate format 	7–10
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report has some structure The report uses some appropriate terminology Citation and referencing of sources are mostly complete and consistent 	4–6
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report lacks clear structure The report uses some terminology Citation and referencing of sources is attempted but incomplete 	1–3
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No creditable response 	0

Glossary of key terms

Analyse	examine in detail to show meaning, identify elements and the relationship between them. Doing this involves identifying the constituent parts of an idea, argument or piece of evidence and showing how they relate to one another.
Argument	one or more reasons that lead to a conclusion. The reasons may be supported by evidence (facts or other data). Arguments may refer to arguments made by the candidate or arguments they locate in the sources they research.
Assert	make a statement which is not supported by reasons or argument. For example, a candidate may claim something to be true or claim to reach a conclusion, but not supply any reasons or evidence why that is the case.
Assess	weigh up the strengths and weaknesses or other aspects of something in order to make an informed judgement on it. This judgement will therefore be supported by reasons and/or evidence.
Concepts	in the report, concepts are the terms or ideas which are relevant to the subject area of the chosen topic. These usually have specialised meanings which are specific to that subject (e.g. sociology, economics).
Evaluate	judge or calculate the quality, importance, amount, or value of something. As with 'assess', evaluating usually involves identifying strengths and weaknesses and then using these to reach a judgement.
Explain	set out the reasons and/or evidence which show why something is the case. Unlike arguments, explanations do not claim that something should be the case but provide reasons for something which is already agreed to exist.
Identify	name, select or recognise something. Identification demonstrates that something has been named or noted, but the report has not yet moved on to analyse or evaluate it.
Judgements	conclusions reached by the candidate which may be supported by reasons/evidence. Having reasons and/or evidence means that the judgement is being argued for rather than asserted.
Justify	support a case with evidence/argument. In the report (for AO1c at Level 5) this is to make an argued case for the research methods used by the candidate.
Juxtaposition	support an argument or a perspective by placing sources together but without making explicit cross-references between them. Typically, a report might move from one source to the next with any similarities or differences between them only implied.
Methodology	the set of methods which are most suitable for use within a particular subject area. Candidates demonstrate understanding of their methodology when they are able to explain why the methods they have chosen are the most appropriate ones for the subject area of their report.

- Perspective** a coherent world view which is a response to an issue. A perspective is made up of argument, evidence, assumptions and may be influenced by a particular context.
- Sustained** in the report, when the analysis, synthesis or evaluation is maintained at a similar level of skill or detail throughout the candidate's argument.
- Synthesis** support an argument or a perspective by cross-referencing different sources to explicitly show the similarities or differences between the sources. Typically, a report might identify a specific argument or piece of evidence in more than one named source; or a report might identify a specific point on which two or more named sources disagree.