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CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

MATHEMATICS **9709/42**

Paper 4 Mechanics **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 2026 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.

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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Mathematics-Specific Marking Principles

1 Unless a particular method has been specified in the question, full marks may be awarded for any correct method. However, if a calculation is required then no marks will be awarded for a scale drawing.

2 Unless specified in the question, non-integer answers may be given as fractions, decimals or in standard form. Ignore superfluous zeros, provided that the degree of accuracy is not affected.

3 Allow alternative conventions for notation if used consistently throughout the paper, e.g. commas being used as decimal points.

4 Unless otherwise indicated, marks once gained cannot subsequently be lost, e.g. wrong working following a correct form of answer is ignored (isw).

5 Where a candidate has misread a number or sign in the question and used that value consistently throughout, provided that number does not alter the difficulty or the method required, award all marks earned and deduct just 1 A or B mark for the misread.

6 Recovery within working is allowed, e.g. a notation error in the working where the following line of working makes the candidate's intent clear.

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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
	More information required
	Accuracy mark awarded zero
	Accuracy mark awarded one
	Independent accuracy mark awarded zero
	Independent accuracy mark awarded one
	Independent accuracy mark awarded two
	Benefit of the doubt
	Blank Page
	Incorrect
Dep	Used to indicate DM0 or DM1

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Annotation	Meaning
DM1	Dependent on the previous M1 mark(s)
FT	Follow through
	Indicate working that is right or wrong
Highlighter	Highlight a key point in the working
ISW	Ignore subsequent work
J	Judgement
JU	Judgement
M0	Method mark awarded zero
M1	Method mark awarded one
M2	Method mark awarded two
MR	Misread
O	Omission or Other solution
Off-page comment	Allows comments to be entered at the bottom of the RM marking window and then displayed when the associated question item is navigated to.
On-page comment	Allows comments to be entered in speech bubbles on the candidate response.
PE	Judgment made by the PE
Pre	Premature approximation
SC	Special case
SEEN	Indicates that work/page has been seen

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Annotation	Meaning
SF	Error in number of significant figures
	Correct
TE	Transcription error
XP	Correct answer from incorrect working

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Mark Scheme Notes

The following notes are intended to aid interpretation of mark schemes in general, but individual mark schemes may include marks awarded for specific reasons outside the scope of these notes.

Types of mark

M Method mark, awarded for a valid method applied to the problem. Method marks are not lost for numerical errors, algebraic slips or errors in units. However, it is not usually sufficient for a candidate just to indicate an intention of using some method or just to quote a formula; the formula or idea must be applied to the specific problem in hand, e.g. by substituting the relevant quantities into the formula. Correct application of a formula without the formula being quoted obviously earns the M mark and in some cases an M mark can be implied from a correct answer.

A Accuracy mark, awarded for a correct answer or intermediate step correctly obtained. Accuracy marks cannot be given unless the associated method mark is earned (or implied).

B Mark for a correct result or statement independent of method marks.

DM or **DB** When a part of a question has two or more 'method' steps, the M marks are generally independent unless the scheme specifically says otherwise; and similarly, when there are several B marks allocated. The notation DM or DB is used to indicate that a particular M or B mark is dependent on an earlier M or B (asterisked) mark in the scheme. When two or more steps are run together by the candidate, the earlier marks are implied and full credit is given.

FT Implies that the A or B mark indicated is allowed for work correctly following on from previously incorrect results. Otherwise, A or B marks are given for correct work only.

- A or B marks are given for correct work only (not for results obtained from incorrect working) unless follow through is allowed (see abbreviation FT above).
- For a numerical answer, allow the A or B mark if the answer is correct to 3 significant figures or would be correct to 3 significant figures if rounded (1 decimal place for angles in degrees).
- The total number of marks available for each question is shown at the bottom of the Marks column.
- Wrong or missing units in an answer should not result in loss of marks unless the guidance indicates otherwise.
- Square brackets [ ] around text or numbers show extra information not needed for the mark to be awarded.

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Abbreviations

AEF/OE	Any Equivalent Form (of answer is equally acceptable) / Or Equivalent
AG	Answer Given on the question paper (so extra checking is needed to ensure that the detailed working leading to the result is valid)
CAO	Correct Answer Only (emphasising that no 'follow through' from a previous error is allowed)
CWO	Correct Working Only
ISW	Ignore Subsequent Working
SOI	Seen Or Implied
SC	Special Case (detailing the mark to be given for a specific wrong solution, or a case where some standard marking practice is to be varied in the light of a particular circumstance)
WWW	Without Wrong Working
AWRT	Answer Which Rounds To

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1	$[R = 200g]$ $F = 0.8 \times 200g$ $[= 1600]$	*B1	
	$D = \dfrac{4000}{v}$	*B1	For $P = Fv$. OE seen at any point in working.
	$\dfrac{4000}{v} = 0.8 \times 200g$	DM1	Using Newton's second law with $a = 0$. Dependent on both previous **B** marks.
	$v = 2.5$	A1	OE.
		4	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(a)	[Velocity after 10 s =] 0.5×10 $[= 5]$	B1	
	$v^2 = their\, 5^2 + 2 \times 1.5 \times 13$	M1	Use of suvat equation(s) to get an expression for v^2 or v, using $their\, 5 \neq 0$.
	$v = 8$	A1	
		3	
2(b)(i)	Distance for first stage $s_2 = 0 + \frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2} \times 10^2 [= 25]$ **OR** Distance for third stage $s_2 = 5 \times their\, 8$ $[= 40]$	B1FT	**FT** their value of *v*.
	$[25 + 13 + 40 + 28] = 106$ m	B1FT	**FT** their value of *v*. $5v + 66$.
		2	

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9709/42 M Scheme March 2026

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(b)(ii)	Time for second stage $t = \dfrac{\textit{their}\,8 - \textit{their}\,5}{1.5}$ $\left[t = 2\right]$ **OR** Time for 4th stage $t = \dfrac{28}{\textit{their}\,8 + 0} \times 2$ $\left[t = 7\right]$	**B1FT**	**FT** their value of v and $\textit{their}\,5 \neq 0$ Must get an expression for t in either second or fourth stage of motion. May see deceleration of $\frac{8}{7}$ in working for final phase.
	$\left[\dfrac{106}{10+5+2+7} = \right]\dfrac{53}{12}$ m s^{-1}	**B1**	Allow AWRT 4.42. Allow $\frac{106}{24}$. 4.416666….
		2	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
3	Attempt to resolve in any direction to form an equation	***M1**	With correct number of terms. Allow sin/cos mix. Allow sign errors.
	$20\sin\theta - F - 2F\sin 30 = 0 \quad [20\sin\theta - 2F = 0]$	**A1**	OE. CWO.
	$20\cos\theta - 2F\cos 30 = 0 \quad \left[20\cos\theta - \sqrt{3}F = 0\right]$	**A1**	OE.
	For attempt to find θ $\theta = \tan^{-1}\left(\dfrac{F + 2F\sin 30}{2F\cos 30}\right)\left[= \tan^{-1}\left(\dfrac{2}{\sqrt{3}}\right)\right]$ OR $\theta = \sin^{-1}\left(\dfrac{\textit{their } F + 2\times(\text{their } F)\sin 30}{20}\right)$ OR $\theta = \cos^{-1}\left(\dfrac{2\times(\text{their } F)\cos 30}{20}\right)$	**DM1**	$\theta = \tan^{-1}\left(\dfrac{F + 2F\sin 30}{2F\cos 30}\right)\left[= \tan^{-1}\left(\dfrac{2}{\sqrt{3}}\right)\right]$. From equations with the correct number of relevant terms.
	For attempt to find F $F = \dfrac{20\sin(\textit{their } \theta)}{1 + 2\cos 30}$ OR $F = \dfrac{20\cos(\textit{their } \theta)}{2\cos 30}$ OR $F = \sqrt{\dfrac{20^2}{(1 + 2\sin 30)^2 + (2\cos 30)^2}}$	**DM1**	From equations with the correct number of relevant terms.
	$\theta = 49.1 \quad F = 20\dfrac{\sqrt{7}}{7} = 7.56$	**A1**	**OE** θ = 49.1066... AWRT 49.1. F = 7.55928… AWRT 7.56.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
3	**Alternative using triangle of forces**		
	For attempt at correct cosine rule	**(M1)**	Using any numerical angle other than 90°.
	$20^2 = F^2 + (2F)^2 - 2 \times F \times 2F \cos 120$	**(A1)**	
	$F = \frac{20\sqrt{7}}{7}$ or $F = 7.56$	**(A1)**	**OE** $F = 7.55928\ldots$ AWRT 7.56.
	For attempt at correct sine rule	**(M1)**	
	$\frac{20}{\sin 120} = \frac{F}{\sin(\theta - 30)} = \frac{2F}{\sin(90 - \theta)}$	**(A1FT)**	**FT** their F only. Any two of the three needed.
	$\theta = 49.1$	**(A1)**	$\theta = 49.1066...$ AWRT 49.1
		6	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
4	$\text{KE}_A = \frac{1}{2}\times 1600\times 10^2 \left[=80000\right]$ $\text{KE}_B = \frac{1}{2}\times 1600\times 12^2 \ \left[=115200\right]$	**B1**	For either correct. Do not allow $\frac{1}{2}\times 1600\times(12-10)^2$. NB Difference = 35200.
	$\text{PE}_{change} = \pm 1600g(250-200)\left[=\pm 800000\right]$ OR $\text{PE}_{change} = \pm 1600g\times\frac{50}{2000}\times 2000\left[=\pm 800000\right]$	**B1**	Allow $\pm 1600g\times 2000\times \sin 1.4\left(32543738\right)$.
	WD against resistance $= \pm 150\times 2000\ \left[=\pm 300000\right]$	**B1**	
	Work done by braking force $= \frac{1}{2}\times 1600\times 10^2 - \frac{1}{2}\times 1600\times 12^2 + 1600g(250-200) - 150\times 2000$ OR Work done by braking force $= \frac{1}{2}\times 1600\times 10^2 - \frac{1}{2}\times 1600\times 12^2 + 1600g\times\frac{50}{2000}\times 2000 - 150\times 2000$	**M1**	Attempt at work energy equation with correct number of relevant terms; dimensionally correct. Allow using 2 rather than 2000. Allow sign errors, but must be a difference in KE terms. Allow with $BF\times 2000$ for work done by braking force. Allow $1600g\times 2000\times \sin 1.4\left(32543738\right)$. **M0** if using $\frac{1}{2}\times 1600\times(12-10)^2$.
	Work done by braking force = 464 800 J	**A1**	Allow 465 000 J. DO NOT ISW. Allow 463 000 from use of angle of 1.43 (463379.7522) and 464000 from use of angle of 1.432 (464496.4145).
		5	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
4	**Special case for use of constant acceleration and N2L**		
	$12^2 = 10^2 + 2\times 2000a \left[a = \frac{11}{1000} = 0.011\right]$ **AND** $1600g \times \frac{50}{2000} - 150 - BF = 1600 \times (\textit{their } a) \quad [BF = 232.4]$	**M1**	Must have a correct equation in a and a N2L equation with correct number of terms, but allow sign errors and sin/cos mix. Must be an equation in BF only. Allow using 2 rather than 2000 in finding a.
	Work done by braking force $= [232.4 \times 2000]\, 464\,800$ J	**A1**	Allow 465 000 J.
		2	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
5(a)	$R_P = 0.3g\cos 30 \quad \left[= \frac{3}{2}\sqrt{3} = 2.598076211\right]$ **or** $R_Q = 0.2g\cos 30 \quad \left[= \sqrt{3} = 1.732050808\right]$ **or** $R_{P+Q} = (0.2+0.3)g\cos 30 \quad \left[= \frac{5}{2}\sqrt{3} = 4.330127019\right]$	**B1**	
	Attempt at Newton's second law for either particle or the system	**M1**	Must have correct number of terms. Allow sign errors. Allow sin/cos mix. Allow g missing. Allow with *their* F or just F.
	$12 - T - 0.2g\sin 30 - 0.4\times 0.2g\cos 30 = 0.2a$ $\left[12 - T - 1 - \frac{2}{5}\sqrt{3} = 0.2a\right]$ Or $T - 0.3g\sin 30 - 0.4\times 0.3g\cos 30 = 0.3a \quad \left[T - 1.5 - \frac{3}{5}\sqrt{3} = 0.3a\right]$ Or $12 - (0.2+0.3)g\sin 30 - 0.4\times(0.2+0.3)g\cos 30 = (0.2+0.3)a$ $\left[12 - 2.5 - \sqrt{3} = 0.5a\right]$	**A2**	For any two correct equations. **A1** for any one equation. Allow with *their* a. Allow with *their* T.
	Attempt to solve for a or T	**M1**	Must have correct number of terms. Allow sign errors. Allow sin/cos mix. Allow g missing.
	$a = 15.5$ m s^{-2} or $a = 19 - 2\sqrt{3}$ AND $T = 7.2$ N	**A1**	$a = 15.5358983$. AWRT 15.5. Allow $T = 7.19$ from use of $a = 15.5$ in 0.3 kg N2L equation, CWO. Allow $T = 7.21$ from use of $a = 15.5$ in 0.2 kg N2L equation, CWO.
		6	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
5(b)	$-0.3g\sin 30 - 0.4\times 0.3g\cos 30 = 0.3a$ $[a = -8.46410\ldots$ or $a = -5-2\sqrt{3}]$	***M1**	For use of Newton's second law. Must have correct number of terms. Allow sign errors. Allow sin/cos mix. Allow with m or mass omitted. **M0** for use of 0.2 or 0.5.
	$0 = 2 + (their - 8.46\ldots)t$ or $0 = -2 + (their \mid -8.46\ldots \mid)t$	**DM1**	For getting an equation in t only using their $a \neq 10$. Must lead to a positive value of t, so the sign of u and the sign of a must be different. Or other complete method.
	$t = 0.236$ or $t = \dfrac{10-4\sqrt{3}}{13}$	**A1**	$t = 0.23629\ldots$ AWRT 0.236. BEWARE $s = \dfrac{10-4\sqrt{3}}{13} = 0.236$.
	ALTERNATIVE USING ENERGY		
	$\frac{1}{2}\times 0.3\times 2^2 = 0.3g\sin 30\times h + 0.4\times 0.3g\cos 30\times h$ $\left[\rightarrow h = \dfrac{10-4\sqrt{3}}{13} = 0.236\right]$	**(*M1)**	Dimensionally correct work energy equation with 3 relevant terms. Allow sign errors, allow sin/cos mix. Allow with m or mass omitted. **M0** for use of 0.2 or 0.5.
	$their\ 0.236 = \frac{1}{2}(2+0)t$	**(DM1)**	For getting an equation in t only using their h. Must lead to a positive value of t. Or other complete method.
	$t = 0.236$ or $t = \dfrac{10-4\sqrt{3}}{13}$	**(A1)**	$t = 0.23629\ldots$ AWRT 0.236. BEWARE $s = \dfrac{10-4\sqrt{3}}{13} = 0.236$.
		3	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
6(a)(i)	$4m \times 6.5[+0] = 4m \times 2 + 3mv$	**M1**	For attempt at use of conservation of momentum. 3 non-zero terms, allow sign errors. Do not allow with m missing.
	$v = 6$	**A1**	Must see at least one correct intermediate step eg $3mv = \ldots$, $3v = \ldots$, but if $v = \ldots$ then must be an expression on RHS. **AG** CWO. If using mg in momentum equation, then **M1A0** max.
		2	
6(a)(ii)	$\frac{1}{2} \times 4m \times 6.5^2 - \frac{1}{2} \times 4m \times 2^2 - \frac{1}{2} \times 3m \times 6^2 = 45$ $[84.5m - 8m - 54m = 45 \Rightarrow 22.5m = 45]$	**M1**	Attempt at KE equation. Correct number of terms. Allow ± 45 but do not allow any other sign errors.
	$m = 2$	**A1**	**Do not allow** $m = -2$ becoming $m = 2$
		2	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
6(b)	Q hits wall after 1.5 s	***B1**	OE, e.g. $\frac{9}{6}$.
	Distance travelled by P up to time at which Q hits wall $s[=2\times1.5]=3$ m	***B1FT**	**FT** their 1.5 s.
	After Q hits wall $s_P=\pm2t$ **AND** $s_Q=\pm0.5t$	***B1**	Allow relative speed $=\pm(2+0.5)$.
	$2t+0.5t=9-\textit{their}\,3$ [$\Rightarrow t=2.4$ s]	**DM1**	For equating distances to get an equation that leads to a positive t, with $2t$ and $0.5t$ having the same sign if on the same side of the equation. Dependent on all previous **B** marks
	Distance from wall $[=0.5\times2.4]=1.2$ m	**A1**	OE.
	Alternative method using equal times		
	Q hits wall after 1.5 s	**(*B1)**	OE, e.g. $\frac{9}{6}$.
	Distance travelled by P up to time at which Q hits wall $s[=2\times1.5]=3$ m	**(*B1FT)**	**FT** their 1.5 s.
	$t_P=\pm\frac{x}{0.5}$ **AND** $t_Q=\pm\left(\frac{6-x}{2}\right)$	**(*B1)**	
	$\frac{x}{0.5}=\frac{6-x}{2}$ OR $\frac{6-y}{0.5}=\frac{y}{2}$	**(DM1)**	For equating times to get an equation that leads to a positive x, with $\frac{x}{0.5}$ and $\frac{6-x}{2}$ having the same sign if on opposite sides of the equation. Dependent on all previous **B** marks.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
6(b)	Distance from wall $=1.2$ m	**(A1)**	OE.
		5	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
7(a)	Attempt to differentiate	**M1**	Of the form $1-kt^{-\frac{1}{2}}$ where $k \neq \pm 7$. Use of $v=at$ is **M0**. Expect $\frac{\mathrm{d}v}{\mathrm{d}t}=1-7\times\frac{1}{2}t^{\frac{1}{2}-1}=1-\frac{7}{2}t^{-\frac{1}{2}}$.
	At $t=4$ acceleration $=-0.75\ \text{ms}^{-2}$	**A1**	**Do not ISW.** OE. Must be negative. CWO.
	SC for no differentiation seen		
	At $t=4$ acceleration $=-0.75\ \text{ms}^{-2}$	**(B1)**	**Do not ISW.** OE. Must be negative.
		2	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
7(b)	$t - 7t^{\frac{1}{2}} + 12 = 0$	**B1**	For setting given v expression equal to zero. May be implied, for example, by at least one correct value of t.
	$t = 9$	**B1**	
	$t = 16$	**B1**	If other t values given on the range, then **B1B1B0** max.
		3	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
7(c)	Attempt to integrate given v expression once only	***M1**	The power of t must increase by 1 in at least 1 term, with a change of coefficient in the same term. Use of $s = vt$ is **M0**
	$(s =)\frac{1}{1+1}t^{1+1} - \frac{7}{\frac{1}{2}+1}t^{\frac{1}{2}+1} + 12t(+c)\left[= \frac{1}{2}t^2 - \frac{14}{3}t^{\frac{3}{2}} + 12t(+c)\right]$	**A1**	Allow un-simplified.
	Use limits 0, *their* 9 **or** *their* 9, *their* 16 **or** *their* 16, 25 correctly in their $\frac{1}{2}t^2 - \frac{14}{3}t^{\frac{3}{2}} + 12t$	**DM1**	Using *their* t value(s) where both are $0 < t < 25$, using limits correctly in their 3 term s. Allow un-simplified.
	0 to 9: $\frac{1}{2}\times 9^2 - \frac{14}{3}\times 9^{\frac{3}{2}} + 12\times 9 - 0 \quad \left[= 22\frac{1}{2} - 0 = 22\frac{1}{2}\right]$ 9 to 16: $\pm\left(\left(\frac{1}{2}\times 16^2 - \frac{14}{3}\times 16^{\frac{3}{2}} + 12\times 16\right) - \left(\frac{1}{2}\times 9^2 - \frac{14}{3}\times 9^{\frac{3}{2}} + 12\times 9\right)\right)\left[= \pm\left(21\frac{1}{3} - 22\frac{1}{2}\right) = \mp 1\frac{1}{6} = \pm\frac{7}{6}\right]$ 16 to 25: $\left(\left(\frac{1}{2}\times 25^2 - \frac{14}{3}\times 25^{\frac{3}{2}} + 12\times 25\right) - \left(\frac{1}{2}\times 16^2 - \frac{14}{3}\times 16^{\frac{3}{2}} + 12\times 16\right)\right)\left[= 29\frac{1}{6} - 21\frac{1}{3} = 7\frac{5}{6} = \frac{47}{6}\right]$	**DM1**	For all **three**, using their t values where both are $0 < t < 25$, using limits correctly. Allow un-simplified.
	Total distance = $31\frac{1}{2}$ m	**A1**	OE. AWRT 31.5.
	SC for no integration seen		
	21.5 or $\pm\frac{7}{6}$ or $\frac{47}{6}$	**(B1)**	OE.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
7(c)	Total distance = $31\frac{1}{2}$ m	**(B1)**	OE. AWRT 31.5.
		5	

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