CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge O Level

BENGALI **3204/01**

Paper 1 Composition **May/June 2026**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 90

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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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
	Credit for content point or language.
	Incorrect.
	If the examiner considers the answer to be more correct than incorrect, then 'benefit of the doubt' is given.
	Meaning unclear or illegible.
	Used to show that blank pages have been seen and any creditworthy material has been awarded.
	Optional, to indicate irrelevant material.
Highlighter	Optional, to highlight errors.
Off-page comment	Used to make a holistic comment about the script.
	Repetition.
	Error of Tense.
	Omission.
	Tick for correct content related to first bullet point.
	Tick for correct content related to second bullet point.
	Tick for correct content related to third bullet point.

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Annotation	Meaning
	Tick for correct content related to fourth bullet point.
	Spelling / grammar mistake.

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Section A

MARKS	CONTENT (Q1 or Q2)
3	• Detailed and fully relevant response to the bullet point. • Communicates without ambiguity.
2	• Most of the task is completed and relevant information is conveyed, although there may be some omissions and irrelevant material. • Communication is generally clear, with some lapses.
1	• The response is minimal. • There are substantial omissions and/or ambiguity and/or irrelevance.
0	• Bullet point is not addressed anywhere in the composition.

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BAND	MARKS	LANGUAGE (Q1 or Q2)
6	**16–18**	• The language is accurate; occasional slips are either slips or arise from attempts to use ambitious structures or vocabulary. Vocabulary is appropriate and wide enough to convey shades of meaning with precision. Sentences are varied in length, including the confident use of complex sentences. • Spelling is nearly always accurate. Paragraphs are effectively sequenced and appropriately linked. The response is concise, staying within the word limit. Punctuation is accurate and helpful.
5	**13–15**	• The meaning is generally clear. Vocabulary and structures are mainly correct when they are simple; mistakes may occur when sophistication is attempted. Sentences may show some variety of structure and length, although there may be a tendency to repeat sentence types and 'shapes'. Spelling is generally accurate, but mistakes may occur when more ambitious vocabulary is used. • Sentence separation is correct. The composition is written in paragraphs which mostly show unity, although some links may be absent or inappropriate. The composition stays within the word limit or only exceeds it to a limited extent. Punctuation is generally accurate and helpful, apart from occasional slips.
4	**10–12**	• The meaning is generally clear. There will be patches of accurate language, particularly when simple vocabulary and structures are used. There may be some variety of sentence length and structure, but this variety may not always be effective. Vocabulary is usually adequate to convey intended meaning although it may not be sufficiently developed to convey precision. Idiom may be uncertain at times. • Sentence separation errors may occur occasionally. Simple words may be accurately spelt, but there may be weaknesses in the spelling of more complex words. Paragraphs may be used but may lack coherence. Punctuation may be used but will not enhance or clarify meaning.
3	**7–9**	• Meaning is never in doubt, but the errors are sufficiently frequent and serious to hamper precision and may slow the speed of reading. Some simple structures will be accurate, but the candidate is unlikely to sustain accuracy for long. Vocabulary may be limited. Idiomatic errors are likely. • Simple words will usually be spelt correctly, but there may be inconsistency and frequent mistakes in the spelling of more difficult words. Paragraphs may lack unity or be used haphazardly, or may not even be used at all. Linguistic errors are likely to distract the reader from merits of content. Simple punctuation may be accurate, but there may be frequent separation errors.
2	**4–6**	• There may be serious errors of various kinds throughout the answer which may blur communication from time to time. Sentences will be simple and repetitive in structure. Vocabulary may convey meaning but is likely to be simple and imprecise. Errors in idiomatic usage will be a significant • feature. • Spelling may be inconsistent, including in simple words. Paragraphing may be haphazard or non-existent. Linguistic error is likely to obscure or neutralise meaning.

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BAND	MARKS	LANGUAGE (Q1 or Q2)
1	**0–3**	• Sense may be decipherable, but errors will require the reader to re-read and re-organise before any meaning is clear. There are unlikely to be more than a few accurate sentences. Content will be partly or mostly hidden by linguistic error. • At the lower end, answers will not be identifiable as pieces of Bengali writing and whole sections will make no sense at all. • The mark of 0 is reserved for answers that make no sense at all from beginning to end.

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Section B

	MARK	CONTENT (Q3, Q4 or Q5)
5	**16–20**	• Fully relevant response to the stimulus. • A well-developed response with effective linking of ideas. • An imaginative and sophisticated response.
4	**11–15**	• Mostly relevant information, although there may be some omissions or irrelevant material. • A reasonably well-developed response with some evidence of linking of ideas. • A thoughtful and logical response.
3	**6–10**	• Some relevant information, but parts of the response digress from the topic. • There is an attempt to develop the response and link ideas, but this is patchy / inconsistent. • The response is sound, with some attempt to engage the reader's • interest.
2	**1–5**	• Limited relevant information given; a largely irrelevant response. • Little or no attempt to develop or link ideas. • The response is pedestrian and/or unengaging.
1	**0**	• No relevant information communicated. • A mark of zero for content will mean a mark of zero for language and organisation.

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	MARK	STYLE & ORGANISATION (Q3, Q4 or Q5)
5	**16–20**	• A range of sophisticated language is used to create an impact on the reader. • A wide range of complex sentence structures is used successfully. • The response is well structured, with logically sequenced paragraphs.
4	**11–15**	• A good range of language is used which helps to engage the reader. • Some attempt is made to use a variety of sentence structures, sometimes complex. • The structure of the response is sound, with some sequencing of paragraphs.
3	**6–10**	• There is some attempt to vary the language used, with occasional interest for the reader. • Sentences tend to be simple, with little variation. • There is an attempt to structure the response and sequence the paragraphs, with limited success.
2	**1–5**	• There is little or no variation in the language used, and limited interest for the reader. • Sentences are basic and repetitive. • There may be no paragraphing; the response may be disordered.
1	**0**	• No language worthy of credit.

	MARK	ACCURACY (Q3, Q4 or Q5)
5	**16–20**	• High level of accuracy, although not necessarily perfect. • Spellings, verbs and grammatical features are used correctly overall. • More complex structures used without major errors.
4	**11–15**	• Language is generally accurate. • Most spellings, verbs and grammatical features are correct. • Variable accuracy when using more complex sentence structures
3	**6–10**	• Fairly accurate in using simple language. • Inconsistency in use of verbs and other grammatical features, but more correct than incorrect. Spelling of common words is generally accurate. • Errors occur frequently when more complex structures are attempted, but communication is generally not prevented.
2	**1–5**	• Frequent basic errors. Communication is prevented in several cases. • Some correct phrases, but there are frequent spelling, verb and grammatical errors.
1	**0**	• No language worthy of credit.

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