

Cambridge International AS & A Level

DIGITAL MEDIA & DESIGN**9481/03**

Paper 3 Personal Investigation

October/November 2025**MARK SCHEME**Maximum Mark: 100

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.

This document consists of **7** printed pages.

PUBLISHED**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

Annotation	Meaning
	Indicates that a page has been seen by the examiner

PUBLISHED

AO1: Research and record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, reflecting critically on work and progress.	AO2: Explore and select appropriate media, materials and technology, reviewing and refining ideas as work develops.	AO3: Develop ideas or concepts through investigations informed by feedback, testing and constraints, demonstrating critical understanding.	AO4: Produce a personal digital response that realises intentions and, where possible makes connections between digital and design elements.
Excellent skill in researching and recording observations and insights from a variety of sources, relevant to intentions. Highly accomplished ability to reflect critically on work and progress. Excellent use of specialist language and appropriate technical vocabulary.	Exploration and selection of relevant media, materials and technology is excellent. Highly accomplished and sophisticated ability to review and refine ideas as work develops. Excellent communication of ideas through visual and other forms.	Excellent development of ideas or concepts, with reference to the brief provided, through focused investigations. Analytical and critical understanding demonstrated through highly accomplished and mature referencing of feedback, testing and constraints. Perceptive integration of practical and written elements.	Excellent realisation of intentions demonstrated through a personal digital response. Highly accomplished and mature connections made between digital and design elements. Work demonstrates an excellent level of engagement and independence.
21–25 marks	21–25 marks	21–25 marks	21–25 marks
Confident skill in researching and recording observations and insights from a variety of sources, relevant to intentions. Highly effective ability to reflect critically on work and progress. Confident use of specialist language and appropriate technical vocabulary.	Confidently explores and selects relevant media, materials and technology. Highly effective ability to review and refine ideas as work develops. Confident communication of ideas and other forms.	Confident development of ideas or concepts, with reference to the brief provided, through focused investigations. Analytical and critical understanding confidently demonstrated through thorough and careful referencing of feedback, testing and constraints. Highly effective integration of practical and written elements.	Confident realisation of intentions demonstrated through a personal digital response. Highly effective connections made between digital and design elements. Work demonstrates a highly effective level of engagement and independence.
16–20 marks	16–20 marks	16–20 marks	16–20 marks

PUBLISHED

AO1: Research and record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, reflecting critically on work and progress.	AO2: Explore and select appropriate media, materials and technology, reviewing and refining ideas as work develops.	AO3: Develop ideas or concepts through investigations informed by feedback, testing and constraints, demonstrating critical understanding.	AO4: Produce a personal digital response that realises intentions and, where possible makes connections between digital and design elements.
Competent skill in researching and recording observations and insights from a variety of sources, relevant to intentions. Good ability to reflect critically on work and progress. Competent use of specialist language and appropriate technical vocabulary.	Competent exploration and selection of relevant media, materials and technology. Good ability to review and refine ideas as work develops. Good communication of ideas through visual and other forms.	Competent development of ideas or concepts, with reference to the brief provided, through focused investigations. Good analytical and critical understanding demonstrated through careful referencing of feedback, testing and constraints. Good integration of practical and written elements.	Competent realisation of intentions demonstrated through a personal digital response. Good connections made between digital and design elements. Work demonstrates a competent level of engagement and independence.
11–15 marks	11–15 marks	11–15 marks	11–15 marks
Satisfactory skill in researching and recording observations and insights from a variety of sources, relevant to intentions. Adequate ability to reflect critically on work and progress. Satisfactory use of specialist language and appropriate technical vocabulary.	Adequate exploration and selection of relevant media, materials and technology. Satisfactory ability to review and refine ideas as work develops. Satisfactory communication of ideas through visual and other forms.	Satisfactory development of ideas or concepts, with reference to the brief provided, through focused investigations. Adequate analytical and critical understanding demonstrated through careful referencing of feedback, testing and constraints. Adequate integration of practical and written elements.	Satisfactory realisation of intentions demonstrated through a personal digital response. Adequate connections made between digital and design elements. Work demonstrates an adequate level of engagement and independence.
6–10 marks	6–10 marks	6–10 marks	6–10 marks

PUBLISHED

AO1: Research and record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, reflecting critically on work and progress.	AO2: Explore and select appropriate media, materials and technology, reviewing and refining ideas as work develops.	AO3: Develop ideas or concepts through investigations informed by feedback, testing and constraints, demonstrating critical understanding.	AO4: Produce a personal digital response that realises intentions and, where possible makes connections between digital and design elements.
Limited skill in researching and recording observations and insights from a variety of sources, relevant to intentions. Basic ability to reflect critically on work and progress. Limited use of specialist language and appropriate technical vocabulary.	Limited exploration and selection of relevant media, materials and technology. Basic ability to review and refine ideas as work develops. Basic communication of ideas through visual and other forms.	Basic development of ideas or concepts, with reference to the brief provided. Limited analytical and critical understanding demonstrated through careful referencing of feedback, testing and constraints. Limited integration of practical and written elements.	Limited realisation of intentions demonstrated through a personal digital response. Basic connections made between digital and design elements. Work demonstrates a basic level of engagement and independence.
1–5 marks	1–5 marks	1–5 marks	1–5 marks
No creditable work.	No creditable work.	No creditable work.	No creditable work.
0 marks	0 marks	0 marks	0 marks