

# Cambridge International AS Level

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**ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER**

**8021/21**

Paper 2 Comprehension

**October/November 2025**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 50

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**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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This document consists of **11** printed pages.

### 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.

**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**

<b>Annotation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
	One mark
	Two marks
	Used to indicate a creditable point in levels-based marking
	The point is incorrect, perhaps factually, or the wrong word or point has been offered
	Used to indicate development
	Used where there is repetition of the same/an earlier point
	'Too vague', used when the response does not make the required point precisely enough
	'Benefit of the doubt', used to indicate marginal decisions where the point is not totally convincing but where credit is given
	The point is either unclear, illogical, or unconvincing in some way
nfp	No further penalty

Question	Answer	Marks
1(a)	<p><b>With reference to the Background and the Additional Information only, identify <u>two</u> pieces of evidence showing that Ereeka might <u>not</u> have the necessary experience to organise a ‘memorable’ press launch.</b></p> <p>Credit the following two points.</p> <p>Ereeka had only started as Director of Publicity three weeks ago. (1)</p> <p>One month ago, Ereeka graduated from university with a degree in archaeology. (1)</p> <p>(1 + 1)</p>	2
1(b)	<p><b>Identify the disadvantage with The Beeches.</b></p> <p>Credit the following point.</p> <p>It is (only) a two-star hotel. (1)</p>	1
1(c)	<p><b>Identify the likely date for the press launch.</b></p> <p>Credit the following point.</p> <p>10 March. (1)</p>	1
1(d)	<p><b>Explain why Ereeka will have to ask Caradoc Schmidt for an increased budget for the press launch.</b></p> <p>Credit any three of the following points.</p> <p>The current budget of \$30 000 will not cover all the costs. (1)</p> <p>120 delegates could cost up to \$30 000 alone, if they all requested an overnight stay. (1)</p> <p>The gourmet buffet lunch (that Caradoc would probably want) costs \$2400. (1)</p> <p>Orlando Teeme’s personal expenses would come to \$3500. (1)</p> <p>There is the potential for up to 30 more delegates to indicate that they will attend. (1)</p> <p>Overtime may be necessary to speed up production to meet the preferred launch date (increasing costs further). (1)</p> <p>(3 × 1)</p>	3

Question	Answer	Marks
1(e)	<p><b>Apart from the cost, explain the disadvantages of The Tuila Hotel and Conference Centre as a venue for the press launch. Answer in continuous prose.</b></p> <p>Caradoc Schmidt specified a venue within 5 km of the office, but The Tuila Hotel and Conference Centre is 8 km away.</p> <p>The Tuila Hotel and Conference Centre's head chef has just broken both wrists, so the food might not be up to gourmet standard / and one of CS' specifications in his email was for a lunch of an excellent standard / so a less qualified chef might have to take over / so the venue might not find a replacement chef in time.</p> <p>The Tuila Hotel and Conference Centre has only been open since 15 January, so Ereeka will not have been able to check many online reviews to ensure that it is of five-star standard / to see how it had coped previously with events as large as their press launch.</p> <p>The engineer hoping to repair The Tuila Hotel and Conference Centre's audio-visual equipment cannot come before 9 March / <u>the day before</u> the likely date of the press conference, so it allows no room for manoeuvre if the engineer cannot repair the equipment/ needs to order a part.</p>	8

In assessing the answer award marks for a coherent appraisal, clearly expressed, of three or more relevant considerations that make use of analytical skills.

<b>Levels</b>	<b>Mark(s)</b>	<b>Descriptors</b>
4	7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity to interpret evidence and sustained ability to present relevant arguments, analysis and exemplification maintaining a strong focus on the main issues in the question.</li> <li>Comprehensive approach demonstrating ability to identify and select relevant information, data, concepts and opinions and maintain a strong focus on the key issues.</li> <li>Shows the ability to communicate clearly and accurately in a fluent and organised manner.</li> </ul>
3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate range of arguments, analysis and exemplification covering some of the main issues in the question.</li> <li>Demonstrating some grasp of the nature of key issues but with a restricted range or a loss of focus leading to the inclusion of some irrelevant material.</li> <li>Shows the ability to communicate clearly and accurately in a fluent and organised manner.</li> </ul>
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited analysis shown in a response consisting of mainly undeveloped material.</li> <li>A modest range of selected points, perhaps some of which are irrelevant or incorrect.</li> <li>Ability to convey meaning but with limited powers of expression with some errors in spelling, punctuation or grammar which impede the flow and hinder communication.</li> </ul>
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some simple, mainly unexplained or undeveloped points or perhaps a very narrow range – with little interpretation or analysis and little development or exemplification.</li> <li>Limited range, dubious choice showing restricted appreciation of key issues.</li> <li>Ability to convey meaning but with limited powers of expression with some errors in spelling, punctuation or grammar which impede the flow and hinder communication.</li> </ul>
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A mark of zero should be awarded for no creditable content.</li> </ul>

Question	Answer	Marks
1(f)	<p><b>Explain why working with Orlando Teeme has been a particularly stressful time for Klaus, the Director of Manufacturing.</b></p> <p>Credit three of the following points or any other valid point.</p> <p>There has been an issue at every stage of production, (1) as Orlando Teeme changed his design (from a simple one) to a more complicated one (1) and the gold edging would have increased the level of technicality required. (1)</p> <p>Now they are two months behind schedule. (1)</p> <p>Orlando's demanding and diva-like character has clearly worn him out. (1)</p> <p>(3 × 1)</p>	3
1(g)	<p><b>With reference to the Additional Information, identify the reason why Caradoc Schmidt might soon regret linking his company's reputation with that of Orlando Teeme.</b></p> <p>Credit the following point.</p> <p>Orlando Teeme is going to be accused in a national newspaper of stealing recipe ideas from his junior chefs. (1)</p>	1
1(h)	<p><b>In your opinion, explain why, as Schmidt + Daughters Tableware has its own design team, Caradoc Schmidt asked Orlando Teeme to design a product range for them.</b></p> <p>Credit four of the following points or any other valid points.</p> <p>Orlando Teeme is a celebrity TV chef, (1) so he is likely to have hundreds of thousands of fans, (1) many of whom would happily buy tableware designed by Orlando, (1) which might help their meals look as good as his culinary creations. (1)</p> <p>Schmidt + Daughters Tableware can charge a premium on products endorsed by famous people, (1) whereas in-house tableware design teams are not normally known by anyone outside their industry. (1)</p> <p>2 × 2 or 1 × 4</p>	4

Question	Answer	Marks
1(i)	<p><b>In your opinion, suggest why celebrities feel the need to be chauffeured in limousines.</b></p> <p>Credit two of the following points or any other valid point.</p> <p>They might feel vulnerable travelling in public transport, (1) worrying about being bothered by over-zealous fans or people with bad intentions. (1)</p> <p>They might worry about getting lost trying to find the venue. (1)</p> <p>They might think that it underlines their status as a celebrity. (1)</p> <p>They might revel in being regarded as high-wealth individuals. (1)</p> <p>They can post pictures on social media to impress their followers. (1)</p> <p>2 × 1 or 1 + 1</p>	2

Question	Answer	Marks
2(a)	<p><b>Identify when Iulia Bochis started to become interested in illustrations, specifically.</b></p> <p>Credit the following point.</p> <p>(She started to become interested in them) when she started using social media. (1)</p>	1
2(b)(i)	<p><b>Using your own words as far as possible, explain the meaning of the following five phrases as used in the material: ‘something changed in me’ (lines 9–10)</b></p> <p>she altered her attitude</p>	1
2(b)(ii)	<p><b>Using your own words as far as possible, explain the meaning of the following five phrases as used in the material: ‘felt a strong desire to travel’ (line 10)</b></p> <p>experienced a great need to explore</p>	1
2(b)(iii)	<p><b>Using your own words as far as possible, explain the meaning of the following five phrases as used in the material: ‘obstacles that got in the way’ (line 12)</b></p> <p>barriers that prevented her</p>	1
2(b)(iv)	<p><b>Using your own words as far as possible, explain the meaning of the following five phrases as used in the material: ‘after much deliberation’ (line 12)</b></p> <p>having thought a great deal</p>	1

Question	Answer	Marks
2(b)(v)	<p><b>Using your own words</b> as far as possible, explain the meaning of the following <b>five</b> phrases as used in the material: ‘there wasn’t a better moment than “now”’ (lines 12–13)</p> <p>the present was the perfect opportunity</p>	1
2(c)(i)	<p>Identify the <b>exact</b> word or phrase in the material which means the following: <b>life-changing</b> (lines 9–18)</p> <p>Credit the following point.</p> <p>transformative (1)</p>	1
2(c)(ii)	<p>Identify the <b>exact</b> word or phrase in the material which means the following: <b>imagination</b> (lines 20–25)</p> <p>Credit the following point.</p> <p>mind’s eye (1)</p>	1
2(c)(iii)	<p>Identify the <b>exact</b> word or phrase in the material which means the following: <b>affect emotionally</b> (lines 20–25)</p> <p>Credit the following point.</p> <p>touch (1)</p>	1
2(c)(iv)	<p>Identify the <b>exact</b> word or phrase in the material which means the following: <b>remedy</b> (lines 29–34)</p> <p>Credit the following point.</p> <p>antidote (1)</p>	1
2(c)(v)	<p>Identify the <b>exact</b> word or phrase in the material which means the following: <b>encouraging</b> (lines 44–56).</p> <p>Credit the following point.</p> <p>uplifting (1)</p>	1
2(d)(i)	<p><b>Regarding Iulia’s site, describe what makes her feel humble</b></p> <p>Credit one of the following points.</p> <p>(She feels humble) when she receives messages from around the world/ people let her know that her work brings them a sense of lightness and comfort. (1)</p>	1

Question	Answer	Marks
2(d)(ii)	<p><b>Regarding Iulia's site, identify the comparison she makes to describe her site.</b></p> <p>Credit the following point.</p> <p>(She considers it as a corner of the internet that's like) a sunny garden for people to sit and relax in (at any time). (1)</p>	<b>1</b>
2(e)	<p><b>According to Iulia, identify <u>one</u> advantage and <u>one</u> disadvantage of an easily accessible virtual world.</b></p> <p>Credit the following two points.</p> <p>Advantage: (It allows many) individuals and communities to have a far-reaching voice (for the first time). (1)</p> <p>Disadvantage: It has become more difficult to build real and lasting relationships/ Everything changes so quickly. (1)</p> <p>1 + 1</p>	<b>2</b>
2(f)	<p><b>Explain the structure of Iulia's book (lines 44–52). Answer in about 50 words using continuous prose.</b></p> <p>Credit any three of the following points.</p> <p>It is built around the four seasons. (1)</p> <p>It draws parallels between life stages and the changing seasons. (1)</p> <p>Autumn invites us to reflect on the nature of change. (1)</p> <p>Dark winter days are for self-reflection and focusing on ourselves. (1)</p> <p>Spring marks rebirth, allowing us reflection both backwards and forwards. (1)</p> <p>Summer liberates, letting us glide along, surrendering to life's flow. (1)</p> <p>Examiners should place a vertical red line after 30 words but consider the remainder of any incomplete point which concludes within 35 words.</p> <p>1 × 5</p>	<b>5</b>
2(g)(i)	<p><b>State the <u>exact</u> meaning of the following <u>five</u> words as they are used in the material:</b></p> <p><b>thought-provoking (line 7)</b></p> <p>stimulating, intriguing, riveting, striking, inspirational, absorbing, engaging (1)</p>	<b>1</b>

Question	Answer	Marks
2(g)(ii)	<p><b>State the <u>exact</u> meaning of the following <u>five</u> words as they are used in the material:</b>  <b>perspective (line 20)</b></p> <p>angle, viewpoint/ point of view, mindset, standpoint, way of looking, outlook, position, situation, slant (1)</p>	1
2(g)(iii)	<p><b>State the <u>exact</u> meaning of the following <u>five</u> words as they are used in the material:</b>  <b>resilient (line 26)</b></p> <p>strong, tough, hardy, flexible (1)</p>	1
2(g)(iv)	<p><b>State the <u>exact</u> meaning of the following <u>five</u> words as they are used in the material:</b>  <b>solace (line 31)</b></p> <p>consolation, comfort, relief, easing (1)</p>	1
2(g)(v)	<p><b>State the <u>exact</u> meaning of the following <u>five</u> words as they are used in the material:</b>  <b>superficial (line 35)</b></p> <p>shallow, trivial, glib, fatuous, facile, flippant, empty, meaningless,</p>	1