CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge IGCSE™

GERMAN **0525/21**

Paper 2 Reading **May/June 2026**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 45

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.

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026

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.

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026

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
	Only used for clarification to specify valid material, when other material is crossed out
BOD	If the examiner considers the answer to be more correct than incorrect, then 'benefit of the doubt' is given.
^	Omission
	Incomprehensible or illegible
SEEN	Used to show that blank pages have been seen and any creditworthy material has been awarded
HA	Harmless addition: used if the candidate extends their answer, without contradicting or invalidating the response.
INVL	Invalidates: used if the candidate includes material in their answer which contradicts the correct answer, and therefore invalidates their response.
IR	Irrelevant
tc	'tout court': on its own, the material is not sufficient to score the mark

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026

Additional Guidance

The following guidance underpins the detailed instructions provided in the mark scheme. Where a decision is taken to deviate from this guidance for a particular question, this will be specified in the mark scheme.

Often the additional guidance points will have to be weighed up against each other, e.g. the answer might look or sound like the intended word/phrase in German, but if what the candidate has written means something different in German from what is expected, the mark cannot be awarded.

It is not possible to list all acceptable alternatives in the mark scheme. If you encounter an answer which is not covered by the mark scheme, you will need to make a decision about whether it communicates the required elements (in consultation with your Team Leader if necessary, or with your Product Manager if you are a single examiner), and award marks accordingly.

- **Crossing out:**

(a)	If a candidate changes his/her mind about an answer and crosses out an attempt, award a mark if the final attempt is correct.
(b)	If a candidate crosses out an answer to a whole question but makes no second attempt at it, mark the crossed-out work.

- **More than the stipulated number of boxes ticked/crossed by the candidate:**

(a)	If more than one attempt is visible but the candidate has clearly indicated which attempt is his/her final answer (e.g. by crossing out other attempts or by annotating the script in some way), mark in the usual way.
(b)	If two attempts are visible (e.g. two boxes ticked instead of the one box stipulated), and neither has been crossed out/discounted by the candidate, no mark can be awarded.

- **For questions requiring more than one element for the answer, 1 and 2, where the answers are interchangeable:**

(a)	Both of the correct answers are on line 1 and line 2 blank (or vice versa) = 2 marks
(b)	Both correct answers on line 1 and line 2 contains a wrong answer (or vice versa) = 1 mark

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026

- **Mark for communication:** Answers requiring the use of German (rather than a non-verbal response) should be marked for communication. Tolerate inaccuracies provided that the message is clear. However, do **not** accept incorrect German if the word written by the candidate means something else in German (unless the mark scheme specifies otherwise).

(a)	If you read aloud what the candidate has written, does it sound like the correct answer? Would a native speaker of German understand it?
(b)	Does what the candidate has written look like the correct answer, e.g. one letter missing but no other word created? Would a native speaker of German understand it?

- **No response and '0' marks:**

(a)	**Award NR (no response):** If there is nothing written at all in the answer space or If there is only a comment which does not in any way relate to the question being asked (e.g. 'can't do' or 'don't know') or If there is only a mark which isn't an attempt at the question (e.g. a dash, a question mark).
(b)	**Award 0:** If there is any attempt that earns no credit, e.g. the candidate has copied out part or all of the question.

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026

- **Extra material:** Candidates need to answer the questions in such a way as to demonstrate that they have understood the text. The mark scheme cannot cover all eventualities so where specific instructions are not provided, the examiner must check the text to ensure that the correct elements which would attract the mark are not contradicted or distorted by any extra material. The following general rules should be applied:

(a)	Extra material, mentioned in the mark scheme, which reinforces the correct answer or in itself constitutes an alternative correct answer:	This is acceptable and is not penalised.
(b)	Extra material which constitutes an alternative answer, **but which is not explicitly mentioned in the mark scheme**:	The examiner needs to decide, by consulting the transcript/text and the Team Leader, if necessary, whether the alternative answer constitutes: (i) an alternative correct answer, in which case this falls into category (a) and the answer should be rewarded, or (ii) an answer which on its own would be rejected, in which case this falls into category (c) and the answer should be rejected.
(c)	Extra material which constitutes an alternative answer **specifically** rejected in the mark scheme:	This puts the examiner in the position of having to 'choose' which the intended answer is. The examiner cannot therefore be sure what the candidate has understood, and the mark cannot be awarded.
(d)	Extra material which distorts or contradicts the correct answer:	This affects communication. The examiner cannot be sure what the candidate has understood and therefore the mark cannot be awarded.
(e)	Extra material introduced by the candidate and which does not feature in the original text:	This affects communication. The examiner cannot be sure what the candidate has understood and therefore the mark cannot be awarded. It can sometimes be difficult to draw the line between what is a deduction made by an able candidate on the basis of what they have read and pure guesswork. Therefore, where a particular answer is not covered by the mark scheme, the examiner should consult the Team Leader.

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026

Detailed Mark Scheme

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1(a)	F	**1**	
1(b)	B	**1**	
1(c)	C	**1**	
1(d)	D	**1**	
1(e)	A	**1**	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(a)	B	**1**	
2(b)	A	**1**	
2(c)	G	**1**	
2(d)	H	**1**	
2(e)	E	**1**	

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
3(a)	B	**1**	
3(b)	C	**1**	
3(c)	C	**1**	
3(d)	B	**1**	
3(e)	C	**1**	
3(f)	B	**1**	
3(g)	A	**1**	

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026

Before marking **Question 4**, read the section *Additional Guidance and the bullet points below*.

- Spelling errors: use look alike and sound alike rules for misspellings. Do not accept misspellings that constitute another word in the target language
- Emphasis on answer location, not on precise lifting
- Go with candidates on HA (harmless addition) on **Question 4** if a few words are added that do not invalidate the answer
- The subject needs to be unambiguous. (Personal pronouns/possessives need to be used in such a way as to make the answer unambiguous.)
- Any manipulation of language must be correct, including where a candidate adds extra material that is not required to answer the question
- Errors in tense may be acceptable depending on the context of the question.

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
Before marking **Question 4**, read the section *Additional Guidance*.			
4(a)	(In den) letzten Winterferien	**1**	
4(b)	In den Bergen/ In der Schweiz	**1**	**ACCEPT** either or both elements. Insist on prepositions
4(c)	Was: (er wollte) Skifahren	**1**	**ACCEPT:** Skifahren lernen
	Warum: (er ist) sehr sportlich	**1**	
4(d)	Die richtige Ausrüstung mieten	**1**	
4(e)	unbequem	**1**	
4(f)	(sehr) sonnig	**1**	
4(g)	(gar) nicht hilfsbereit	**1**	
4(h)	Er hat (sich) das/sein Bein gebrochen	**1**	**ACCEPT**: es gab einen Crash
4(i)	Fünf Tage/5 Tage	**1**	
4(j)	**Sie** trank (wunderschöne) heiße Schokolade (in einem hübschen Café).	**1**	**MANIPULATION** required: ich – sie

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
4(k)	Nächstes Jahr werden **sie** einen Strandurlaub machen/ **sie** werden einen Strandurlaub machen/ einen Strandurlaub **zu** machen	**1**	Manipulation required: wir – sie or addition of zu **Refuse**: einen Strandurlaub (tc)

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
5	8, 5, 6, 1, 3	**5**	

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026

Before marking **Question 6,** read the section *Additional Guidance* and the bullet points below.

- Spelling errors: use look alike and sound alike rules for misspellings. Do not accept misspellings that constitute another word in the target language
- A precise lift is needed, not just the location of material
- Use HA (harmless addition) for extra information that does not contradict a correct answer
- Use INV (invalidation) for information which contradicts the correct answer
- The subject needs to be unambiguous. Possessives, personal pronouns need to be used in such a way as to make the answer unambiguous.
- Any manipulation of language must be correct, including where a candidate adds extra material that is not required to answer the question.

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
Before marking **Question 6**, read the section *Additional Guidance*.			
6(a)	drei- bis viermal im Jahr	**1**	**ACCEPT:** drei- bis viermal pro Jahr
6(b)	**Er ist** Sänger	**1**	**MANIPULATION** required: ich bin – er ist. Insist on correct verb. **REFUSE:** Sänger (tc)
6(c)	Mit **seiner** Schwester	**1**	Manipulation required: meiner – seiner
6(d)	Weine aus Deutschland und Österreich	**1**	
6(e)	An Ständen	**1**	
6(f)	Was: als **sie** die berühmte Sachertorte gemacht haben	**1**	**MANIPULATION** required: wir – sie.
	Warum: (denn) alle mögen Sachertorte	**1**	**ACCEPT** – als **sie** die berühmte Sachertorte gemacht **hat** (singular) Denn Carla/sie liebt/mag Sachertorte
6(g)	**Weil** er großer Buch-Fan ist. **Er ist** (ein) großer Buch-Fan	**1**	**MANIPULATION** required: als – weil + addition of er ist OR Removal of als and addition of er ist **ACCEPT**: In **seiner** Stadt gibt es jedes Jahr eine Literaturveranstaltung.

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
6(h)	**1** (Man kann) (bei diesem Festival) (verschiedene) Autoren kennenlernen	**1**	an Schreibworkshops teilnehmen
	2 (Man kann) bei Schreibworkshops mitmachen.	**1**	Schreibworkshops machen
6(i)	**(Die Autorin wird/ sie wird)** eine (kleine) Gruppe (im Café) (persönlich) treffen. Nach der Lesung wird die Autorin/ wird sie eine (kleine) Gruppe (im Café) (persönlich) treffen.	**1**	**MANIPULATION** required: Word order. OR **ACCEPT** replacement of danach with nach der Lesung. **REFUSE**: Anything beginning with danach

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2026