

Cambridge International AS Level

ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER

8021/01

Component 1 Essay

For examination from 2028

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 40

Specimen

This document has **16** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Generic Marking Principles

All examiners must apply these general marking principles when marking candidate responses. Examiners must apply them alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptions for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme must 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 descriptions for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptions 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 descriptions.

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 descriptions in mind.

Guidance on using levels-based mark schemes

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 best fit. 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 a best-fit level statement has been identified, use the following guidance to decide on a specific mark:

- If the candidate's work **convincingly** meets the level statements, award the highest mark.
- If the candidate's work **adequately** meets the level statements, award the most appropriate mark in the middle of the range (where middle marks are available).
- If the candidate's work **just** meets the level statements, award the lowest mark.

Generic levels of response descriptions

These level definitions address Assessment objectives (AOs) 1 and 2, and Assessment objective 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).

AO1 and AO2 descriptors are in the first column of the marking grid. AO1 Selection and application of information and AO2 Analysis and evaluation are equally weighted in the marks for these levels. AO3 descriptors are in the second column of the marking grid.

Introduction

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

- (a) Examiners will give their highest marks to candidates who demonstrate a controlled management of the discussion the question prompts 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 the amount of information.
- (b) Examiners will use these level descriptors in combination with the question-specific mark schemes.
- (c) Explanation or judgement is reinforced if supported by the use of relevant examples.
- (d) The mark and level which an essay is awarded can be different for AO1 and AO2, and for AO3. The best-fit principle should be used to award a mark for each set of AOs.

The criteria in each level are written to represent the middle of that level.

Level	AO1: Selection and application of information and AO2: Analysis and evaluation	Marks	AO3: Communication using written English	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The question and its implications are fully understood and explored. There is a wide range of information and specific examples. Information and examples are fully relevant and effectively linked to the arguments. The arguments are fully focused and developed. The relative importance of arguments is examined. The response is analytical and evaluative, with different perspectives examined. The introduction is focused. The conclusion is effective and evaluative. 	17–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication is consistently clear and effectively controlled. The response is well-organised and cohesively structured. Logical connectors are consistently used to link ideas and paragraphs. There is a wide range of appropriate vocabulary and a variety of grammatical constructions. Language use is precise and errors are rare with occasional slips. The register is consistently appropriate. 	17–20
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The question and its terms are clearly understood and examined. There is a range of information and specific examples. Information and examples are mostly relevant and appropriately linked to the arguments. The arguments are well-reasoned, mostly focused and developed. The relative importance of arguments is recognised. The response is sometimes analytical and begins to evaluate. Different perspectives are considered. The introduction and conclusion are appropriate. 	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication is mostly clear and controlled. The response is organised and structured. Logical connectors are often used to link ideas and paragraphs. There is a range of appropriate vocabulary and grammatical constructions. Language use is accurate. Errors occur in less common words and structures. The register is mostly appropriate. 	13–16

Level	AO1: Selection and application of information and AO2: Analysis and evaluation	Marks	AO3: Communication using written English	Marks
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An adequate response to the question. The question and/or its terms are mostly understood and addressed. Some information and examples are included. Information and examples are usually relevant and often linked to the arguments. The arguments are usually focused and becoming developed. Arguments are usually logical. The response is descriptive or explanatory with different viewpoints. The introduction and/or conclusion are generally appropriate. 	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication is often clear and controlled. The response is generally organised and structured. Appropriate logical connectors are used to link ideas and paragraphs. There is a range of common vocabulary and grammatical constructions. Uses language with some accuracy. Errors are noticeable but do not impede communication. The register is generally appropriate with some slips. 	9–12
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A basic response to the question. The question and/or its terms are partially understood or addressed. There is a limited range of information and examples. Information and examples are partially relevant or not clearly linked to the arguments. The arguments lack focus or lack development. Arguments tend to be assertive. The response is generalised and vague. The scope is narrow. The introduction and/or conclusion are brief and may be inappropriately used. 	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication is clear in places with limited control. The response has some organisation. Appropriate logical connectors are sometimes used to link ideas and paragraphs. There is basic vocabulary and a limited range of grammatical constructions. Uses language with partial accuracy. Errors are frequent and sometimes impede communication. The register is sometimes appropriate. 	5–8
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A very limited response to the question. The question and/or its terms may be misunderstood. Very limited use of information and examples. Information and examples lack relevance to the question. The arguments are weak with very limited development. The response has limited relevance or has a very limited range of points. The response has no, or only a very limited introduction or conclusion. 	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication is mostly unclear and lacks control. The response lacks organisation. Logical connectors are rarely used to link ideas. There is limited vocabulary and use of basic grammatical constructions. Uses language with limited accuracy. Errors are frequent, basic and impede communication. The register is rarely appropriate. 	1–4
0	No creditable response.	0	No creditable response.	0

Question	Answer	Marks
1	<p>Schools should provide an inclusive learning environment for all students. To what extent do you agree with this opinion?</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore school practices that increase or limit inclusion • assess the practicality of implementing inclusive policies • 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 necessity for schools to educate all students without inequality • different learning styles requiring schools to be sensitive and aware • individual students having talents that need to be recognised and encouraged • a love of learning being clearly seen in children in all parts of the world • some schools not being able to effectively educate all students with vastly different skill levels • cultural beliefs and attitudes often dictating what is taught in schools • the learning environment needing to be extended beyond the school • financial constraints forcing schools to prioritise what is deemed essential. 	40

Question	Answer	Marks
2	<p>Sustainability is a critical issue for the fashion industry. Evaluate this statement.</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore what sustainability means for the fashion industry • assess the aims and practices of the fashion industry • 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"> • mass production of goods making fashion items more affordable for people • fashion and clothing being important in how we choose to express ourselves • the need for industries to be profitable being of primary concern • an absence of innovation reducing a brand's appeal in the marketplace • the accumulation of discarded items causing significant environmental damage across the world • opportunities being created for imaginative recycling of materials, creating an alternative market • the aspects of fashion that are not confined to what we wear • the impacts of fast fashion both locally and on a wider scale. 	40

Question	Answer	Marks
3	<p>To what extent does literature reveal what it is to be human?</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss the various qualities we have that make us human • assess the ways in which literature can reveal all aspects of our humanity • 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"> • writers showing us truths about humanity through the eyes of a character • literature reminding us of what we have in common, which develops an understanding of society • literature sometimes takes us into fantasy worlds that do not reflect reality and what it is to be human • literature increasing understanding of the whole range of human traits • it can be comforting to know you are not the only person feeling a particular way • stories being part of our history and literature can capture this • everything happening within our society can be learned from a piece of literature • literature gives us the vocabulary to reflect on and discuss human tragedies, desires and feelings. 	40

Question	Answer	Marks
4	<p>Good leaders are not afraid of making unpopular decisions. Discuss this statement.</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore the characteristics of good leadership • analyse the circumstances in which unpopular decisions are taken • 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"> • there being a difference between a good leader and an effective one • unpopular decisions not necessarily being the correct ones, regardless of good intentions • there being an expectation that a good leader experiences the consequences of a decision • circumstances in which being fearful and not being afraid can co-exist • the different ways leadership is being exercised in various political systems • the variety of contexts in which leadership exists for good or ill • commercial and economic pressures influencing decision making that affect people's lives • professional bodies or individuals having the power to ignore the wishes of others. 	40

Question	Answer	Marks
5	<p>To what extent is it necessary to monitor the content of social media?</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss the role of social media today • assess the extent to which social media should be monitored and by whom • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. <p>Answers might include discussion and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the accessibility and popularity of social media and its dangers • the use of social media by organisations to harvest data, advertise or promote a viewpoint • the manipulation of the truth and the spread of fake news • the case for parental, rather than governmental regulation, in the case of children • the use of social media for purposes such as terrorism or other illegal activities • social media being democracy in action and which should remain free from interference • people being able to choose what they read or express on social media • the extent to which authorities have the right to suppress or censor information on social media. 	40

Question	Answer	Marks
6	<p>With reference to <u>your</u> country, discuss the importance of preserving rural areas.</p> <p>Answers will be focused on one country with which the candidate identifies or to which they direct their answer.</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess the rural assets of the chosen country • evaluate how important preserving rural areas is to the chosen country • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. <p>Answers might include discussion and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a productive agricultural base being essential for a country's economic and social well-being • a country's tourism sector relying upon the variety of its rural experiences • cared for natural habitats providing living spaces for many creatures • the cultural artefacts and practices found in rural settings and traditions • preservation restricting the changes needed for the productive use of rural areas • population pressures requiring more land to be built upon in certain countries • the importance of having green spaces in large urban areas • there being priorities other than preservation in a rapidly changing world. 	40

Question	Answer	Marks
7	<p>People should help themselves before helping others. To what extent do you agree with this statement?</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore what individuals can do for themselves • assess how the needs of others can be met • 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"> • recognising how dependent we are on others at different periods in our lives • how being attentive to our own needs involves the participation of others • helpful ideas and inventions from the past still positively impacting on the lives of people today • the conditions of modern life making it essential that we respect the needs of others • self-reliance often being a desirable quality to develop in many cultures • promoting our own interests being an instinct of human beings • helping others first makes people feel positive and contributing to better personal well-being • economic and social pressures tempting people to overlook the needs of others. 	40

Question	Answer	Marks
8	<p>The impact of music on people's lives is always positive. Discuss this opinion.</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess the different ways music features in everyday life • examine how music has both positive and negative impacts on society • 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"> • music looking back in time and enabling the preservation of different memories and moments • helping to form social bonds with like-minded people who enjoy the same music • providing an indicator of contemporary culture, lifestyle, ideas, and opinions • music and lyrics improving mood, reducing stress, and acting as motivation • the content and sentiment of some music being distracting and triggering bad memories • some contemporary songs projecting a negative view of the world today • obsessive behaviour being generated through strong attachment to one style or genre • increasing aggression due to the way some music is performed. 	40

Question	Answer	Marks
9	<p>To what extent should people fear developments in artificial intelligence (AI)?</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss the definition of AI and explore how AI is currently used • evaluate how developments in AI might have negative as well as positive outcomes • 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 effect of AI on employment and its use in everyday work • the fear that AI may not always be controllable and become autonomous • instances where human creativity will no longer be needed or encouraged • doubts about machine reliability when asking questions relating to morality and ethics • AI devising solutions to increase our everyday safety and efficiency • the potential for AI to predict events with greater accuracy within shorter time spans • the capacity of AI for completing what the artist or composer has left unfinished • how AI might be leading us to value those jobs that require meaningful human interactions. 	40

Question	Answer	Marks
10	<p>Evaluate how successful <u>your</u> country has been in reducing pollution in its towns and cities.</p> <p>Answers will be focused on one country with which the candidate identifies or to which they direct their answer.</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine specific towns and cities in the chosen country • assess the effectiveness of pollution reduction • make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward. <p>Answers might include discussion and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • measures to be taken by local and national authorities to mitigate the effects of pollution • the extent to which individuals are taking responsibility for the environment • the extent to which new ‘green’ technologies are having an impact • opportunities being taken in schools to maintain the enthusiasm of the young to make an environmental difference • those economic necessities that are making pollution reduction difficult to achieve • levels of global pollution making country-level measures insignificant in their effect • political pressures within nations possibly limiting the implementation of environmentally desirable actions and outcomes • those aspects of transport infrastructure causing pollution for the foreseeable future. 	40

Glossary of terms used in the levels-based mark schemes**AO3: Communication using written English**

Errors and slips: **Errors** are systematic mistakes such as subject-verb agreement errors which are made consistently throughout the essay. **Slips** are mistakes that are non-systematic, i.e. the candidate has learned the vocabulary item or grammatical structure, but just happened to make a mistake in this instance.

Impede communication: This makes the meaning unclear or hard to understand. Some spelling errors may be noticeable but do not impede communication.

Logical connectors: This refers to linking words and phrases such as ‘moreover’, ‘also’, ‘as a result’, ‘furthermore’, which might appear at the beginning or within paragraphs.

Basic vocabulary: This refers to the simple words and phrases that are needed to communicate in English. Responses using basic vocabulary are likely to use it repetitively and lack variety.

Common vocabulary: This refers to words that are frequently used by English speakers in daily use. This goes beyond the basics of communication and allows for description and explanation. Responses using common vocabulary may still include some repetition but are likely to show some variety of expression.

Appropriate vocabulary: This refers to words that are relevant to the topic of discussion. Responses using appropriate vocabulary show that candidates can select words that demonstrate an understanding of shades of meaning, and allows the communication of some abstract ideas. Appropriate vocabulary does not necessarily include sophisticated, technical or idiomatic expressions.

Register: This is the voice of the candidate. The response shows consideration of the audience and purpose of the essay. The essay requires a formal register, including grammar and vocabulary used in formal writing and speech and avoiding informal language such as words used in casual conversation, contractions, slang and colloquial expressions.

AO1: Selection and application of information and AO2: analysis and evaluation

Terms of the question: This refers to the specific language and keywords used, which define the scope and focus of the question. Terms might include limits such as a time frame, geographical location (e.g. ‘in **your** country’ ‘in towns or rural areas’) or a specific element indicating a focus.

Implications of a question: This refers to the broader impact or significance. Candidates might have to identify assumptions the question is making or understand the potential impacts of the question for different groups of people.

Narrow scope: This refers to a response which focuses on a small part of a broader topic, and does not consider the major elements of the topic or question.

Assertive argument: This refers to a statement that lacks plausibility or convincing evidence.

Different viewpoints: This refers to two or more perspectives (for and/or against). Most topics will have an impact on more than one group of people (individuals versus governments/corporations, wealth or ethnic groups, etc.) or can be looked at from different perspectives such as ethical, historical, social or political perspectives.

Evaluation: This involves making judgements based on evidence and criteria to determine the quality, importance, success, impact, or worth of something.

Analytical response: This is a discussion that involves breaking down a subject or idea to examine different elements in detail.

Information: This refers to specific details that show an understanding of the point being made.

Examples: This refers to specific instances, events, places or people that clarify and support the point made.

