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CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International A Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE **9093/31**

Paper 3 Language Analysis **October/November 2025**

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 October/November 2025 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

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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.

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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.

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English & Media subject specific general marking principles
(To be read in conjunction with the Generic Marking Principles (and requiring further guidance on how to place marks within levels))

Components using level descriptors:

- We use level descriptors as a guide to broad understanding of the qualities normally expected of, or typical of, work in a level.
- Level descriptors are a means of general guidance and should not be interpreted as hurdle statements.
- Where indicative content notes are supplied for a question, these are *not* a prescription of required content, and must not be treated as such. Alternative correct points and unexpected answers in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the knowledge and skills demonstrated.
- While we may have legitimate expectations as to the ground most answers may occupy, we must at all times be prepared to meet candidates on their chosen ground, provided it is relevant ground (e.g. clearly related to and derived from a relevant passage/text and meeting the mark scheme requirements for the question).

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Annotations guidance for centres

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Assessment Objective 1
	Assessment Objective 2
	Assessment Objective 4
	Assessment Objective 5
	Repetition
	Omission
	Requires clarity
	Seen
[Highlighter]	Inaccurate
	Not relevant

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English Language specific marking instructions:

AO1 Read and demonstrate understanding of a wide variety of texts. (Understanding)
- Marks should be awarded for the accuracy of the candidate's understanding of the text and its features, **not** for any analysis of them which is recognised under AO3.
- Where comparison is required, marks should be awarded for the candidate's recognition of similarities and differences between the texts and their features, **not** for any consequent analysis.
- When awarding a 'best-fit' mark within a Level for each AO, consider each bullet point equally.

AO2 Write effectively, creatively, accurately and appropriately, for a range of audiences and purposes. (Writing)
- Marks should be awarded equally on the basis of the level of the candidate's written expression (range of features used and accuracy) and the development of their writing (its organisation and relevance to task and audience).
- When awarding a 'best-fit' mark within a Level for each AO, consider each bullet point equally.

AO4: Demonstrate understanding of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches. (Conceptualisation)
- Marks should be awarded equally on the basis of the level of the candidate's understanding of the relevant issues, concepts, methods and approaches represented both in the text(s) and in their wider studies.
- When awarding a 'best-fit' mark within a Level for each AO, consider each bullet point equally.

AO5: Analyse and synthesise language data from a variety of sources. (Data handling)
- Marks should be awarded equally on the basis of the level of the candidate's selection, analysis and synthesis of language data.
- When awarding a 'best-fit' mark within a Level for each AO, consider each bullet point equally.

Higher marks should be awarded where candidates identify patterns and offer thoughtful and plausible explanations for the features they are discussing.

Weaker answers may spot features or describe individual cases of language change without reference to broader considerations or examples.

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Section A: Language change

Question	Answer	Marks
1	**Read Texts A, B and C.** **Analyse how Text A exemplifies the various ways in which the English language has changed over time. In your answer, you should refer to specific details from Texts A, B and C, as well as to ideas and examples from your wider study of language change.** Mark according to the levels of response marking criteria in Table A. **Additional guidance:** The comments below are illustrative and are not intended to be exhaustive. Candidates may make other valid comments that should be credited. Candidates may organise their response in any appropriate way. They are not required to focus on lexis, grammar and syntax, orthography and graphology in separate sections. **Responses might feature the following:** **Lexis** • Text B shows that the adjective *handsome* has undergone some semantic narrowing as this is most commonly applied in contemporary usage to describe a male person. • A range of abbreviations are used for 'North', 'East', 'Right', 'Left' and 'Viscount'. Candidates may discuss the similar usage of abbreviations in modern texts, some of which seem to have arisen with the growth of electronic communication. • The noun *plantations* seems to have undergone some semantic narrowing and would now be likely to be used to refer to larger farms or settlements than is implied in this text. • *Hither* and *hath* are used in place of 'here' and 'has' which seem archaic to a modern reader. • The phrase *overflown with floods* would probably be replaced with 'flooded' today. Candidates may discuss the formation of *overflown* relating this to the prefix 'over' meaning above' and 'flown' which seems to be a contraction of 'flowing'. • *market-Town* is hyphenated, with *Town* capitalised, which would not be the case today. Another instance of a hyphenated compound is in 'new-erected', the former part of which today would more likely be replaced with the adverb 'newly'.	**25**

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Question	Answer	Marks
1	• The verb *disposed* is used in its original sense of 'to place' (sharing etymology with 'position') rather than the more commonly used modern form in which it forms part of the phrasal verb 'disposed of'. • The lexis *removed* and *since* is used in ways which would seem more synonymous with the contemporary use of 'moved' and 'ago'. • The military reference to *twelve companies of foot* also sounds archaic. **Grammar** • There is wide use of declaratives, which accords with the purpose of this text. • There is use of the present perfect construction *The house has been built about 24 years*, where in contemporary English it would be more common to find the simple past, or, if the present perfect is used, for this to refer to an ongoing quality. • There is an example of adverb-verb inversion in *They have also*, which would be very unusual in contemporary English where 'have' is a main verb rather than an auxiliary. • There are instances of short sentences, as suited to the form of a directory, however other sentences are complex with multiple clauses, e.g. *Moira is a well laid out, thriving village, conſiſting of one broad ſtreet, chiefly inhabited by dealers, who carry on the linen manufactcture very conſiderably*. **Orthography** • The spellings of *cloathing* (as shown in Text C), *rere* and *ſcite* reflect changes in spelling over time due to standardisation. • 'Rere' uses the French spelling from which the English spelling 'rear' is derived. Candidates may also speculate on links with changes in pronunciation over time. **Graphology** • A long 'ſ' is used at the beginning of some words (E.g. *ſtone*) or middle of words, where in the modern day we would place an 's'. It is not to used at the start of proper nouns where instead a capital 'S' is used, or at the end of words. This reflects a change in fashion brought about with the development of printing typefaces. • ct ligature is used, providing a further example of graphological change from 1786 to the present.	

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Marking criteria for Section A Question 1

Table A

Level	AO2: Write effectively, creatively, accurately and appropriately, for a range of audiences and purposes. 5 marks	AO4: Demonstrate understanding of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches. 5 marks	AO5: Analyse and synthesise language data from a variety of sources. 15 marks
5	• Sophisticated expression, with a high level of accuracy • Content is fully relevant; ideas are developed throughout in a sophisticated manner 5 marks	• Sophisticated understanding of, and insightful reference to, linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches 5 marks	• Insightful and fully appropriate selection of language data from all three sources • Sophisticated and insightful analysis of language data • Sophisticated synthesis of evidence from all three sources of language data 13–15 marks
4	• Effective expression, with a few minor errors which do not impede communication • Content is relevant; ideas are developed in an effective manner 4 marks	• Detailed understanding of, and effective reference to, linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches 4 marks	• Effective and appropriate selection of language data from all three sources • Detailed and effective analysis of language data • Effective synthesis of evidence from all three sources of language data 10–12 marks
3	• Clear expression, with occasional errors which do not impede communication • Content is relevant; ideas are developed clearly 3 marks	• Clear understanding of, and appropriate reference to, linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches 3 marks	• Clear and appropriate selection of language data from at least two sources • Clear analysis of language data • Clear synthesis of evidence from at least two sources of language data 7–9 marks

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Level	AO2: Write effectively, creatively, accurately and appropriately, for a range of audiences and purposes. 5 marks	AO4: Demonstrate understanding of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches. 5 marks	AO5: Analyse and synthesise language data from a variety of sources. 15 marks
2	• Expression is clear but may not flow easily, with frequent errors which generally do not impede communication • Content is mostly relevant; ideas are developed in a limited manner 2 marks	• Limited understanding of, but generally appropriate reference to, linguistic issues, concepts, methods and/or approaches 2 marks	• Limited and generally appropriate selection of language data; may be uneven coverage • Limited analysis of language data • Some attempt to synthesise evidence from sources of language data 4–6 marks
1	• Basic expression, with frequent errors which impede communication • Content may lack relevance in parts; minimal development of ideas 1 mark	• Basic understanding of, and minimal reference to, linguistic issues, concepts, methods and/or approaches 1 mark	• Basic and minimal selection of language data • Basic analysis of language data • Minimal attempt to synthesise evidence from sources of language data 1–3 marks
0	• No creditable response 0 marks	• No creditable response 0 marks	• No creditable response 0 marks

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Section B: Child language acquisition

Question	Answer	Marks
2	**Read the following text, which is a transcription of a conversation between Oliver (age 3 years) and his father. They are at home and Oliver is playing with play dough, a type of modelling clay for children.** **Analyse ways in which Oliver and his father are using language in this conversation. In your answer, you should refer to specific details from the transcription, as well as to ideas and examples from your wider study of child language acquisition.** Mark according to the levels of response marking criteria in Table B. **Additional guidance:** The comments below are illustrative and are not intended to be exhaustive. Candidates may make other valid comments that should be credited. Candidates may organise their response in any appropriate way. They are not required to focus on child-directed speech and children's language features in separate sections. **Responses might feature the following:** **Child-directed speech** • The father frequently asks questions as a way of directing the speech and encouraging Oliver to expand on what he says, e.g. *oh what is it*. • Positive reinforcement is used *(yeah play dough)*, which could be linked to Skinner's theories (behaviourism). • Rising intonation is added to declaratives to form questions e.g. *we're making puppies*↗. • Recasting is used to expand on Oliver's speech: *so if you have too many cookies before breakfast youll get really sick*. **Children's language features** • Oliver uses turn taking competently. • The exchanges are mostly fulfilled adjacency pairs. • Oliver is able to use the simple present tense (*this is /pwaɪvɪt/*) and is starting to use the past tense in *have cookie (.) and maked me ...*. • He uses some telegraphic constructions such as *have cookie* but he is able to add a coordinating conjunction to this to add *and maked me /wɪəliː/ /wɪəliː/ SICK*.	**25**

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Question	Answer	Marks
2	• Oliver uses a range of other lexical features. He uses correctly the singular personal pronoun *i* and the plural *we*, although he later substitutes the determiner *a* for *i* in *a come.* He repeatedly uses an adverb as an pre-modifying intensifier in *and maked me /wɪəliː/ /wɪəliː/ SICK.* Some utterances seem holophrastic though as in */dɪs/*. • Oliver's use of stress, elongated vowels, and increased volume for emphasis e.g. *YEAH, SICK,* birthday. • Child phonological competence, e.g. using */dɪs/* for 'this'; */w/* for /r/. **References to relevant theories and research should be integrated into the response and may include:** • Halliday's functions of language, e.g. Representational – */dɪs/* ; Imaginative – *we /meɪkeɪn/ puppy*. • Skinner (Behaviourism), e.g. positive reinforcement (see above) and imitation: *he has /puːpʌl/ hair*. • Bruner (Language Acquisition Support System), e.g. seen in the utterances of the father. • Chomsky's LAD seen in e.g. the child's use of */eɪkd/* ('maked') for 'made' whereby the regular rule for changing a present tense verb to past tense seems to be used.	

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Marking criteria for Section B Question 2

Table B

Level	AO1: Read and demonstrate understanding of a wide variety of texts. 5 marks	AO4: Demonstrate understanding of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches. 15 marks	AO5: Analyse and synthesise language data from a variety of sources. 5 marks
5	• Sophisticated understanding of text (meaning/context/audience) • Insightful reference to characteristic features 5 marks	• Sophisticated understanding of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches • Insightful reference to wider study of linguistic issues and concepts • Insightful reference to linguistic methods and approaches taken by fully appropriate theorists 13–15 marks	• Sophisticated selection, analysis and synthesis of language data 5 marks
4	• Detailed understanding of text (meaning/context/audience) • Effective reference to characteristic features 4 marks	• Detailed understanding of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches • Effective reference to wider study of linguistic issues and concepts • Effective reference to linguistic methods and approaches taken by appropriate theorists 10–12 marks	• Detailed selection, analysis and synthesis of language data 4 marks
3	• Clear understanding of text (meaning/context/audience) • Clear reference to characteristic features 3 marks	• Clear understanding of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches • Clear reference to wider study of linguistic issues and concepts • Clear reference to linguistic methods and approaches taken by appropriate theorists 7–9 marks	• Clear selection, analysis and synthesis of language data 3 marks

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Level	AO1: Read and demonstrate understanding of a wide variety of texts. 5 marks	AO4: Demonstrate understanding of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches. 15 marks	AO5: Analyse and synthesise language data from a variety of sources. 5 marks
2	• Limited understanding of text (meaning/context/audience) • Limited reference to characteristic features 2 marks	• Limited understanding of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and/or approaches • Some limited reference to wider study of linguistic issues and/or concepts • Some limited reference to linguistic methods and/or approaches taken by generally appropriate theorists 4–6 marks	• Limited selection, analysis and/or synthesis of language data 2 marks
1	• Basic understanding of text (meaning/context/audience) • Minimal reference to characteristic features 1 mark	• Basic understanding of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and/or approaches • Minimal reference to wider study of linguistic issues and/or concepts • Minimal reference to linguistic methods and/or approaches taken by theorists 1–3 marks	• Basic selection, analysis and/or synthesis of language data 1 mark
0	• No creditable response 0 marks	• No creditable response 0 marks	• No creditable response 0 marks

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