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CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International A Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE **9093/41**

Paper 4 Language Topics **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
AO1	Assessment Objective 1
AO2	Assessment Objective 2
AO4	Assessment Objective 4
REP	Repetition
	Omission
	Requires clarity
SEEN	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.

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Marking criteria for Section A Question 1 and Section B Question 2

Table A

Level	AO1: Read and demonstrate understanding of a wide variety of texts. **10 marks**	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. **10 marks**
5	• Sophisticated understanding of text (meaning/context/ audience) • Insightful reference to specific points 9–10 marks	• 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 linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches represented in the text • Insightful reference to wider study of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches 9–10 marks
4	• Detailed understanding of text (meaning/context/ audience) • Effective reference to specific points 7–8 marks	• 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 linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches represented in the text • Effective reference to wider study of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches 7–8 marks
3	• Clear understanding of text (meaning/context/ audience) • Clear reference to specific points 5–6 marks	• Clear expression, with occasional errors which do not impede communication • Content is relevant; ideas are developed clearly 3 marks	• Clear understanding of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches represented in the text • Clear reference to wider study of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches 5–6 marks

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Level	AO1: Read and demonstrate understanding of a wide variety of texts. **10 marks**	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. **10 marks**
2	• Limited understanding of text (meaning/context/ audience) • Limited reference to specific points 3–4 marks	• 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 linguistic issues, concepts, methods and/or approaches represented in the text • Some limited reference to wider study of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and/or approaches 3–4 marks
1	• Basic understanding of text (meaning/context/ audience) • Minimal reference to specific points 1–2 marks	• Basic expression, with frequent errors which impede communication • Content may lack relevance in parts; minimal development of ideas 1 mark	• Minimal understanding of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and/or approaches represented in the text • Minimal reference to wider study of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and/or approaches 1–2 marks
0	• No creditable content 0 marks	• No creditable content 0 marks	• No creditable content 0 marks

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Section A: English in the world

Question	Answer	Marks
1	**Read the following text, which is an extract from an article published on the website of the British weekly newspaper *The Economist* in 2023.** **Discuss what you feel are the most important issues raised in the text relating to the changing use of English around the world. You should refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from your wider study of English in the world.** 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. **Responses might discuss the following:** • the hegemony of English across many parts of the world • how and why the English language *no longer belongs* solely to Anglophone countries • how and why new speakers of English *are going to be less keen to sound British or American* • the concept of *ELF* • the development of the ideology that English speakers *should feel free to ignore British or American norms* • how and why, over time, *new generations of native speakers contribute not just words but their own grammar* • examples of how English has changed over time with input from non-native speakers	**25**

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Section B: Language and the self

Question	Answer	Marks
2	**Read the following text, which is the opening of an article published in 2022 on a business communications company website.** **Discuss what you feel are the most important issues raised in the text relating to the ways in which language can shape and reflect personal and social identity. You should refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from your wider study of Language and the self.** 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. **Responses might discuss the following:** • how female workers are sometimes told to avoid certain writing habits if they *want to be taken seriously at work* • the author's opinion that *it's all nonsense* and a *bizarre oversimplification* • the idea that one should *Challenge the system, not the writer* • the author's opinion that *it's good to be assertive at work from time to time* but that it is also *important to build relationships and create emotional connection* through language • how this implies that males should be encouraged to be less assertive in their language • how *giving someone reams of rules to remember just makes them less confident* • how the issue of 'female' language is *just a distraction from the important stuff.*	**25**

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