

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL AS & A LEVEL

Marine Science 9693

Assessment Overview

Examinations 2028, 2029 and 2030

How the qualification is assessed

The table shows the papers and components described for this syllabus. AS candidates take the designated AS components; the full A Level includes the additional components shown. A component's raw mark is the total available on that assessment; its weighting is the share of the qualification result, which may differ from its share of raw marks.

Paper or component	Duration	Raw marks	Weighting	Question or task structure
1: AS Level Theory	1 h 45 min	75	AS 50%; A 25%	Structured and free-response questions
2: AS Level Data-handling and Investigative Skills	1 h 45 min	75	AS 50%; A 25%	Written data and practical-investigation questions
3: A Level Theory	1 h 45 min	75	A 25%	Advanced structured and free-response questions
4: A Level Data-handling and Investigative Skills	1 h 45 min	75	A 25%	Written advanced data, statistics and planning

Read the weighting against your qualification route. A longer paper or a larger raw-mark total does not automatically mean a greater final weighting. Prepare for every component that applies to you, including practical, oral or coursework requirements where specified.

What each component requires

AS Level is assessed through two written papers.

Paper One, AS Level Theory, lasts one hour and forty-five minutes and is worth seventy-five marks. It contains structured questions followed by free-response questions based on the AS topics.

Paper Two, AS Level Data-handling and Investigative Skills, has the same duration and marks. It uses structured questions to assess data analysis, calculations, experimental planning, graphs, tables, biological drawings and evaluation of investigations.

Each paper contributes fifty per cent of AS Level, or twenty-five per cent of the full A Level.

A Level candidates also take Paper Three and Paper Four. Each lasts one hour and forty-five minutes, carries seventy-five marks and contributes twenty-five per cent of the full qualification.

Paper Three assesses A Level theory through structured and extended free-response questions. Although it concentrates on the advanced topics, relevant AS knowledge may also be required.

Paper Four assesses advanced data handling and investigative skills. It includes structured and extended responses, statistical analysis and experimental planning with less scaffolding than Paper Two. Again, this is a written examination rather than a live practical test.

You may complete AS Level as a standalone qualification, carry an eligible AS result forward to finish the A Level in a later series, or take all four papers together.

AS Level grades range from lowercase a to e, while the full A Level is graded from A-star to E.

Preparing the right kind of response

For numerical answers, show a clear method and units. For data questions, distinguish a description of the results from an explanation using scientific ideas. In investigation questions, identify variables, measurement methods and specific improvements. A general statement such as "make it more accurate" needs an explanation of how.

The assessment objectives are visible in the response itself: relevant knowledge, appropriate use of the stimulus or task, a clear method or explanation, and a conclusion where requested. The command word and mark allocation help show the depth required. An answer should respond to the actual question, not reproduce a memorised passage that only partly fits.

Timing and examination arrangements

Begin preparation with accurate, untimed work, then move towards the duration and conditions of your required component. Use mark allocations to guide pacing while allowing time to read instructions and check the response. Any practice pacing advice is study guidance, not a new Cambridge time rule.

Examinations are available in the June and November series, and private candidates may enter.

An approved examination centre confirms entries, available component options, deadlines and any practical or speaking arrangements. Preparation-course access does not itself constitute an examination entry. All four components are written examinations. Investigative learning is still needed for the data-handling and practical-skills questions.

Key pointers: Know your required components, follow question choices precisely and practise the relevant response formats. **Next:** Open **Learning Resources** to see which materials support this preparation.