

Cambridge CAIE Physics 9702

Command Word Guide & Grade Boundary Tracker

Grade Boundaries

Session	A*	A	B	C	D	E
Nov 2025	214	190	166	138	110	83
Jun 2025	202	177	152	126	100	74

Out of 260 (AC combination — Papers 1, 2, 4, 4, 5). Source: Cambridge International published grade threshold tables, Nov 2025 & Jun 2025. Always verify current thresholds at [cambridgeinternational.org](https://www.cambridgeinternational.org).

Command Word Mastery

Mark schemes for Cambridge CAIE 9702 attach specific meaning to each command word below. Misreading one of these costs marks a student's working had already earned.

Command Word	What It Demands	Common Student Error	Workshop Fix
Determine	Calculate a numerical answer with method shown, to the correct significant figures with correct units	Correct method and value but wrong significant figures, or missing units — both cost the final mark	Drill phase: every "Determine" answer checked against significant-figure and unit conventions
Explain	Give a reasoned account using physics principles — not just a restatement of the observation	Describing what happens without explaining why, in terms of the underlying physics	Anatomy phase: "Explain" answers deconstructed against required physics vocabulary
Suggest	Apply known physics to an unfamiliar context — more than one answer may be acceptable	Treating "Suggest" as requiring one "correct" textbook answer, second-guessing a valid response	Close phase: peer comparison shows multiple mark-scheme-acceptable approaches
Estimate	Use a sensible assumption and simple calculation for an order-of-magnitude answer	Refusing to make an assumption, or over-calculating with unnecessary precision	Open Forum: rapid "Estimate" drills building confidence in stating assumptions