



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2026

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

in English Language (4EA1)

Paper 1: Non-fiction Texts and Transactional Writing

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Specific Marking Guidance

When deciding how to reward an answer, examiners should consult both the indicative content and the associated marking grid(s). When using a levels-based mark scheme, the 'best fit' approach should be used.

- Examiners should first decide which descriptor most closely matches the answer and place it in that level.
- The mark awarded within the level will be decided based on the quality of the answer and will be modified according to how securely all bullet points are displayed at that level.
- Indicative content is exactly that – they are factual points that candidates are likely to use to construct their answer.
- It is possible for an answer to be constructed without mentioning some or all of these points, as long as they provide alternative responses to the indicative content that fulfils the requirements of the question. It is the examiner's responsibility to apply their professional judgement to the candidate's response in determining if the answer fulfils the requirements of the question.

Placing a mark within a level

- Examiners should first decide which descriptor most closely matches the answer and place it in that level. The mark awarded within the level will be decided based on the quality of the answer and will be modified according to how securely all bullet points are displayed at that level.
- In cases of uneven performance, the points above will still apply. Candidates will be placed in the level that best describes their answer according to the descriptors in that level. Marks will be awarded towards the top or bottom of that level depending on how they have evidenced each of the descriptor bullet points.
- If the candidate's answer meets the requirements fully, markers should be prepared to award full marks within the level. The top mark in the level is used for work that is as good as can realistically be expected within that level.

AO1	Read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives.
AO2	Understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects.
AO3	Explore links and connections between writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed.
AO4	Communicate effectively and imaginatively, adapting form, tone and register of writing for specific purposes and audiences.
AO5	Write clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, with appropriate paragraphing and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Section A: Reading

Question Number	AO1 Read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives.	Mark
1	<p><i>Stand well back from the clifftop, with its small red lighthouse on top, and you see its full ferocity. Within it, surfers look like mere dots as they are towed in by the jet skis and fight to stay on their boards, striving for survival.</i></p> <p>Accept any of the following, up to a maximum of two marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • '(look like mere) dots' (1) • 'towed (in by the jet skis)' (1) • 'fight (to stay on their boards)' (1) • 'striving (for survival)' (1) 	(2)

Question Number	AO1 Read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives.	Mark
2	<p><i>Three surfers are admitted to hospital in the course of just one January day in 2022. C.J. Macias is one of them. A former high-level beach volleyball player, at 6 feet 5 inches, he stands far taller than any other surfer in that particular stretch of the Atlantic Ocean. At the season's start, he talked almost as though he was slightly reluctant to tackle the wave on its biggest days.</i></p> <p><i>However, on the day preceding the accident, things have finally clicked for him and demons from past poundings put out of his mind. In those moments, he has at last a sense of belonging. Riding one explosively powerful wave, he comes out of it absolutely euphoric. Macias laughs at the recollection: he was so elated in the moment, his first comments were "Is it the world record, is it the 100-foot wave?" Others laughed too, at the time. It was barely half that.</i></p> <p>Accept any reasonable explanation of what we learn about C.J. Macias, in own words where possible, up to a maximum of four marks.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C.J. Macias is (one of three surfers) hospitalised (in January 2022)/ he has an injury/has been in an accident • he used to play sport/beach volleyball (to a very good standard)/was an athlete • he is extremely tall/of greater height than other surfers • (earlier), he did not seem keen to surf the highest waves • (the day before the incident where he is injured/now), everything seems to fall into place for him • Macias has managed to forget his past struggles/falls in the water • he feels that he is a part of the surfing community • he is thrilled/on a high after surfing one strong wave • (he is amused now to recall that) he was so ecstatic that he thought he might have achieved a new world record • he had clearly over-estimated the height of the wave <p>Reward all valid points.</p>	(4)

Question Number	AO1 Read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives.	Mark
3	<p><i>By now, he is going into damage-limitation mode, holding the hurt arm to protect it from further harm. A keen yoga enthusiast, his great strength is his breathing. He grabs the morsels of breath whenever he can amid the washing-machine effect of his pounding. By this point, the waves have settled down to 12, maybe 15, feet high.</i></p> <p><i>It's now been a solid five minutes – an agonisingly long time. He is finally spotted. Alemão de Maresias, a Brazilian surfer and jet ski driver, locates him on the third peak of waves, way out from where he initially comes off the board and just 30 metres out from the beach. De Maresias reaches out an arm to pull him up on to the sled at the back of the jet ski. Macias hands over the one functioning limb but can't find the strength to get himself up on the sled at the back of the jet ski, causing him to spill out into the water once again.</i></p> <p><i>He is washed up on the shore moments later.</i></p> <p>Accept any reasonable description of what happens to C.J. Macias, up to a maximum of five marks.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C.J. Macias is trying to prevent additional injury: 'holding the hurt arm to protect it' • (as he practises yoga) he is able to manage his breathing • he snatches a breath at every opportunity: 'grabs the morsels of breath whenever he can' • he is being tossed around in the water: 'the washing-machine effect of his pounding' • he has been in the sea for what seems like ages: 'an agonisingly long time' / quite a short time 'five minutes' • he is at last seen by one of the rescuers • he is a long way from where he fell in • the rescuer/de Maresias tries to help Macias on to the jet ski as he 'reaches out an arm to pull him up' • Macias holds out his non-injured arm but is too weak – 'can't find the strength' – to haul himself out of the water • he falls back into the sea • (shortly afterwards) he is swept (by the water) onto the beach: 'washed up on the shore moments later' <p>Reward all valid points.</p>	(5)

Question Number	Indicative content
4	<p>Reward responses that explain and analyse how the writer uses language and structure to present his experiences in the canyon.</p> <p>Examiners should refer to the following bullet points and then to the table to come to an overall judgement.</p> <p>Responses may include some of the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the calm and factual opening sentence does not initially indicate any danger as this is 'another drop-off' – an obstacle he has previously faced and overcome – but the fact that it is 'a foot higher and of a different geometry' to the earlier overhang suggests it could be a challenge the use of the present tense throughout the extract conveys a sense of immediacy the use of measurements in the first paragraph, for example that the drop-off is 'eleven or twelve feet high' and that the slot is 'a consistent three feet across', helps the reader to picture the scene the adjective 'claustrophobic' and the fact that 'the slot narrows' convey a sense of being enclosed and may lead the reader to fear that the writer may become trapped the contrast of verbs in 'Instead of the walls widening ... or opening' and 'here the slot narrows' serves to enhance just how unusually tight the space is explaining that the techniques that might be used to cross the gap are 'Sometimes ... possible' suggests the writer's uncertainty the writer explains the specific techniques he employs and any reader who is new to this sport learns the correct terminology – 'stemming or chimneying' the use of a colloquial analogy when likening the bulk of the chockstone to 'the size of a large bus tire' not only gives a sense of just how big the boulder is, but could also be seen to foreshadow its future movement employing the verb 'teeters' to indicate how the chockstone moves under his weight conveys how precarious his situation is describing his descent as 'akin to climbing down from the roof of a house' means that non-experts can understand the hazardous nature of the situation the assonance in the phrase 'scraping quake' and the alliteration/onomatopoeia on the hard 'c' sounds highlight the sound and movement of the stone and imply danger the blunt statement 'Instantly, I know this is trouble' builds tension the simple sentence 'Fear shoots my hands over my head' shows the reader how the writer is no longer in control and emphasises his powerlessness at that moment the references to the slowing down of time and the alliteration used to link how it 'dilates' with how his reactions consequently 'decelerate' convey a sense of horror to the reader the long, complex sentence beginning 'In slow motion ...', with its multiple clauses, seems to mimic the actual slow motion of the event and conveys the writer's sense of panic an idea of the formidable force of the rock that hits the writer is conveyed

	<p>through the selection of powerful verbs, many enhanced by onomatopoeia, used to describe the action: 'smashes', 'yank', 'ricochets', 'crushes', 'ensnares', 'tearing'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the use of the short sentence 'Then silence' at the end of the sixth paragraph provides a stark contrast with the noise and action of the accident and highlights the writer's total isolation • the phrases 'flaring agony' and 'searing-hot pain', with their connotations of fire and flames, create compassion in the reader for the pain that the writer is experiencing • the alliteration of the verbs in 'I grimace and growl' suggests that he is almost animal-like in his response to the extreme pain • the extreme physical effort needed to try to shift the stone is emphasised by the list of verbs 'shove', 'heaving', 'pushing', 'lifting' followed by 'brace' and 'thrust' • the concluding single-word sentence 'Nothing' underlines the terrible situation that the writer is in; the reader is left wondering what might happen as the extract ends with what could be seen as both a literal and metaphorical cliffhanger. <p>Reward all valid points.</p>
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Question 4		
Level	Mark	AO2 Understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects.
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic identification and little understanding of the language and/or structure used by writers to achieve effects. • The use of references is limited.
Level 2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some understanding of and comment on language and structure and how these are used by writers to achieve effects, including use of vocabulary. • The selection of references is valid, but not developed.
Level 3	5–7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear understanding and explanation of language and structure and how these are used by writers to achieve effects, including use of vocabulary and sentence structure. • The selection of references is appropriate and relevant to the points being made.
Level 4	8–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough understanding and exploration of language and structure and how these are used by writers to achieve effects, including use of vocabulary, sentence structure and other language features. • The selection of references is detailed, appropriate and fully supports the points being made.
Level 5	11–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptive understanding and analysis of language and structure and how these are used by writers to achieve effects, including use of vocabulary, sentence structure and other language features. • The selection of references is discriminating and clarifies the points being made.

Question Number	Indicative content
5	<p>Reward responses that compare the experiences described and the ways in which the writers present their ideas and perspectives.</p> <p>Examiners should refer to the following bullet points and then to the table to come to an overall judgement.</p> <p>Responses may include some of the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • both writers describe how a man injures his arm in an accident, in Text One while surfing and in Text Two when canyoneering • both writers use a serious tone throughout, although there are some lighter touches in Text One such as when C. J. Macias 'laughs at the recollection' • both writers use similar measurements to give a clear indication of setting and potential danger: in Text One the waves are '12, maybe 15, feet high' and in Text Two the drop-off that Ralston comes to is 'eleven or twelve feet high' • the events of both texts are written in the present tense, perhaps to create a greater sense of tension and immediacy for the reader • both extracts have moments of high drama: Text One with the description of the accident, the concern of the onlookers and the time lapse before rescue; Text Two with the boulder falling and the fact that he cannot free his arm • both writers make reference to time passing slowly in their accounts: in Text One 'five minutes – an agonisingly long time' and Text Two 'The next three seconds play out at a tenth of their normal speed' • in both texts the man's excruciating pain is described using the noun 'agony' • in both extracts verbs are used that suggest the accident was like a violent assault: in Text One Macias 'is flung like a 6-foot skimming stone' and "'ripped all over the place'" and in Text Two the rock 'smashes' and 'crushes' Ralston's arm • both writers use analogies with household objects to describe aspects of the man's experience in a way that readers can relate to: Text One describes 'the washing-machine effect of his pounding'; in Text Two Ralston refers to 'Another refrigerator chockstone' • both texts present the thoughts of the protagonist at the time of the accident: in Text One, Macias goes from "'Oh my God, I made it'" to "'At that point, I knew I was done for'" ; in Text Two Ralston recalls how 'I know this is trouble' and 'I'm frantic' • both writers make reference to a lack of noise to highlight a moment of tension: in Text One 'the spotters go silent' and in Text Two 'Then silence' • in both texts the man starts off calm and seemingly on top of things: in Text One Macias is out surfing 'with ... confidence' and 'looks to have it completely under control' and in Text Two Ralston describes his movements in a matter-of-fact tone as 'I come to another drop-off' • after this calm start in both texts there is a build-up of tension with, in each case, the hope that the events may not be catastrophic being

	<p>dashed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in both extracts a short sentence followed by an exclamation mark is used for dramatic impact: in Text One the shouts of “‘We can’t see him!’” and in Text Two Ralston’s exhortation to himself to “‘Come on...move!’” convey a sense of desperation and panic • in both texts the writer describes how the man attempts unsuccessfully to avoid disaster: in Text One he ‘tries to turn his way out of the danger’ and ‘put out his arm to break his fall’ and in Text Two he believes his ‘only hope is to push off the falling rock and get my head out of its way’ • both writers describe how the man suffers pain and desperation but in Text One Macias is also described as ‘elated’ and ‘happy’ • Text One is a third-person account with some direct quotations from people involved in the accident and rescue, whereas Text Two is a highly personal description of an accident experienced by the writer himself • Text One tells the complete story of the accident and rescue with Macias’ recollections of the event, whereas Text Two begins in medias res and tells only part of the story with the reader left in suspense about what happens • in Text One, Macias is not alone as there are at least two rescuers in the water and people ‘watching on the clifftops’, but in Text Two Ralston is alone with no possibility of help • Text One provides some background information about Macias, but in Text Two we learn little about Ralston other than his experience of the accident • Text One ends on a positive note with Macias ‘happy to be alive’ and a description of the pull of Nazaré ‘even after the very worst moments there’; Text Two, however, concludes with the writer still trapped and he starkly informs the reader that the result of his efforts to free himself is ‘Nothing’. <p>Reward all valid points.</p>
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Question 5

Level	Mark	AO3 Explore links and connections between writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed.
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response does not compare the texts. Description of writers' ideas and perspectives, including theme, language and/or structure. The use of references is limited.
Level 2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response considers obvious comparisons between the texts. Comment on writers' ideas and perspectives, including theme, language and/or structure. The selection of references is valid, but not developed. <p>NB: candidates who have considered only ONE text may only achieve a mark up to the top of Level 2</p>
Level 3	9–13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response considers a range of comparisons between the texts. Explanation of writers' ideas and perspectives, including theme, language and/or structure. The selection of references is appropriate and relevant to the points being made.
Level 4	14–18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response considers a wide range of comparisons between the texts. Exploration of writers' ideas and perspectives, including how theme, language and/or structure are used across the texts. References are balanced across both texts and fully support the points being made.
Level 5	19–22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response considers a varied and comprehensive range of comparisons between the texts. Analysis of writers' ideas and perspectives, including how theme, language and/or structure are used across the texts. References are balanced across both texts; they are discriminating and fully support the points being made.

SECTION B: Transactional Writing

Refer to the writing assessment grids at the end of this section when marking questions 6 and 7.

Question Number	Indicative content
6	<p>Purpose: to write a guide for students – informative and advisory.</p> <p>Audience: students. The focus is on communicating ideas about how to ‘survive’ the first term at a new school or college. There should be an attempt to engage and influence the audience.</p> <p>Form: candidates may use some stylistic conventions of a guide such as heading, sub-heading or occasional use of bullet points. Candidates should not include features of layout such as pictures or columns. There should be clear organisation and structure with an introduction, development of points and a conclusion.</p> <p>Responses may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suggest ways in which students can prepare for new subjects/situations, for example carrying out some research about the subjects/qualifications, reading textbooks in advance, talking to people who have studied the subjects or who already attend the school/college, planning/practising the journey, attending welcome meetings • consider how to get on with the students and staff, for example, talking to people, displaying a friendly/respectful attitude, joining clubs, showing an interest in class and completing homework • might also give ideas about how <i>not</i> to behave • include elements of humour • include personal accounts/quotations from students/staff. <p><i>The best-fit approach</i></p> <p>An answer may not always satisfy every one of the assessment criteria for a particular level in order to receive a mark within that level range, since on individual criteria the answer may meet the descriptor for a higher or lower mark range. The best-fit approach should be used to determine the mark which corresponds most closely to the overall quality of the response.</p>

Question Number	Indicative content
7	<p>Purpose: to write a letter – informative and discursive.</p> <p>Audience: the readers of a national or local newspaper. The focus is on communicating ideas about peer pressure. There should be an attempt to engage and influence the audience.</p> <p>Form: the response should be set out effectively as a formal letter, using organisational features. Candidates do not have to include postal addresses but should include an appropriate salutation and letter ending. There should be a clear introduction, development of points and a conclusion.</p> <p>Responses may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider how peer pressure (in person or online) is often considered to have a negative influence, for example leading people into unhealthy habits or bad behaviour • explore the ways in which peer pressure might have a positive impact, for example by encouraging good behaviour or helping someone to build confidence • include anecdotes, ‘statistics’ and ‘expert’ opinion • be written from a personal or more general point of view. <p><i>The best-fit approach</i></p> <p>An answer may not always satisfy every one of the assessment criteria for a particular level in order to receive a mark within that level range, since on individual criteria the answer may meet the descriptor for a higher or lower mark range. The best-fit approach should be used to determine the mark which corresponds most closely to the overall quality of the response.</p>

Writing assessment grids for Questions 6 and 7

Questions 6 and 7		
Level	Mark	AO4 Communicate effectively and imaginatively, adapting form, tone and register of writing for specific purposes and audiences.
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication is at a basic level, and limited in clarity. • Little awareness is shown of the purpose of the writing and the intended reader. • Little awareness of form, tone and register.
Level 2	6–11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates in a broadly appropriate way. • Shows some grasp of the purpose and of the expectations/requirements of the intended reader. • Straightforward use of form, tone and register.
Level 3	12–17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates clearly. • Shows a clear sense of purpose and understanding of the expectations/requirements of the intended reader. • Appropriate use of form, tone and register.
Level 4	18–22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates successfully. • A secure realisation of purpose and the expectations/requirements of the intended reader. • Effective use of form, tone and register.
Level 5	23–27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication is perceptive and subtle. • Task is sharply focused on purpose and the expectations/requirements of the intended reader. • Sophisticated use of form, tone and register.

Questions 6 and 7		
Level	Mark	AO5 Write clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, with appropriate paragraphing and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses information and ideas, with limited use of structural and grammatical features. Uses basic vocabulary, often misspelt. Uses punctuation with basic control, creating undeveloped, often repetitive, sentence structures.
Level 2	4–7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses and orders information and ideas; uses paragraphs and a range of structural and grammatical features. Uses some correctly spelt vocabulary, e.g. words with regular patterns such as prefixes, suffixes, double consonants. Uses punctuation with some control, creating a range of sentence structures, including coordination and subordination.
Level 3	8–11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops and connects appropriate information and ideas; structural and grammatical features and paragraphing make the meaning clear. Uses a varied vocabulary and spells words containing irregular patterns correctly. Uses accurate and varied punctuation, adapting sentence structures as appropriate.
Level 4	12–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages information and ideas, with structural and grammatical features used cohesively and deliberately across the text. Uses a wide, selective vocabulary with only occasional spelling errors. Positions a range of punctuation for clarity, managing sentence structures for deliberate effect.
Level 5	16–18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manipulates complex ideas, utilising a range of structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion. Uses extensive vocabulary strategically; rare spelling errors do not detract from overall meaning. Punctuates writing with accuracy to aid emphasis and precision, using a range of sentence structures accurately and selectively to achieve particular effects.