

Grade Descriptions for Cambridge International AS Level Accounting 9706

What are grade descriptions?

Grade descriptions describe the level of performance typically demonstrated by candidates achieving the different grades awarded for a qualification. For Cambridge International AS Levels, they describe performance at three levels – grades ‘E’, ‘C’ and ‘A’.

Grade descriptions sit alongside other key documents that illustrate examination standards, including:

- the syllabus, which presents what students should be taught over a course of study and explains how this is assessed
- the specimen assessment materials, which exemplify the structure of the assessment and the kinds of tasks that candidates complete
- grade thresholds, which show the total mark required to achieve a grade.

Grade descriptions are produced with a wide range of audiences in mind. For teachers, they support lesson planning and curriculum development, while students may gain useful insights into what is required to achieve a high grade and what candidate performance at lower grades typically looks like. For university admissions staff and employers, and those less familiar with Cambridge, they paint a picture of typical performance at different grades.

Cambridge publishes grade descriptions for a qualification once examinations have taken place for the first time, and we review them when a qualification is substantially revised. They are developed by highly experienced examiners who understand performance standards in the subject area and have studied samples of candidate work.

How do I use this resource?

Grade descriptions are presented as a grid, with content areas at the start of each row and the different grades at the top of each column.

The content areas group together various aspects of the syllabus – they reflect topics, assessment objectives, key concepts, syllabus aims and/or components. The way they are organised is specific to each subject.

For each content area, there is a descriptor for each grade. Reading across the row from left to right, the descriptors represent increasing levels of performance, with each grade descriptor building on, and including, the last.

Each column represents overall performance at a particular grade. Reading down the column from top to bottom, the descriptors capture the range of knowledge, understanding and skills that a candidate comfortably achieving the grade is likely to demonstrate.

Cambridge produces grade descriptions to support teaching and learning and the interpretation of candidate scores and grades. We do not use them to set grade thresholds. As such, they cannot be used to challenge the grade awarded to any individual candidate.

Grade descriptions

Area of knowledge, understanding and skills	Typical performance at grade E	Typical performance at grade C	Typical performance at grade A
Financial accounting	<p>Students show a knowledge of sole traders, partnerships and limited companies and recognise the advantages and disadvantages of each. They recognise possible funding methods.</p> <p>Students show a knowledge of capital and revenue expenditure.</p> <p>Students carry out basic depreciation calculations and make entries to ledger accounts. Disposal entries contain a range of errors.</p>	<p>Students explain the advantages and disadvantages of each business entity and demonstrate an understanding of each entity. They demonstrate an understanding of various funding methods.</p> <p>Students explain the difference between capital and revenue expenditure.</p> <p>Students carry out more complex depreciation calculations and enter them in ledger accounts. Disposal entries contain some errors.</p>	<p>Students exemplify the advantages and disadvantages of each business entity with clear and concise differentiation. They show a full understanding of funding methods, supported by concise explanation.</p> <p>Students exemplify the difference between capital and revenue expenditure, drawing on examples.</p> <p>Students carry out all required depreciation calculations and enter them correctly in ledger accounts. Disposal entries contain no errors.</p>
Preparation of financial statements	<p>Students prepare financial statements for the required entities after accounting for some adjustments. They know the layout, but the statements contain a range of errors.</p>	<p>Students prepare financial statements after accounting for most adjustments. The statements are in the prescribed format, but there are a limited number of errors.</p>	<p>Students prepare financial statements after accounting for all adjustments. The statements are prepared to a high standard and in the prescribed format. There are few or no errors.</p>
Cost and management accounting	<p>Students prepare a basic profit statement, showing direct and indirect costs using absorption and marginal costing.</p>	<p>Students prepare a profit statement using absorption costing, which accounts for under- and overabsorption, and a profit statement using marginal costing.</p>	<p>Students prepare a profit statement using both absorption and marginal costing with very few errors. They explain the causes of under- and overabsorption and discuss the usefulness of marginal costing.</p>

Area of knowledge, understanding and skills	Typical performance at grade E	Typical performance at grade C	Typical performance at grade A
	Students show a knowledge of the advantages and limitations of cost–volume–profit analysis.	Students develop their knowledge of cost–volume–profit analysis to advise users to make business decisions.	Students carry out a detailed cost–volume–profit analysis considering all factors, including non-financial ones, and can advise users accordingly.
Analysing and interpreting data	Students calculate profitability, liquidity and efficiency ratios, and provide a limited analysis of the results and are able to use relevant information.	Students calculate profitability, liquidity and efficiency ratios and interpret the results to benefit the users and aid decision-making using the relevant information.	Students calculate profitability, liquidity and efficiency ratios and provide a report detailing methods of improvement and limitations. They make informed business decisions using a range of relevant information.
Evaluation	Students can advise a user which option to take and justify the decision with one or two valid points.	Students can advise a user which option to take and justify the decision with more than two valid points.	Students can advise a user which option to take and justify the decision with a comprehensive range of valid points which consider all options.

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