

Cambridge International AS Level

ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER		8021/2
Paper 2 Comprehension		February/March 2026
MARK SCHEME		
Maximum Mark: 50		
	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 February/March 2024 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

Cambridge International AS Level – Mark Scheme PUBLISHED

Generic Marking Principles

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

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

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

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

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

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

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

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

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

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.

Information about annotations

For creditworthy content, point-based marking makes use of tick1 and tick2 annotations, the first showing a single mark is to be awarded and the second, where appropriate, that a developed point has been made, worthy of two marks.

In levels-based marking, plain ticks and **DEV** will be the main annotations for valid content points.

Where required Bal shows where a (dis)advantage has been noted.

BOD (benefit of doubt) can be useful to show marginal decisions where the point is not totally convincing but where credit is given.

There are various reasons why content considered might not gain credit and the following annotations help us to distinguish these somewhat:

? the point is either unclear, illogical or unconvincing in some other way.



the point is incorrect, perhaps factually, or the wrong word or point has been offered.

NAQ "not answering the question"; perhaps the material relates to a later question, or simply comes from the wrong part of the material

NAR "narration", usually used in levels-based, longer responses; information is included but no real point is made, for example, it might not be clear whether the intended point is an advantage or a disadvantage

REP repetition of the same/an earlier point

TV "too vague" the response is not making the required point clearly or precisely enough

Sometimes the candidate has not followed the instructions fully and this needs to be shown by red highlighting over those words, phrases or sections which have not made sufficient use of own words to convey a point. Also used for highlighting lifted material on own words questions to block out words copied too closely from the text to make marking clearer. Finally, the red highlighter is used for indicating the position of the word count on those questions.

Question	Answer	Marks
1(a)	Considering the advantages and <u>one</u> disadvantage, explain why Francesca is <u>most</u> likely to choose the zoo trip. Do <u>not</u> refer to the other celebration ideas.	10
	Answer in continuous prose.	
	Credit any of the following or any other valid points.	
	It is almost certainly the <u>cheapest</u> option, so is least likely to cause stress and annoyance to get Katarina to contribute, putting least pressure on Francesca and James	
	and on Katarina if her financial woes are genuine.	
	It is the <u>easiest</u> to organise (with only four months to go), as it only involves them all arranging to visit on the same day / requires no advanced bookings beyond the immediate family.	
	Francesca knows of her father's interest in big cats, which the zoo's specialism would satisfy, and he would enjoy seeing the lions in the enclosure, and the tigers and snow leopards.	
	Katarina's 16-year-old daughter, the animal rights enthusiast, would probably not find fault, given the zoo's recognised welfare credentials and the fact that at least some of the animals are kept in large open spaces/not caged.	
	A minibus trip around the enclosure is likely to keep all the children interested/enable them all to participate, including the boy who is shy and has a hearing impairment.	
	There might be a number of baby animals (given the renowned breeding programme) which would probably appeal to the (younger) children.	
	For Francesca's parents, this day out gives them the <u>most</u> time with the grandchildren / the <u>best</u> opportunity to spoil the grandchildren, which is their priority.	
	However, the zoo trip may not appeal equally to all the grandchildren, since they are of different ages	
	and Katarina's children might misbehave in public / be too loud and scare the animals.	
	Katarina's 16-year-old daughter, the animal rights enthusiast, might object on principle to visiting the zoo.	
	The trip completely excludes the couple's only close and long-standing friends, since only the immediate family is involved	
	which might disappoint the Ackwoods / risk offending Jerzy and Susana.	

Question			Answer	Marks
1(a)	expressed		ver award marks for a coherent appraisal, clearly more relevant considerations, including balance, that all skills.	
	Level	Mark(s)	Descriptors	
	4	9–10	 Capacity to interpret evidence and sustained ability to present relevant arguments, analysis and exemplification maintaining a strong focus on the main issues in the question. Comprehensive approach demonstrating ability to identify and select relevant information, data, concepts and opinions and maintain a strong focus on the key issues. Shows the ability to communicate clearly and accurately in a fluent and organised manner. 	
	3	6–8	 Moderate range of arguments, analysis and exemplification covering some of the main issues in the question. Demonstrating some grasp of the nature of key issues but with a restricted range or a loss of focus leading to the inclusion of some irrelevant material. Shows the ability to communicate clearly and accurately in a fluent and organised manner. 	
	2	3–5	 Limited analysis shown in a response consisting of mainly undeveloped material. A modest range of selected points, perhaps some of which are irrelevant or incorrect. Ability to convey meaning but with limited powers of expression with some errors in spelling, punctuation or grammar which impede the flow and hinder communication. 	

Question			Answer	Marks
1(a)	Level	Mark(s)	Descriptors	
	1	1–2	 Some simple, mainly unexplained or undeveloped points or perhaps a very narrow range – with little interpretation or analysis and little development or exemplification. Limited range, dubious choice showing restricted appreciation of key issues. Ability to convey meaning but with limited powers of expression with some errors in spelling, punctuation or grammar which impede the flow and hinder communication. 	
	0	0	A mark of zero should be awarded for no creditable content.	
1(b)(i)	Weekend. Credit any Maria and experience The heate cold water The wood walking/cy They wou	Antony dore some luxud pool would (1) land (walking in the luxually eat a	why Antony and Maria might like the luxury hotel er to the other celebration ideas. following or any other valid points. It often treat themselves (1) so this is a rare chance to ary. (1) If appeal to Maria (1) as she likes swimming, but not in agournet meals on offer (1) in contrast to the plain(er) at home / because they like more adventurous food	4

Question	Answer	Marks
1(b)(ii)	Explain two reasons why Antony and Maria might not like the surprise party. Do not refer to the other celebration ideas.	4
	Credit any of the following or any other valid points.	
	A large number of / around 120 people would be invited (beyond immediate family and close friends) (1) but Antony and Maria prefer quiet times together / don't have a very active social life / enjoy holidays just with close friends / time with their grandchildren / may not wish to be the centre of so much attention. (1)	
	They may feel <u>Francesca</u> would have to work too hard on all the preparations (1) as she would be organising the food, entertainment, invitations and speeches. (1)	
	There is another big family occasion (wedding) coming up (1) and they may be concerned that theirs will steal the thunder of / be overshadowed by the other one. (1)	
	They may be worried that the argument between Mr Ackwood's cousins (at another family event last year) (1) could reoccur on this occasion/ spoil the event if it reoccurred. (1)	
	2 × 2	
1(c)	State the <u>one</u> piece of the Additional Information provided which is the <u>least</u> relevant when Francesca is deciding which celebration to organise.	1
	Point 6. / Antony used to be a train driver – a job he loved – while Maria worked in a supermarket, once all her children had reached school age.	
1(d)(i)	Using <u>only</u> evidence from Katarina's email, justify James' claim that Katarina likes to tell other people what to do.	2
	She instructs Francesca to organise a big cake and floral decorations. (1)	
	She <u>demands</u> (via Francesca) <u>James</u> finds out what flowers their parents had at their wedding (1)	
	rather than trying to find this out / reach out to James herself. (1)	
	2 × 1 or 1 × 2	

Question	Answer	Marks
1(d)(ii)	Using <u>only</u> evidence from Katarina's email, justify James' claim that Katarina is not telling the truth when saying she cannot contribute financially.	2
	Credit any two of the following.	
	The house improvements do not sound like essential repairs (1)	
	so could have been delayed if Katarina really wanted to help pay for the celebrations. (1)	
	Katarina seems very excited about her three children dressing up / all of them being there dressed up in their finest (1)	
	and the prospect of / having an excuse for getting her hair done, buying a new dress and new shoes for the party (1)	
	which will all cost (a lot of) money / she seems able to afford / while pleading poverty / claiming that funds are 'a bit limited'. (1)	
	2x1 or 1x2	
1(d)(iii)	Using <u>only</u> evidence from Katarina's email, justify James' claim that Katarina will not help with the organisation.	2
	Credit any two of the following.	
	She seems to be/want to stress being busy all the time (1),	
	even taking three weeks to respond to the email from Francesca (about something quite important). (1)	
	She will not be flying home until the Friday evening that weekend. (1)	
	She flatters her older sister/praises Francesca's organisational skills (1)	
	to detract from her intention not to assist. (1)	
	She refers to Francesca's contacts, (1)	
	making it sound as if it will be easy for her sister to do it all (instead). (1)	
	2 × 1 or 1 × 2	

Question	Answer	Marks
2(a)	Identify how American prisons have been portrayed in some films and on TV.	2
	Credit any two of the following.	
	They are <u>harsh</u> , <u>dehumanising</u> places (1) populated by <u>hardened criminals</u> and <u>vicious guards</u> . (1)	
	It's not an easy option / it's a glorified TV version of what a prison is really like.	
2(b)	Identify Brian Roettinger's goal in running art classes for prisoners in California.	1
	He sees it as an opportunity to <u>humanise the prisoners</u> / to help make <u>the experience less frightening / intimidating</u> . (1)	
2(c)(i)	Using <u>only</u> lines 1 to 18 of the material, identify the exact <u>word</u> which means: to redefine.	1
	(to) demystify	
2(c)(ii)	Using <u>only</u> lines 1 to 18 of the material, identify the <u>exact</u> word which means: partnership.	1
	(a) collaboration	
2(c)(iii)	Using <u>only</u> lines 1 to 18 of the material, identify the <u>exact</u> word which means: reflective self-awareness.	1
	mindfulness	

Question	Answer	Marks
2(d)	Explain why Willo Perron believes 'in the transformative power of art and the redemptive potential of self-expression' for prisoners (lines 25 to 31).	5
	Answer <u>using your own words</u> as far as possible.	
	Credit any five of the following.	
	The arts are a method of directing (1)	
	and managing feelings (1)	
	such as sorrow, rage and delight (1)	
	(and he believes) individuals finding themselves (1)	
	in such challenging circumstances (1)	
	simply lashed out (1)	
	or had no way of expressing themselves. (1)	
	Everyone requires various means of emotional release, (1)	
	whether through therapy or (verbal) communication with others. (1)	
	Art therapy offers prisoners an alternative strategy (1)	
	to resorting to aggression. (1)	

Question	Answer	Marks
2(e)	According to Perron, explain how the duo's proposed arts programme demonstrates their views relating to prison reform (lines 32 to 44).	5
	Answer in about 50 words. Credit any five of the following.	
	As <u>artists/designers</u> (not politicians) they can <u>use their skills</u> to <u>help / improve</u> things. (1)	
	They are personally involved / in direct contact with prisoners. (1)	
	They feel <u>responsibility</u> for / want to change <u>what happens in prisons</u> . (1)	
	Society / the government currently locks offenders up and isolates / forgets them, (1)	
	treating prisoners as <u>disposable / rubbish</u> . (1)	
	That approach really <u>does not work</u> and <u>needs rethinking / a more realistic</u> <u>perspective</u> . (1)	
	Criminality is a whole-society problem / needs everyone's help to solve. (1)	
	While simple / obvious, locking people up is outdated (and barbaric). (1)	
	Any content above 50 words will not be credited.	
2(f)	According to Annie Buckley, identify the 'overwhelmingly positive' features of the guest artist programme for prisoners (lines 45 to 55).	3
	Answer in about 30 words.	
	Credit any three of the following.	
	The arts represent a safe space, offering respite / relaxation (1)	
	which can be <u>assumed outside</u> but is <u>rare / valued / effective in prison</u> . (1)	
	The prisoners <u>connect / interact</u> with people/students/teachers they would <u>never usually meet</u> . (1)	
	Such <u>communication about arts / in arts lessons / with artists</u> becomes <u>meaningful</u> . (1)	
	They can develop a sense of identity around creative pursuits / study. (1)	
	Any content above 30 words will not be credited.	

Question	Answer	Marks
2(g)	Suggest why Buckley might find the example of the prisoner's daughter 'powerful'.	2
	Credit any two of the following, or any other valid point.	
	(She likes the idea of) the girl being able to describe her father as 'an artist' when talking to her friends. (1)	
	(She imagines) the daughter's <u>pride</u> in (talking of) her father now. (1)	
	Previously, the girl might have been <u>ashamed</u> to say her father was in prison. (1)	
2(h)	Explain why the organisers of the arts programme do not ask prisoners 'why they're there or what they've done' (lines 59 to 64).	2
	Answer in about 20 words.	
	Credit any two of the following.	
	The programme is concerned with <u>changing the sense of self</u> (1) <u>rather than</u> <u>identifying</u> people by their <u>most wicked</u> <u>past actions</u> . (1)	
	Participants work with others in a welcoming atmosphere (1)	
	feeling like / what it is to be artists, pupils / learners and colleagues / fellows.	
	Any content above 20 words will not be credited.	
2(i)	In your opinion, explain why art therapy for prisoners might <u>not</u> be successful.	2
	Credit any two of the following or any other valid point.	
	Prisoners may be unreceptive / intimidated by others (1) as arts may not be seen as something 'tough' people do. (1)	
	The inmates may have no prior knowledge of the arts, (1) limiting their potential to engage with the ideas. (1)	
	Prisoners may see no point in indulging in the arts / be unreceptive to the whole idea / think it is a waste of time, (1) perhaps preferring to learn more practical skills / something which they will be able to use after their release. (1)	
	They may be unused to concentrating on tasks (1) and give up quickly if they are not making progress / find it difficult. (1)	
	Other forms of therapy may be more effective, (1) such as counselling or anger management. (1) 2×1 or 1×2	