

Cambridge International AS Level

ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER**8021/13**

Paper 1 Essay

May/June 2025**MARK SCHEME**Maximum Mark: 30

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 May/June 2025 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

This document consists of **12** printed pages.

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.

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.












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
	Demonstrates an understanding of the question and is used to indicate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a focused introduction. each new valid point made in relation to the key words of the question.
	Further development of a valid point in the question or development of evaluation. [This may precede or follow a tick, according to the candidate's argumentative method.]
	Use of relevant example.
	Generalised and descriptive points.
	Assertion. Opinions stated without any credible evidence.
	Repetition of point.
	When the candidate has not answered the question, or a section of the response is not answering the question.
	Vague points and ideas.
	Evaluation is attempted.
	Examples of ambitious, sophisticated accurate expression, punctuation and grammatical structures.
	Serious errors that impede communication and for where register becomes informal or inappropriate.

Generic levels of response descriptions

These level definitions address Assessment Objectives (AOs) 1, 2 and 3, and should be used in conjunction with the indicative content for each question in the mark scheme. Information about AOs can be found in the Cambridge International AS Level English General Paper syllabus (8021) for examination in 2025, 2026 and 2027.

Introduction

The level definitions which follow reflect, and should be interpreted within the context of, the following general statement:

- (a) Examiners will give their highest marks to candidates who demonstrate a disciplined management of the discussion the question provokes and use clear and accurate communication. Examiners will be guided more by careful selection and application of information, effective analysis and evaluation, and supported judgement, than by weight of facts.
- (b) Examiners will use these level definitions in combination with the question-specific mark schemes.
- (c) Explanation or judgement is strengthened if informed by the use of relevant examples.
- (d) The level in which an essay is placed depends on the range of criteria detailed in AO1, AO2 and AO3. As a result, not all essays fall obviously into one particular level. In such cases a 'best-fit' approach will be adopted with any doubt erring on the side of generosity.

In marking an essay, examiners will first place it in a level and then fine-tune the mark in terms of how strongly/weakly the demands of the level have been demonstrated. The criteria in each level are written to exemplify the middle of that level.

Levels of response descriptions				
Level	AO1 Selection and application of information	AO2 Analysis and evaluation	AO3 Communication using written English	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects a range of fully relevant information that effectively exemplifies the main aspects of the response to the question. Applies a range of examples appropriately to support the main ideas and opinions in the response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyses possible meanings of the question and defines the scope of the response. Develops, analyses and evaluates a range of arguments to reach a supported conclusion. Develops a strong argument with clear use of supportive evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates clearly with consistently appropriate use of register. Uses a wide range of vocabulary and a variety of language features. Uses language with control and accuracy. Errors, if present, are only related to the use of sophisticated words and structures. Constructs a cohesive response which links ideas, arguments and paragraphs convincingly. Text is well organised. 	25–30
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects relevant information that exemplifies the main aspects of the response to the question. Applies examples appropriately to support the main ideas and opinions in the response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyses the meaning of the question to inform the scope of the response. Develops, analyses and begins to evaluate different arguments to reach a supported conclusion. Develops a well-reasoned argument with use of supportive evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates clearly with appropriate use of register. Uses a range of vocabulary and language features. Uses language with control and some accuracy. Errors relate to the use of less common words and structures. Constructs a clear response which links ideas, arguments and paragraphs. Text is generally well organised. 	19–24

Levels of response descriptions				
Level	AO1 Selection and application of information	AO2 Analysis and evaluation	AO3 Communication using written English	Marks
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects information that exemplifies some of the main aspects of the response to the question. Applies examples to support the main ideas and opinions in the response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates understanding of the meaning of the question in the response. Develops and brings together some arguments to form a conclusion. Constructs an argument which is logical and usually supported by evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates clearly overall but with inconsistent use of appropriate register. Uses everyday vocabulary and some varied language features. Uses language with some control. Errors are noticeable but do not impede communication. Constructs a mostly coherent response which links ideas, arguments and paragraphs. Text has some organisation but may not be sustained. 	13–18
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects limited information that exemplifies aspects of the response to the question. Applies examples that are linked to some of the ideas and opinions in the response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates partial understanding of the meaning of the question in the response. Refers to arguments to form a conclusion. Constructs an argument partially supported by evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates clearly in places, with inconsistent use of register. Uses basic vocabulary with limited language features. Uses language with limited control. Errors are frequent and sometimes impede communication. Constructs a fragmented response which links some ideas and/or arguments. 	7–12

Levels of response descriptions				
Level	AO1 Selection and application of information	AO2 Analysis and evaluation	AO3 Communication using written English	Marks
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects limited information that is relevant to the question. Makes examples which may not link to the ideas and opinions in the response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes a limited response to the question. Makes some form of basic conclusion. Constructs a weak argument. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates with lack of clarity and/or register is inappropriate. Uses basic vocabulary. Uses language with control rarely. Errors are frequent and communication is often lost. Constructs a response but the response is not organised and ideas are not linked. 	1–6
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A mark of zero should be awarded for no creditable content. 			0

Question	Answer	Marks
1	<p>Everyone must help their country in times of war. To what extent do you agree with this statement?</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss the need for everyone to contribute to a war effort and its practicalities • consider the opposition to this proposal and the dilemmas that arise • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allowing people to understand war and its consequences through being directly involved • developing and securing a sense of national unity in a time of crisis • ensuring access to the many areas of skill and expertise that will be required • a feeling of having contributed to the preservation of a way of life • refusal to participate resulting in rejection and isolation from society • disunity and pacifism being seen as a sign of weakness by aggressors • not everyone being able to contribute reducing the options for defence • removing people's right to object to war as a matter of conscience. 	30

Question	Answer	Marks
2	<p>To what extent should towns be designed to support people's needs?</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine the factors and considerations influencing town planning • consider the importance of people's needs in town planning • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proximity to local facilities and services being an important consideration for residents • public transport systems ensuring quick access to all areas of the urban centre • prioritising parking facilities and ease of access for motor vehicles • positioning of shopping centres, retail parks and other commercial outlets • the different special needs of people needing to be considered • urban spread being a limiting factor in ensuring all parts of a town or city are linked • environmental considerations being important and affecting priorities in urban planning • commuting and access for inhabitants from outside the urban area being a further consideration. 	30

Question	Answer	Marks
3	<p>Non-fiction books will never be as popular as fiction. To what extent do you agree with this statement?</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore the wide range of non-fiction and fiction books available • discuss the relative appeal and popularity of non-fiction and fiction books • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-fiction books often being viewed as factual and educational, rather than entertaining • subjects of non-fiction books which appeal only to a small number of interested people • works of non-fiction often being longer and less accessible, so unappealing in busy modern lives • the wide range of non-fiction books now available, including those written by or about celebrities and modern times • some works of literature becoming more or less popular over time as tastes and standards change • the popularity of fiction books of all genres, given an infinite range of themes and characters • television or film adaptations making the original fictional works more popular • social media's role in increasing awareness and generating excitement about the latest works of fiction. 	30

Question	Answer	Marks
4	<p>Evaluate the view that the aim of prison should be to improve people rather than punish them.</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss the value of imprisonment as a form of punishment • consider the different purposes of imprisonment for people • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the main reasons for imprisonment being for punishment and deterrence • enabling rehabilitated offenders to be of service or value to society • rehabilitation schemes having a positive impact on rates of reoffending in some areas of the world • moral arguments in favour of reforming rather than punishing individuals • rehabilitation enforcing certain social norms and values to the disadvantage of those that have been incarcerated • the severity of the punishment depending on the severity of the crime committed • the requirement that offenders repay their debt to society before being allowed the opportunity of rehabilitation • whether prison is a suitable environment for improving the lives of offenders. 	30

Question	Answer	Marks
5	<p>The rights of people to protest on the streets should always be protected. Examine this statement.</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore what ‘rights’ consist of • evaluate the extent to which protection should be provided to protestors • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • matters of conscience varying from person to person and region to region • protests inconveniencing or endangering people going about their daily business • there being different ways of drawing attention to perceived injustice • the risk that street protests are interfering with legitimate security concerns • confident nations or institutions having nothing to fear from dissent • freedom to protest provoking debate and spreading knowledge about issues • there being no alternative but to take to the streets in some contexts • protests which may empower marginalised or minority groups in societies. 	30

Question	Answer	Marks
6	<p>To what extent has globalisation improved people's lives in <u>your</u> country?</p> <p>Answers will be focused on one country with which the candidate identifies or to which they direct their answer. Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore what globalisation is • consider whether its impact on their country has been positive or negative • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opening of markets resulting in trading opportunities and reduction of bureaucracy • bringing countries together to encourage greater tolerance and a better mutual understanding • enabling their country to work with others to solve global problems • a greater choice of goods and services being made available to people in their country • opening up global markets resulting in concentrations of money and power • globalisation leading to a disempowerment of their country's government and people • global trade adversely affecting the environment and living standards in their country • globalisation leading to tensions and rivalries that may increase conflict. 	30

Question	Answer	Marks
7	<p>Government investment is essential for local community arts to survive. Discuss.</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine the areas where the government invests public money • discuss other ways that local community arts can survive • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spending money on the arts does not necessarily mean there will be more interest or participation generated • more businesses and private individuals investing in the arts reducing the need for government subsidy • encouraging people to take part in art events thereby developing a sense of local community • local community arts being a way of preserving cultural heritage and unique traditional skills • maintaining the arts in the local community can result in the creation of jobs and the promotion of tourism • arts investment having an impact on the education of young people by making them aware of their heritage • some local communities possessing a strong tradition for art and needing no external support • those communities where the arts are an important link with the past. 	30

Question	Answer	Marks
8	<p>To what extent does a plant-based diet ensure a healthy lifestyle?</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine the purpose and aims of a plant-based diet • consider the health implications of eating a plant-based diet • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eating vegetables containing essential vitamins and nutrients being part of a healthy lifestyle • avoidance of meat and dairy products reducing intake of calories and fats • consumers of vegetable-based foods being less susceptible to certain diseases • diet not being the only component of a healthy lifestyle meaning fitness and exercise are necessary also • plant-based diets risking a low intake of protein and certain important vitamins • monitoring of such diets being important to ensure a healthy balance • some plant-based foods being of more nutritional value and conducive to a healthy lifestyle than others • lack of commercial availability of certain plant-based foods limiting their potential impact. 	30

Question	Answer	Marks
9	<p>Actors playing leading roles in movies are too often chosen for their physical appearance. Discuss.</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore the different types of leading roles in movies • consider whether physical appearance is too often a deciding factor • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • movies, being commercial entertainment forms, aim to attract a large audience • seeing actors deemed attractive helping viewers like and relate to the leading characters • there being cultural expectations regarding desirable physical appearance, reflected in the most popular actors • historically, heroes and villains in movies often being stereotyped by physical appearance • changing views regarding which actors should play particular roles moving away from clichés • modern movie viewers expecting greater diversity in the actors they see on screen • the need for greater equality and representation of all groups in society • acting skill and empathy with the role and character being the more worthwhile considerations when casting. 	30

Question	Answer	Marks
10	<p>To what extent is the introduction of electric vehicles a positive development?</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine the environmental advantages of electric vehicles • explore reasons why their use may not be so promising in the future • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the zero emissions of these vehicles reducing our carbon footprint • low-cost maintenance being a significant economic factor for individuals and businesses • noise pollution being less prevalent in cities and rural areas • vehicle manufacturers and their employees having a guaranteed and stable future • not all electricity being resourced from renewable sources of energy • the exploitation of finite mineral deposits needed for electric vehicle manufacture • electric cars taking up as much space as their predecessors • other forms of transport and mobility offering a greener future. 	30