



Cambridge International AS Level

ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER

8021/12

Paper 1 Essay

October/November 2023

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 October/November 2023 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

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 descriptors 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.

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 2019, 2020 and 2021.

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.

Information about annotations

Annotations used in the marking of responses.

TV should be used to indicate vague points and ideas.



The caret is used to indicate generalised and descriptive points.

A tick indicates an understanding of the question, including:

- For a focused introduction.
- For each NEW VALID point made in relation to the key words of the question.



The downward arrow should be used for further development of a valid point in the question or development of evaluation.

EG this should be used when a relevant example is used.

SEEN should be stamped on all blank pages and, if there is one, the planning page.

AE Assertion. Opinions stated without any credible evidence.

REP should be used for repeated points.

EVAL should be used when evaluation is attempted.

NAQ should be used when the candidate has not answered the question, or a section of the response is not answering the question.

Use the horizontal wavy underlining tool  to indicate serious errors that impede communication in grammar and very basic errors in spelling and punctuation.

Use the **Green L**  for examples of ambitious, sophisticated accurate expression, punctuation and grammatical structures.

Levels of response descriptions				
Level	AO1 Selection and application of information	AO2 Analysis and evaluation	AO3 Communication using written English	Marks
5	- 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.	- 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.	- 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	- 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.	- 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.	- 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	- 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.	- 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.	- 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	- 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.	- 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.	- 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	- Selects limited information that is relevant to the question. - Makes examples which may not link to the ideas and opinions in the response.	- Makes a limited response to the question. - Makes some form of basic conclusion. - Constructs a weak argument.	- 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	A mark of zero should be awarded for no creditable content.			0

Question	Answer	Marks
1	All young people in <u>your</u> country should spend some time serving in the armed forces. Discuss. Answers will be focused on one country with which the candidate identifies or to which they direct their answers. Answers are likely to: • explore the desirability of young people spending some time in the armed forces • consider the drawbacks of compulsory military service • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. Answers might include discussions and examples such as: • providing opportunities for the development of personality and confidence as well as physical fitness • being a good place to train for the workplace through the acquisition of a range of skills • an opportunity for meeting and collaborating with young people from a variety of backgrounds and communities • rules and discipline being key elements and not everyone likes to conform • it not being necessary during times of freedom and peace • some people considering that patriotism and contributing to their country is not important • finding the confinement and lack of freedom of movement and expression being too stressful • the assumption that the service is always military whereas there are other ways to serve a country.	30

Question	Answer	Marks
2	To what extent do the personal characteristics of politicians influence how people vote? Answers are likely to: • explore the qualities and characteristics that politicians need • assess the extent to which personal characteristics and lifestyle have an impact on voters • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. Answers might include discussions and examples such as: • how some politicians have enjoyed success in fields outside of politics, enhancing their popularity and public image • the public being attracted by fashions and appearances as well as other lifestyle and family factors • serving the country in times of conflict promoting trust and confidence • being put off by scandals and smear campaigns about the private lives of politicians • how well the politician connects and relates to voters • family connections and history tarnishing what would otherwise be an unblemished reputation • bribery of voters or choices made based on familial pattern of voting • political ideology; policies; socio-economic climate and crises overriding personal characteristics	30

Question	Answer	Marks
3	It is important to limit how long someone works each day. Discuss. Answers are likely to: • consider the importance to the workforce of a proper work-life balance • explore the extent to which working hours should be limited for all and by whom • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. Answers might include discussions and examples such as: • everyone needing physical and mental rest and separation from their workplace • time for family, friends, sleep, leisure and exercise being important • working productively being more important than working for set periods or longer hours • workplaces where tired workers are risking their safety and that of others • it being impossible for some jobs to have prescribed working hours • the balance of work and rest time required for good physical and mental health varying between individuals • in times of crisis for a country or business, increased working hours being essential • some people wanting to work longer hours because they enjoy their job.	30

Question	Answer	Marks
4	A country's government should do everything possible to control the spread of infectious diseases. To what extent do you agree? Answers are likely to: • consider the extent to which it is important to control the spread of infectious diseases • discuss the possible measures which can be taken to improve things • make a judgement, based on consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. Answers might include discussions and examples such as: • governments having the responsibility for their citizens' welfare, health and lives • governments having ethical obligations; infectious diseases having dire consequences • every possible effort being made to research, produce and supply vaccines, to save as many lives as possible • co-ordinated, official and centralised responses, including international communication and co-operation • governments controlling how people are allowed to live their lives, resulting in the restriction of civil liberties • advance preparation is as important as crisis management to prevent health care services being overwhelmed • 'locking down' a country affecting everyone, financially and personally, with long-term economic implications and mental health risks • possible argument for utilitarianism; limiting the number of deaths without normal economic and social activity stopping completely.	30

Question	Answer	Marks
5	The protection of the underwater environment should be the world's most urgent environmental concern. Discuss. Answers are likely to: • examine the different aspects of the underwater world • consider the urgency of protecting the underwater environment compared with other environmental concerns • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. Answers might include discussions and examples such as: • the underwater environment providing for a variety of our essential needs • the extent to which pollution is affecting underwater life and ecosystems • what might be discovered that will add beauty and wonder to our lives • our duty of care to the species and organisms that live below water • other environmental concerns that might take precedence in different parts of the world • how placing limits on exploiting the underwater environment might threaten human progress • the need to respect the traditional ways of human interaction with underwater life • establishing sustainable relationships between human activities and underwater environments.	30

Question	Answer	Marks
6	Living a longer life is <u>not</u> always desirable. To what extent do you agree? Answers are likely to: • discuss issues raised by humans living longer • consider the extent to which these issues are problematic • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. Answers might include discussions and examples such as: • longer life equating to greater capacity for doing and achieving more • making humans resistant to illness and diseases in later life being a positive development • longer life, giving people a greater capacity for enjoyment and pleasure • the capacity for meeting and seeing generations of one's own family due to living longer • over-population as a consequence of living longer and the various problems caused by this • living longer meaning greater exposure to suffering and the problems of old age • the problems of alienation from society that old age can often bring • longer life putting greater pressure on a society's health care system.	30

Question	Answer	Marks
7	The problem of the global food shortage will never be solved. Discuss. Answers are likely to: • assess the reasons why there is a food shortage in different parts of the world • evaluate the extent to which the food crisis could be solved • make a judgement, based on a consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. Answers might include discussions and examples such as: • world farmers dealing with a food crisis for a variety of reasons • weather, extreme climate change and population growth being important factors • urban sprawl removing land that was once productive and fertile • crop failures being more common and consumption needs exceeding production • farmers not having sufficient resources to farm effectively and economically • people refusing to consider a more sustainable diet while others are forced to use food banks • support being needed for farmers through subsidies, credit initiatives and emergency aid • various local initiatives could prevent waste and promote healthier eating.	30

Question	Answer	Marks
8	People should have the freedom to wear whatever clothes they choose. Discuss. Answers are likely to: • explore the ways people choose to express themselves through clothing • examine the restrictions placed on people's choices in what they wear • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. Answers might include discussions and examples such as: • specific subcultures exhibiting their identity in what they choose to wear • the pressures on young people to conform to current trends in social contexts • environmental concerns playing a part in the purchases we make • circumstances where what is worn is dictated by particular situations beyond our control • choices being dependent upon different economic, social and family circumstances • clothing as an expression of and identification with cultural and religious backgrounds • how much people are influenced by role models or trend setters • how the quality of one's inner life matters more than what we wear.	30

Question	Answer	Marks
9	To what extent has society become too influenced by advertising? Answers are likely to: • identify the many areas of advertising • consider if society is swayed by advertising to a significant extent • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. Answers might include discussions and examples such as: • the prime area of advertising is for commercial products, but other kinds exist • the resulting rise of consumerism, fast fashion and unnecessary wastage of resources • the proliferation of advertising across a variety of media outlets • advertising of products or services that may lead to unhealthy lifestyles • the rise of targeted advertising increases vulnerability among certain groups • advertising itself must be effective as companies spend large budgets on it • too much influence by advertising can discourage individuality • the effectiveness of regulatory bodies in managing excesses of advertising.	30

Question	Answer	Marks
10	To what extent is it important to keep traditional arts alive in <u>your</u> country? Answers will be focused on one country with which the candidate identifies or to which they direct their answer. Answers are likely to: • identify examples of traditional arts in the chosen country and reasons for continuing with them • consider the relevance of ‘traditional’ arts in a more ‘modern’ world • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. Answers might include discussions and examples such as: • ‘traditional’ arts embody something of a nation’s identity and history • they grow out of the availability of locally available materials • bringing communities together at traditional art exhibitions and performances • providing opportunities to discover and showcase talent and craftsmanship • they can often be a source of tourist interest and local revenue • ‘progress’ cannot be held back by a nostalgic affection for traditional arts • the world is advancing technologically, which brings opportunities for areas that have been previously held back. • there are more important priorities for funding of the arts.	