UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
GCE Ordinary Level

MARK SCHEME for the October/November 2010 question paper

for the guidance of teachers

1123 ENGLISH LANGUAGE
1123/12   Paper 1 (Composition), maximum raw mark 60

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 must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the report on the examination.

* CIE will not enter into discussions or correspondence in connection with these mark schemes.

CIE is publishing the mark schemes for the October/November 2010 question papers for most IGCSE, GCE Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary Level syllabuses and some Ordinary Level syllabuses.

MARKING PART ONE

Assessment Objectives

To test the candidate's ability to:

1   produce a piece of continuous prose in accurate Standard English.

2   respond relevantly to a task chosen from a number of alternatives.

Particular emphasis is placed upon the candidate's ability to:

• write sentences of various lengths and types, using a variety of sentence structures as an aid to meaning;
• use a wide vocabulary and suitable range of idiom with precision;
• punctuate accurately and helpfully;
• write in paragraphs which demonstrate internal unity and are appropriately linked;
• spell accurately over the full range of vocabulary used;
• respond with relevance and precision to the chosen topic;
• engage and sustain the interest of the reader.

The above objectives are assessed by impression, using as guides the grade descriptions in this Mark Scheme, the photostats and the exemplar marked scripts attached to this Mark Scheme, showing performance across the expected range of achievement.

Marking Method

The whole of each composition should be read slowly and carefully, indicating all errors by underlining the word or phrase where the mistake occurs and placing ticks in the body of the script to indicate good use of language or subject matter.

When the script has been read, it should be assigned to one of the levels of performance described below. No script will fit exactly into one of the descriptions but examiners must judge which grade most nearly 'fits' the characteristics of the script.

Where all, or nearly all, of the criteria of a particular grade have been met, the script should be placed towards the top of the mark range available for that grade. A script that fits the description but is less complete in its coverage of the criteria should be placed towards the bottom of the available range.

N.B.   When assessing pieces of continuous writing, it is important to remember that the candidate is working within a strict time limit and may, therefore, make occasional 'first draft' errors which may not be typical of the candidate's best work.

Grade Descriptions for the Assessment of Continuous Writing

A1/A2 (40–36) Apart from **very occasional slips**, the language is **highly accurate**. **Sent** **structure is varied** and demonstrates the candidate's skill to use different lengths and types sentences for particular effects. **Verb forms** will be **largely correct** and **appropriate tenses consistently used** to sustain a logical progression of events or ideas. **Vocabulary is wide and precise**. **Punctuation is accurate** and helpful to the reader. Apart from very occasional slips, **spelling is accurate** across the full range of vocabulary used. **Paragraphs have unity**, are linked, and show evidence of planning. The topic is addressed with **consistent relevance**; the **interest** of the reader is **aroused and sustained**. **The tone and register are entirely appropriate to the topic**.

B3/B4 (35–31) The language is **accurate**; **occasional errors** are either slips or arise from attempts to use ambitious structures or vocabulary that may be imperfectly understood. **Vocabulary is wide enough** to convey intended shades of meaning with some precision. **Sentences show some variation** of length and type, including the confident use of complex sentences to create **some natural fluency**. There may be occasional **slips** in **verb forms or tense formation** but **sequence will be consistent** and **clear** throughout the piece. **Punctuation is accurate** and generally helpful. **Spelling is nearly always accurate**. **Paragraphs show some evidence of planning**, have unity and are usually appropriately linked. The **response is relevant**, and the **interest** of the reader **is aroused and sustained** through most of the composition. There is evidence of a **genuine effort to achieve an appropriate tone and register for the topic**.

C5/C6 (30–26) The language **is mostly accurate**; errors that occur will not mar clarity of communication. **Vocabulary and structures are mainly correct** when they are simple; mistakes may occur when more sophistication is attempted. **Sentences may show some variety** of structure and length, although there may be a tendency to repeat sentence types and 'shapes', producing a monotonous effect. There may be **errors in irregular verb forms** but **control of tense sequence** will be sufficient to **sustain a clear progression** of events or ideas. **Spelling of simple vocabulary is accurate**; errors may occur when more ambitious vocabulary is used. **Punctuation is generally accurate**, although errors may occur when more difficult tasks are attempted e.g. the punctuation of direct speech. **Sentence separation is correctly marked by punctuation**. The composition is written in **paragraphs which may show some unity**, although links may be absent or inappropriate. **The composition is relevant** and will **arouse some interest** in the reader. There may be an impression of lack of originality and/or some evidence of lack of planning. The **tone is usually appropriate** to the topic, although there may be **slips of register** with some unsuitable vocabulary or idiom.

D7 (25–21) The language is **sufficiently accurate to communicate meaning**. There will be **patches of clear, accurate language**, particularly when simple vocabulary and structures are used. There may be **some variety of sentence length and structure** but the reader may not be convinced that this variety is for a particular purpose. There may be **errors in verb forms and tense consistency** which cause some **uncertainty in the sequence of events** or **disturb the ease of communication**. **Vocabulary is usually adequate to convey intended meaning**, although it may be insufficiently developed to achieve precision. **Idiom may be uncertain** at times. **Punctuation will be used** but may not enhance/clarify meaning. **Some sentence separation errors may occur occasionally**. **Simple words will be spelt accurately**, but more complex vocabulary may show some spelling weaknesses. **Paragraphs will be used** but may lack unity or coherence. **A genuine attempt has been made to address the topic** but there may be digressions or failures of logic. Compositions may lack liveliness and interest value. The **tone may be uneven**. There may be **some irrelevance**.

E8 (20–16) The overall meaning is never in doubt but the **errors are sufficiently freq** **serious to hamper precision** and may slow down speed of reading. **Some simple structu** be accurate** but the script is **unlikely to sustain accuracy for long**. **Errors in verb forms** **tenses** will sometimes **confuse the sequence of events**. **Vocabulary may be limited**, either t simple to convey precise meaning or more ambitious but imperfectly understood. **Some idiomatic errors are likely**. **Simple punctuation will usually be accurate** but **there may be frequent sentence separation errors**. **Simple words will usually be spelt correctly** but there may be inconsistency and frequent mistakes in the spelling of more difficult words. **Paragraphs may lack unity** or be used haphazardly. The subject matter will show **some relevance**. The **tone** may sometimes indicate that the candidate recognises the nature of the topic but only **inconsistently**. **The incidence of linguistic** error is likely to **distract the reader** from merits of content.

U9(i) (15–11) There will be **many serious errors of various kinds** throughout the script but **they will be of the 'single-word' type** i.e. they could be corrected without re-writing the sentence. **Frequent errors in verb forms** and **haphazard changes of tense** will **confuse the meaning**. **Communication is established**, although the weight of **error may cause 'blurring'** from time to time. **Sentences will probably be simple and repetitive** in structure. **Vocabulary will convey meaning but is likely to be simple and imprecise**. **Errors in idiomatic usage will be a significant feature**. **Spelling may be inconsistent**. **Paragraphing may be haphazard** or non-existent. There may be evidence of interesting and relevant subject matter and **some recognition of appropriate tone for the genre** but the weight of linguistic error will tend to obscure or neutralise its effect.

U9(ii) (10–6) Sense will usually be decipherable but **some of the error will be multiple** i.e. requiring the reader to re-read and re-organise before meaning becomes clear. There are **unlikely to be more than a few accurate sentences**, however simple, in the whole composition. The content is likely to be comprehensible but may be partly hidden by the density of the linguistic error.

U9(iii) (5–0) Scripts are almost entirely or entirely impossible to recognise as pieces of English writing. Whole sections will make no sense at all. Where occasional patches of relative clarity are evident some marks will be given. The mark of 0 is reserved for scripts that make no sense at all from beginning to end.

MARKING PART TWO

Assessment Objectives

To test the candidate's ability to:

1   write an account which communicates information clearly, accurately and economically;

2   carry out the instructions as detailed on the question paper regarding the particular information required;

3   write in accurate standard English, using a style and tone appropriate to the task.

Detailed Marking Instructions

In Part 2, the candidate is to be rewarded as follows:

**(a) Content** – 5 marks;   **(b) Language** – 15 marks.

(a) Content

There are five specific pieces of information required in the account. The 5 Content marks will be awarded on the basis of one mark per piece of information, given that the information is reasonable. It is obviously impossible to attempt to predict what candidates might say. Examiners must use their judgement and be prepared to be lenient when in doubt. Only reject information when it is illogical, irrelevant, or if it demonstrates that the candidate has not understood the situation or the task at all. Candidates should cover all five points given on the question paper but not necessarily with equal emphasis.

(b) Language/Style

The qualities to be rewarded are **Accurate Standard English** and **Style and Tone** appropriate to the task. The answer should be assessed by general impression, taking into consideration the variety of fresh vocabulary supplied, structural range and merits of linking and arrangement. Please be prepared to give credit to those candidates who can adapt their style to suit the needs of this particular writing task.

To arrive at the Language/Style mark for Part 2, use the grade descriptions set out previously in this Mark Scheme. The marks corresponding to grades for Part 2 are:

Grade	**Mark**	**Short Scripts**
A1/A2	15/14	8
B3/B4	13/12	7
C5/C6	11/10	6
D7	9/8	5
E8	7/6	4
U9 (i)	5/4	3
U9 (ii)	3/2	2
U9 (iii)	1/0	1
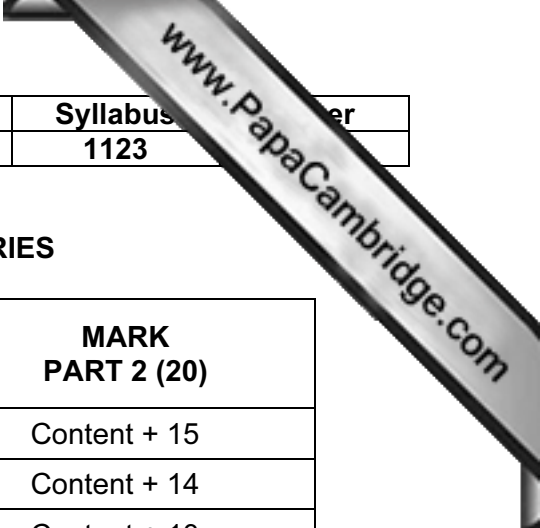
COMPLETE TABLE OF MARK CATEGORIES

GRADE	MARK PART 1 (40)	MARK PART 2 (20)
A1	40–39	Content + 15
A2	38–36	Content + 14
B3	35–33	Content + 13
B4	32–31	Content + 12
C5	30–28	Content + 11
C6	27–26	Content + 10
D7	25–21	Content + 9/8
E8	20–16	Content + 7/6
U9 (i)	15–11	Content + 5/4
U9 (ii)	10–6	Content + 3/2
U9 (iii)	5–0	Content + 1/0