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CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE **9093/21**

Paper 2 Writing **May/June 2026**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 50

Published

This mark scheme contains the instructions and marking guidance that our examiners used to mark candidate responses for this component.

Before they start marking, examiners complete a standardisation process. They review a range of candidate responses and discuss the mark scheme in detail to agree which answers can and cannot be accepted. Examiners award marks where it is clear that candidate responses have met the requirements of the mark scheme. These requirements may vary between different components or different versions of the same component, depending on the exact requirements of the question and the candidate responses seen during the standardisation process.

Sometimes, our mark schemes may allow marks to be awarded to responses which contain elements that are factually incorrect or for content not covered by the syllabus. We do this in response to the demands of a specific question to support candidates and make sure that our assessments are fair. However, these allowances should not be used as a guide for teaching and learning.

We cannot discuss the mark scheme with schools, and we recommend that schools read the mark scheme together with the assessment material and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

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General marking principles

All examiners must apply these marking principles when marking candidate responses.

1	Examiners must award marks for each response in line with: • the specific **content** defined in the mark scheme • the specific **skills** defined in the mark scheme or in the level descriptions • the **standard of response** required as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.
2	Examiners must award **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).
3	Examiners must award marks **positively**. This means that: • marks are not deducted for errors or omissions • marks are awarded for correct/valid answers as defined in the mark scheme and also for **other valid answers** which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme referring to your team leader as appropriate • the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar are judged **only** when the mark scheme indicates that these features are **specifically assessed** in the question. However, the meaning of all responses must be unambiguous.
4	Examiners must **consistently** apply the requirements of the mark scheme and any rules for what to do when candidates have not followed instructions correctly.
5	Examiners must use the **full range of marks** defined in the mark scheme, unless limited by the quality of the candidate responses seen.
6	Examiners must award marks according to the mark scheme and **must not** award marks with grade thresholds or grade descriptions in mind.

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English & Media-Specific Marking Principles
(To be read in conjunction with the General Marking Principles (and requiring further guidance on how to place marks within levels))

Components using level descriptions:

- We use level descriptions as a guide to broad understanding of the qualities normally expected of, or typical of, work in a level.
- Level descriptions 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
	Good point
	Error (analysis)
	SPAG error
	Unclear expression / errors throughout
	Fluent expression
	Errors continue
	Purpose
	Addressing the question
	Uncertain relevance to the question

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Annotation	Meaning
R	Repetition
TE	Tense error

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English Language specific marking instructions:

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.

AO3: Analyse the ways in which writers' and speakers' choices of form, structure and language produce meaning and style. (Analysis)

- Marks should be awarded equally on the basis of the level of the candidate's analysis of the text's elements (form, structure and language) and of the writer's stylistic choices (including how style relates to audience and shapes meaning).
- When awarding a 'best-fit' mark within a Level for each AO, consider each bullet point equally.

In response to **Question 1(a)**, candidates are required to write no more than 400 words. In response to **Questions 2, 3 and 4**, candidates are required to write between 600 and 900 words. While there is no direct penalty for failing to adhere to either requirement, examiners should consider this an aspect of the response's 'achievement of task' and 'relevance to purpose'. As such, adherence to the word limit is assessed as part of the fourth bullet point of AO2.

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Section A: Shorter writing and reflective commentary

Marking criteria for Section A Question 1(a)

Table A

Level	AO2: Write effectively, creatively, accurately and appropriately, for a range of audiences and purposes.	AO2 marks
5	• Sophisticated expression, with a wide range of language, including complex structures and less common lexis • High level of accuracy • Text is logically and very effectively organised; ideas are developed throughout in a sophisticated manner • Task is achieved fully; content is fully relevant • Audience is fully engaged	**13–15**
4	• Effective expression, with a range of language, including some complex structures and less common lexis • A few minor errors which do not impede communication • Text is logically organised; ideas are developed in an effective manner • Task is achieved well; content is relevant • Audience is engaged	**10–12**
3	• Clear expression, with a range of language, including some complex structures and some less common lexis, although there may be some repetition • Occasional errors which do not impede communication • Text is clearly organised; ideas are developed clearly • Task is achieved; content is relevant • Audience is addressed	**7–9**
2	• Expression is clear but may not flow easily, with some attempt to use a range of language, including mostly more common structures and lexis • Frequent errors which generally do not impede communication • Some attempt to organise text; ideas are developed in a limited manner • Task is generally achieved; content is mostly relevant • Limited evidence of an attempt to address the audience	**4–6**

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Level	AO2: Write effectively, creatively, accurately and appropriately, for a range of audiences and purposes.	AO2 marks
1	• Basic expression, with a limited range of language, including almost exclusively simple structures and more common lexis • Frequent errors which impede communication • Minimal attempt to organise text; minimal development of ideas • Task may have been misinterpreted or is only achieved in part; content may lack relevance in parts • Minimal evidence of an attempt to address the audience	1–3
0	• No creditable response	0

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Marking criteria for Section A Question 1(b)

Table B

Level	AO3: Analyse the ways in which writers' and speakers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings.	AO3 marks
5	• Sophisticated analysis of form, structure and language • Sophisticated analysis of how the writer's stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning	**9–10**
4	• Detailed analysis of form, structure and language • Detailed analysis of how the writer's stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning	**7–8**
3	• Clear analysis of form, structure and language • Clear analysis of how the writer's stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning	**5–6**
2	• Limited analysis of form, structure and/or language • Limited analysis of how the writer's stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning	**3–4**
1	• Minimal analysis of form, structure and/or language • Minimal analysis of how the writer's stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning	**1–2**
0	• No creditable response	**0**

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Section B: Extended writing

Marking criteria for Section B Question 2, Question 3 and Question 4

Table C

Level	AO2: Write effectively, creatively, accurately and appropriately, for a range of audiences and purposes.	AO2 marks
5	• Sophisticated expression, with a wide range of language, including complex structures and less common lexis • High level of accuracy • Text is logically and effectively organised; ideas are developed throughout in a sophisticated manner • Task is achieved fully; content is fully relevant • Audience is fully engaged	21–25
4	• Effective expression, with a range of language, including some complex structures and less common lexis • A few minor errors which do not impede communication • Text is logically organised; ideas are developed in an effective manner • Task is achieved well; content is relevant • Audience is engaged	16–20
3	• Clear expression, with a range of language, including some complex structures and some less common lexis, although there may be some repetition • Occasional errors which do not impede communication • Text is clearly organised; ideas are developed clearly • Task is achieved; content is relevant • Audience is addressed	11–15
2	• Expression is clear but may not flow easily, with some attempt to use a range of language, including mostly more common structures and lexis • Frequent errors which generally do not impede communication • Some attempt to organise text; ideas are developed in a limited manner • Task is generally achieved; content is mostly relevant • Limited evidence of an attempt to address the audience	6–10

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Level	AO2: Write effectively, creatively, accurately and appropriately, for a range of audiences and purposes.	AO2 marks
1	• Basic expression, with a limited range of language, including almost exclusively simple structures and more common lexis • Frequent errors which impede communication • Minimal attempt to organise text; minimal development of ideas • Task may have been misinterpreted or is only achieved in part; content may lack relevance in parts • Minimal evidence of an attempt to address the audience	1–5
0	• No creditable response	0

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