



# Cambridge International AS Level

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ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER

8021/12

Paper 1 Essay

May/June 2021

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 30

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**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 2021 series for most Cambridge IGCSE™, Cambridge International A and AS Level components and some Cambridge O Level components.

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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 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.

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

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

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

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Question	Answer	Marks
1	<p><b>To what extent do you agree that democracy is the most effective way of governing a society?</b></p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider what democracy is</li> <li>• explore to what extent democracy is the most effective form of government</li> <li>• make a judgement based on a consideration of the argument put forward.</li> </ul> <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• democracy can lead to a fairer and more equitable society</li> <li>• democracy often being linked with liberalism and the pursuit of an open society</li> <li>• democracy enables greater freedom of speech and participation in decision making</li> <li>• democracy acts as an important brake on excesses of power</li> <li>• differing forms of democracy with some being more effective than others</li> <li>• the will of the people is not truly reflected in any conventional democratic system</li> <li>• problems caused by democracy as people are given too much say when experts should make important decisions</li> <li>• democratic systems have not always led us away from corruption and abuses of power.</li> </ul>	30

**PUBLISHED**

Question	Answer	Marks
2	<p data-bbox="336 215 1435 247"><b>In sport, individual skill and talent are more important than teamwork. Discuss.</b></p> <p data-bbox="336 284 618 316">Answers are likely to:</p> <ul data-bbox="336 320 1664 424" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss examples of individuals in sport whose skills and talent make them stand out from the rest</li> <li>• explore to what extent teamwork is more important than the skill and talent of the individual</li> <li>• make a judgement, based on a consideration of the evidence and argument put forward.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="336 461 1099 493">Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul data-bbox="336 497 1686 778" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the individual brilliance of certain sportspeople who have achieved cult status</li> <li>• how individuals who exhibit brilliance can bring prosperity to the teams or clubs they play</li> <li>• those individuals who are positive role models and what they have done to achieve this status</li> <li>• those who bring a sense of pride to their nations and towns</li> <li>• team sports where a weak link can undermine the whole enterprise</li> <li>• the roles played by coaches, backroom staff, or even parents</li> <li>• the highly gifted have a responsibility to bring on the rest, particularly younger players</li> <li>• team success is harder to achieve than that of the individual, making it more special and celebrated.</li> </ul>	30

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<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Marks</b>
3	<p><b>To what extent is a person’s identity defined by the geography of where they live?</b></p> <p>Answers will be focused on one country with which the candidate identifies or to which they direct their answers. Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explore what might be meant by a person’s identity</li> <li>• consider whether an area’s geography could have an impact on someone’s identity</li> <li>• make a judgement, based on a consideration of the evidence and argument put forward.</li> </ul> <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how national character can be shaped by specific geographical features</li> <li>• how weather and climate can impact a person’s behaviour, clothing, appearance, lifestyle and habits</li> <li>• national pride and identity can be intrinsically linked to geography</li> <li>• people are increasingly seeing themselves as being citizens of the world or even of the digital world</li> <li>• the importance or otherwise of national languages when world languages are now transnational</li> <li>• geography may have less significance than religious identities, personal attitudes or character</li> <li>• the importance of the landscape in the many forms of artistic expression, sport and politics</li> <li>• how cities can limit our horizons in comparison to non-urban areas.</li> </ul>	30

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<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Marks</b>
4	<p><b>The use of data alone is not enough to ensure accurate decision-making. Discuss.</b></p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• explore ways in which data is used in decision making</li><li>• consider how only using data is insufficient in decision making</li><li>• make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward.</li></ul> <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• data helps to prepare for a range of situations and outcomes</li><li>• research data is vital to help improve a large number of processes</li><li>• how data can be very useful for a variety of everyday purposes</li><li>• clear, unambiguous data can be used to help educate and inform people</li><li>• data is always underpinned by some sort of theoretical assumption</li><li>• it is hard to use data to reliably predict or determine emotional reactions</li><li>• data sometimes being utilised to the disadvantage of humans</li><li>• acceptance of 'big data' will lead to loss of human control of the technology that should be serving us.</li></ul>	30

Question	Answer	Marks
5	<p><b>Examine whether there should be any limits to the advances of medical science.</b></p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• examine recent, and possible future, medical advances</li> <li>• explore if the control of such advances might not be possible</li> <li>• make a judgement, based on the consideration of the evidence and argument put forward.</li> </ul> <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it is simply impossible to control the advance of science</li> <li>• the ethical and moral danger, sometimes unpredictable, of distorting ‘natural’ life</li> <li>• the exciting unlimited possibilities of medical science and its benefits</li> <li>• near miraculous current medical advances will need clear and careful review</li> <li>• future possibilities of genetic research needing to be considered in the wider context of achieving ‘perfection’</li> <li>• the vast and unnecessary expense of medical research and development</li> <li>• possible medical access only to the wealthy, enhancing divisions in society</li> <li>• prolonging the physical but not the mental well-being of people.</li> </ul>	<b>30</b>

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Question	Answer	Marks
6	<p><b>To what extent should your country protect the environment when continuing to develop its transport system?</b></p> <p>Answers will be focused on one country with which the candidate identifies or to which they direct their answers.</p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider the importance and condition of the transport system in the chosen country</li> <li>• discuss the extent to which developments should prioritise environmental concerns, and what other priorities should be considered</li> <li>• make a judgement, based on consideration of the evidence and argument put forward.</li> </ul> <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the size and state of development of the chosen country in question, its transport system and likely priorities</li> <li>• the transport system may include road; rail; sea and air</li> <li>• some countries will be prioritising reach, efficiency and speed of transport between key locations over any environmental concerns</li> <li>• concern for the environment over development of infrastructure and commercial travel might be seen as an unaffordable luxury</li> <li>• the global environment has a vast range of climate concerns in many different places</li> <li>• the local environment includes land clearance, drainage for infrastructure, and air pollution</li> <li>• commercial and economic priorities may be seen as more important</li> <li>• developing remote areas, with transport improving access to healthcare, education, communication and media.</li> </ul>	30

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Question	Answer	Marks
7	<p><b>Among all the other threats to humanity’s survival, the destruction of the forests is the greatest. To what extent is this true?</b></p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• examine the reasons why the destruction of forests might be the ‘greatest threat’</li> <li>• consider why forests may be disappearing in many areas of the world</li> <li>• make a judgement, based on a consideration of the evidence and argument put forward.</li> </ul> <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• forests are one of the most diverse and important natural resources, with great social and economic value</li> <li>• without forests, the ecosystem will fall apart as they provide many benefits</li> <li>• forests are homes to diverse animal species and indigenous people</li> <li>• they are spiritual places, where people seek tranquillity and appreciate nature,</li> <li>• if deforestation continues it could mean irreparable damage to the ecosystem</li> <li>• how forests can be sustainably used to provide products and land</li> <li>• conservation schemes either on a local or an international scale</li> <li>• other ‘threats’ to humanity and how they compare to the destruction of forests.</li> </ul>	30

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Question	Answer	Marks
8	<p><b>Music that is popular today is heavily influenced by the past. Discuss.</b></p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider what they understand by music that is popular today</li> <li>• explore the influence of the past on music that is popular today</li> <li>• make a judgement based on a consideration of the argument put forward.</li> </ul> <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all musical forms today grew out of past music or non-musical influences</li> <li>• it is in the nature of popular music to seek out and re-use older musical forms and reconfigure them for a new generation</li> <li>• the impact of new technology that is used in the creation of music</li> <li>• older music continues to be popular and includes reissues and the reimagining of classics</li> <li>• the continued interest in ‘vintage’ music, performers, movements and fashion</li> <li>• originality in all forms of art has certain limits with the repackaging and recycling of what has gone before</li> <li>• the ‘cyclic’ nature of musical trends means that young people have always sought out older forms</li> <li>• how musicians and composers are influenced by their own past experiences.</li> </ul>	30

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<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Marks</b>
9	<p><b>In attempting to translate from one language into another, something will always be lost. How far do you agree?</b></p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider the potential difficulties of precision in translation between two languages</li> <li>• analyse the extent to which something is always lost when translating</li> <li>• make a judgement, based on a consideration of the evidence and argument put forward.</li> </ul> <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• translation usually refers to written or spoken language, either by human or computer translators</li> <li>• nothing is lost when translating basic vocabulary or common abstract concepts</li> <li>• literal translation is possible and largely desirable in official contexts</li> <li>• languages from similar groups or regions can be easier to translate</li> <li>• errors, inaccuracies and loss of nuance or precision are more likely in complex ideas</li> <li>• ideas and structural devices in literature are not easily translated</li> <li>• the importance of knowing the cultural context as concepts may be unknown to speakers of another language</li> <li>• limitations of computer software and human translators in accurate translation.</li> </ul>	30

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Question	Answer	Marks
10	<p><b>News that is free of censorship is the only way that people can find out the truth. Discuss.</b></p> <p>Answers are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explore the impact of censorship on the delivery of news</li> <li>• analyse whether censorship can impact on the truthfulness of news reporting</li> <li>• make a judgement, based on a consideration of the evidence and argument put forward.</li> </ul> <p>Answers might include discussions and examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• publishers or broadcasters not being controlled or restricted by government censorship in political and ideological matters</li> <li>• stories being told truthfully but with bias, omissions and exaggerations</li> <li>• limiting government power and its role in providing a counterbalance in democracies</li> <li>• the possibility of situations being manipulated that results in the dissemination of fake news</li> <li>• presenting stories that could be damaging or result in financial gain for organisations and individuals</li> <li>• a lack of control over sources leading the public to become confused or unaware of the more discerning viewpoints</li> <li>• a totally free press would allow the publication of material from unreliable and perhaps uneducated sources</li> <li>• the difficulties and desirability of censoring news on the internet.</li> </ul>	30