



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 GCE in
English Language (9EN0)
Paper 3: Language Investigation

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the last candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the first.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than be penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme – not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- 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/indicative content will not be exhaustive.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, a senior examiner must be consulted before a mark is given.
- Crossed-out work should be marked unless the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Specific Marking Guidance

The marking grids have been designed to assess student work holistically. The grids identify which Assessment Objective is being targeted by each bullet point within the level descriptors. One bullet point is linked to one Assessment Objective; however, please note that the number of bullet points in the level descriptor does not directly correlate to the number of marks in the level descriptor.

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
- 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 each of the Assessment Objectives described in the 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

- examiners of Advanced GCE English should remember that all Assessment Objectives within a level are equally weighted. They must consider this when making their judgements
- the mark grid identifies which Assessment Objective is being targeted by each bullet point within the level descriptors
- 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.

Section A
Indicative content
Question 1

Topic: Global English
Subtopic: African American English

General

Candidates should be aware of the key features of African American English. Candidates may consider the gender and profession of both speakers and its influence on the language used.

Analysis

Candidates should comment on some of the following features:

Discourse

- use of backchannel and minimal responses for agreement, e.g. 'yeah man'
- use of shared frames of reference to create cohesion between speakers, e.g. 'PE' for Public Enemy
- use of colloquial quotative 'like'.

Morphology and syntax

- use of prepositions, e.g. 'we at'
- use of 'ain't'
- omission of prepositions, e.g. 'going to'
- inconsistent absence of copula, e.g. 'you right'
- inconsistent absence of auxiliary verbs, e.g. 'we sitting here', 'they not'
- use of multiple negation, e.g. 'never get invited to nothing', 'ain't get invited to nothing'.

Pragmatics

- use of stage names rather than their given names, e.g. 'Big', 'Ice'
- use of terms of address, e.g. 'bro', 'man'
- topic of Hip-Hop and artists, e.g. 'gangsta rappers', 'hardcore rappers'.

Lexis

- use of 'yo' as an interjection
- use of religious lexis, e.g. 'amen'
- use of idiomatic phrases, e.g. 'keep it real'.

Phonology

- use of distinctive stress patterns
- evidence of monophthongisation, e.g. 'no'
- lowering of /ɪ/ to create TRAP vowel in 'thing'
- evidence of yod-deletion, e.g. 'lying'
- inconsistent use of TH-stopping, e.g. 'nothing'
- evidence of elision, e.g. 'wanna', 'gonna'.

Accept any valid interpretation based on different linguistic approaches.

Indicative content
Question 2

Topic: Language and Gender Identity
Subtopic: Mixed-Gender Spoken Conversations

General

Candidates should show an awareness of a range of theories linking language, gender identity and conversational structures. Candidates should comment on the interaction between participants and the topic of this conversation.

Analysis

Candidates should comment on some of the following features:

Discourse:

- use of overlaps
- use of backchannelling
- use of adjacency pairs
- use of the quotative 'like'
- use of face-threatening acts from Andy, e.g. 'how can you spend hours of your life watching that?'
- use of mitigation and interrogatives as topic management strategies, e.g. 'just an hour every day', 'for how long?'

Lexis:

- use of taboo lexis, e.g. 'bitch'
- use of hedging, e.g. 'quite good'
- use of colloquial lexis, e.g. 'telly', 'stuff'
- use of dialect, e.g. 'owt', 'tabs'.

Syntax:

- use of tag questions to seek agreement, e.g. 'don't you?'
- use of modification of noun and verb phrases, e.g. 'cochlear implant', 'genuinely cheat'
- use of subject complement to describe feelings, e.g. 'quite good'
- use of exclamative, e.g. 'oh the drama.'

Phonology

- use of elision, e.g. 'because /kəz/'
- variable use of glottal stops across the participants
- use of elements to show emotions, e.g. 'awww', '[laughs]'.

Pragmatics

- use of names in a way which suggests shared knowledge between the participants, e.g. 'Diane'
- shared knowledge between female participants, e.g. 'she loves it'.

Accept any valid interpretation based on different linguistic approaches.

Indicative content**Question 3****Topic: Language and Journalism****Subtopic: Rock and Pop Music Journalism****General**

Candidates should have an awareness of the common conventions of music journalism and reviews. Candidates may discuss elements associated with the sub-genres of music.

Analysis

Candidates should comment on some of the following features:

Lexis:

- use of alliterative phrases, e.g. 'tension and turmoil', 'sweet scythe'
- use of opinionated lexis, e.g. 'giant hooks', 'guttural, shrieking'
- use of subject specific lexis, e.g. 'folkier', 'industrial electro', 'crescendo'
- use of hyperbole, e.g. 'tracks...unexpectedly explode', 'Queen of Darkness'
- use of metaphor, e.g. 'vocal sculpting', 'heavy guitars dissolve'
- use of lexical fields associated with sub-genre, e.g. 'mordant thrums,' 'haunting'.

Syntax:

- use of comparative clauses, e.g. 'Where 'Salt' is brooding...'Place in the Sun' puts it front and centre'
- use of parallelism, e.g. in paragraph 4
- use of modification, e.g. 'perfect counterweight', 'lurching destruction'
- use of lists, e.g. 'waits, wails, soars...'

Discourse:

- use of first-person perspective
- use of comparative references, e.g. 'isn't as metal-focused as predecessors'
- embedding of song titles from the album being reviewed
- narrative structure around journey and development of album
- use of scores for evaluation.

Pragmatics:

- reference to taboo topic typical of sub-genre, e.g. 'injection of amphetamine'
- use of popular culture references, e.g. 'David Sitek,' 'Assassin's Creed'.

Accept any valid interpretation based on different linguistic approaches.

Indicative content
Question 4

Topic: Language and Power

Subtopic: The Language of Professional Health Advice

General

Candidates should be aware of the conventions of professional health advice and the influential strategies used by health professionals.

Analysis

Candidates should comment on some of the following features:

Grammar and syntax

- use of imperatives, e.g. 'check your pulse rate', 'list your reasons to quit'
- use of adverbials, e.g. 'on your quitting journey', 'because your bronchial tubes are improving'
- use of fronted adverbials, e.g. 'with the right support', 'This October'
- use of conditional structures, e.g. 'if it's your first time'
- use of exclamative structures, e.g. 'You've got this!', 'More great news!'
- use of the present progressive, e.g. 'are improving'
- use of modified noun phrases, e.g. 'the perfect opportunity', 'the right help', 'a great decision'
- use of relative clauses, e.g. 'who have someone to help them quit'.

Lexis:

- use of blend to create campaign, e.g. 'Stoptober'
- use of colloquial expressions, e.g. 'checking out', 'throw away', 'stay on track'
- use of lexical field of health, e.g. 'pulse rate', 'circulation will have improved'
- use of subject specific lexis, e.g. 'carbon monoxide', 'bronchial tubes'
- use of comparative adjectives, e.g. 'sooner'.

Discourse:

- use of question-and-answer structure
- use of lists and bullet points for clarity
- use of direct address throughout
- use of hyperlinks to further information.

Pragmatics:

- use of assumed shared values, e.g. 'senses...are improving', 'your energy will be increasing'
- use of metaphor of journey typical of genre, e.g. 'on track'.

Accept any valid interpretation based on different linguistic approaches.

Indicative content**Question 5****Topic: Regional Language Variation****Subtopic: West Yorkshire****General**

Candidates should have an awareness of the key features of the West Yorkshire variety of English. Students may consider the different genres of the two texts.

Analysis

Candidates should comment on some of the following features:

Phonology:

- lack of FOOT/STRUT split in E1, e.g. 'done', 'does'
- evidence of h-dropping in E1, e.g. 'his'
- evidence of yod-insertion in E1, e.g. 'ado'
- use of glottal stops, e.g. 'haven't' (E1)
- representation of glottal stops in E2, e.g. 'wi'
- representation of monophthongisation in both texts, e.g. 'close' (E1); 'mi', 'ivvery' (E2)
- representation of elongation of vowels in E2, e.g. 'abaght', 'withaat'
- evidence and representation of final consonant deletion, e.g. 'last' (E1); 'tha', 'willin' (E2).

Morphology and syntax:

- dialectal use of verb in E2, e.g. 'says us nay'
- dialectal construction of phrases, e.g. 'go as far to say that' (E1); 'come thi ways' (E2)
- dialectal use of articles in E2, e.g. 'a Eve'.

Lexis:

- use of dialectal nouns, e.g. 'bletherings' (E1); 'lassie', 'mammy' (E2)
- use of dialectal verbs, e.g. 'stall'd' (E2)
- dialectal use of second-person singular pronouns, e.g. 'thee', 'thine' (E2)
- use of low frequency lexemes typical of dialect, e.g. 'twine' (E2).

Candidates may comment on the differences between the dialect features in the spoken text in comparison to the poem.

Accept any valid interpretation based on different linguistic approaches.

Please refer to the Specific Marking Guidance when applying this marking grid.

AO1 = bullet point 1 AO2 = bullet point 2 AO3 = bullet point 3		
Level	Mark	Descriptor (AO1, AO2, AO3)
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	Descriptive - Knowledge of methods of language analysis is largely unassimilated. Recalls limited range of terminology and makes frequent errors and technical lapses. - Knowledge of concepts and issues is limited. Uses a descriptive approach or paraphrases with little evidence of applying understanding to the data. - Lists contextual factors and language features. Makes limited links between these and the construction of meaning in the data.
Level 2	4–6	General understanding - Recalls methods of language analysis that show general understanding. Organises and expresses ideas with some clarity, though has lapses in use of terminology. - Summarises basic concepts and issues. Applies some of this understanding when discussing data. - Describes construction of meaning in the data. Uses examples of contextual factors or language features to support this.
Level 3	7–9	Clear relevant application - Applies relevant methods of language analysis to data with clear examples. Ideas are structured logically and expressed with few lapses in clarity and transitioning. Clear use of terminology. - Clear understanding and application of relevant concepts and issues to data. - Explains construction of meaning in data by making relevant links to contextual factors and language features.
Level 4	10–12	Discriminating controlled application - Controlled application of methods of language analysis supported with use of discriminating examples. Controls the structure of response with effective transitions, carefully chosen language and use of terminology. - Discriminating selection and application of a range of concepts and issues to the data. - Makes inferences about the construction of meaning in data by examining relevant links to contextual factors and language features.
Level 5	13–15	Critical and evaluative - Critical application of methods of language analysis with sustained examples. Uses sophisticated structure and expression with appropriate register and style, including use of appropriate terminology. - Evaluative application of a wide range of concepts and issues. - Critically examines relevant links to contextual factors and language features. Evaluates construction of meaning in data.

Section B

Indicative content

Question 6

Candidates will have researched/investigated various data so detailed indicative content is not applicable.

Topic: Global English

Subtopic: African American English

Possible content:

- candidates may argue for or against this statement, or take a balanced approach, using data from their research/investigation to support their views
- candidates are likely to consider the distinctive features of African American English
- candidates may engage with sociolinguistic debates surrounding questions about the linguistic legitimacy of African American English
- candidates are likely to engage with the typical debates surrounding the use of global varieties of English.

Should include references to some of the following points:

- relevant language frameworks and levels of African American English: phonology, morphology, lexis and semantics, grammar and syntax, discourse, pragmatics
- influence of any relevant social, historical, technological and cultural factors on African American English.

Indicative content

Question 7

Candidates will have researched/investigated various data so detailed indicative content is not applicable.

Topic: Language and Gender Identity

Subtopic: Mixed-Gender Spoken Conversations

Possible content:

- candidates may argue for or against this statement, or take a balanced approach, using data from their research/investigation to support their views
- candidates should consider stereotypical beliefs about language use in relation to gender and conversation theory
- candidates are likely to engage with the impact of different contexts on language use
- candidates may explore changing attitudes towards gender identity over time.

Should include references to some of the following points:

- relevant language frameworks and levels used in the language of mixed-gender spoken conversations, for example: phonology, morphology, lexis and semantics, grammar and syntax, discourse, pragmatics
- influence of any relevant social, historical, technological and cultural factors on the language of mixed-gender spoken conversations.

Indicative content
Question 8

Candidates will have researched/investigated various data so detailed indicative content is not applicable.

Topic: Language and Journalism
Subtopic: Rock and Pop Music Journalism

Possible content:

- candidates may argue for or against this statement, or take a balanced approach, using data from their research/investigation to support their views
- candidates are likely to consider the styles and approaches of different rock and pop music publications
- candidates are likely to engage with strategies relevant to presenting expert opinions
- candidates are likely to engage with the purpose and use of rock and pop music journalism.

Should include references to some of the following points:

- relevant language frameworks and levels used in rock and pop music journalism: lexis and semantics, grammar and syntax, graphology, discourse, pragmatics
- influence of social, cultural, technological and historical changes on rock and pop music journalism.

Indicative content
Question 9

Candidates will have researched/investigated various data so detailed indicative content is not applicable.

Topic: Language and Power

Subtopic: The Language of Professional Health Advice

Possible content:

- candidates may argue for or against this statement, or take a balanced approach, using data from their research/investigation to support their views
- candidates are likely to explore ideas about the purposes and goals of professional health advice
- candidates may consider the impact of different genres and producers of professional health advice
- candidates are likely to explore different linguistic strategies employed by professional health advice to establish and maintain power.

Should include references to some of the following points:

- relevant frameworks and levels used in the language of professional health advice: phonology, lexis and semantics, grammar and syntax, discourse, pragmatics
- influence of social, cultural, technological and historical changes on the language of professional health advice.

Indicative content
Question 10

Candidates will have researched/investigated various data so detailed indicative content is not applicable.

Topic: Regional Language Variation
Subtopic: West Yorkshire

Possible content:

- candidates may argue for or against this statement, or take a balanced approach, using data from their research/investigation to support their views
- candidates may consider historical attitudes towards the West Yorkshire variety of English as well as current attitudes and general attitudes towards regional accents
- candidates may consider the impact of media and technological developments on this variety and the impact this has had on the way the variety is represented
- candidates are likely to engage with discussion about the distinctive features of the West Yorkshire variety and the impact of dialect levelling.

Should include references to some of the following points:

- relevant language frameworks and levels of the West Yorkshire variety of English: phonology, morphology, lexis and semantics, grammar and syntax, discourse, pragmatics
- influence of any relevant social, historical, technological and cultural factors on the dialect of West Yorkshire.

Please refer to the **Specific Marking Guidance** when applying this marking grid.

AO1 = bullet point 1		AO2 = bullet point 2	AO3 = bullet point 3	AO4 = bullet point 4
Level	Mark	Descriptor (AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4)		
	0	No rewardable material.		
Level 1	1–6	Descriptive - Knowledge of methods of language analysis is largely unassimilated. Recalls limited range of terminology and makes frequent errors and technical lapses. - Knowledge of concepts and issues is limited. Uses a descriptive approach or paraphrases with little evidence of applying understanding to the data. - Lists contextual factors and language features. Makes limited links between these and the construction of meaning in the data. - Makes no connections between the data.		
Level 2	7–12	General understanding - Recalls methods of language analysis that show general understanding. Organises and expresses ideas with some clarity, though has lapses in use of terminology. - Summarises basic concepts and issues. Applies some of this understanding when discussing data. - Describes construction of meaning in the data. Uses examples of contextual factors or language features to support this. - Gives obvious similarities and differences. Makes links between the data and applies basic theories and concepts.		
Level 3	13–18	Clear relevant application - Applies relevant methods of language analysis to data with clear examples. Ideas are structured logically and expressed with few lapses in clarity and transitioning. Clear use of terminology. - Clear understanding and application of relevant concepts and issues to data. - Explains construction of meaning in data by making relevant links to contextual factors and language features. - Identifies relevant connections across data. Mostly supported by clear application of theories, concepts and methods.		
Level 4	19–24	Discriminating controlled application - Controlled application of methods of language analysis supported with use of discriminating examples. Controls the structure of response with effective transitions, carefully chosen language and use of terminology. - Discriminating selection and application of a range of concepts and issues to the data. - Makes inferences about the construction of meaning in data by examining relevant links to contextual factors and language features. - Analyses connections across data. Carefully selects and embeds use of theories, concepts and methods to draw conclusions about the data.		
Level 5	25–30	Critical and evaluative - Critical application of methods of language analysis with sustained examples. Uses sophisticated structure and expression with appropriate register and style, including use of appropriate terminology. - Evaluative application of a wide range of concepts and issues to the data. - Critically examines relevant links to contextual factors and language features. Evaluates construction of meaning in data. - Evaluates connections across data. Critically applies theories, concepts and methods to data.		