

Cambridge International AS & A Level

TRAVEL & TOURISM**9395/32**

Paper 3 Destination Marketing

October/November 2025**MARK SCHEME**Maximum Mark: 50

Published

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the October/November 2025 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

This document consists of **20** printed pages.

Generic Marking Principles

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptions for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

Social Science-Specific Marking Principles (for point-based marking)

1 Components using point-based marking:

- Point marking is often used to reward knowledge, understanding and application of skills. We give credit where the candidate's answer shows relevant knowledge, understanding and application of skills in answering the question. We do not give credit where the answer shows confusion.

From this it follows that we:

- a** DO credit answers which are worded differently from the mark scheme if they clearly convey the same meaning (unless the mark scheme requires a specific term)
- b** DO credit alternative answers/examples which are not written in the mark scheme if they are correct
- c** DO credit answers where candidates give more than one correct answer in one prompt/numbered/scaffolded space where extended writing is required rather than list-type answers. For example, questions that require n reasons (e.g. State two reasons ...).
- d** DO NOT credit answers simply for using a 'key term' unless that is all that is required. (Check for evidence it is understood and not used wrongly.)
- e** DO NOT credit answers which are obviously self-contradicting or trying to cover all possibilities
- f** DO NOT give further credit for what is effectively repetition of a correct point already credited unless the language itself is being tested. This applies equally to 'mirror statements' (i.e. polluted/not polluted).
- g** DO NOT require spellings to be correct, unless this is part of the test. However spellings of syllabus terms must allow for clear and unambiguous separation from other syllabus terms with which they may be confused (e.g. Corrasion/Corrosion)

2 Presentation of mark scheme:

- Slashes (/) or the word 'or' separate alternative ways of making the same point.
- Semi colons (;) bullet points (•) or figures in brackets (1) separate different points.
- Content in the answer column in brackets is for examiner information/context to clarify the marking but is not required to earn the mark (except Accounting syllabuses where they indicate negative numbers).

3 Calculation questions:

- The mark scheme will show the steps in the most likely correct method(s), the mark for each step, the correct answer(s) and the mark for each answer
- If working/explanation is considered essential for full credit, this will be indicated in the question paper and in the mark scheme. In all other instances, the correct answer to a calculation should be given full credit, even if no supporting working is shown.
- Where the candidate uses a valid method which is not covered by the mark scheme, award equivalent marks for reaching equivalent stages.
- Where an answer makes use of a candidate's own incorrect figure from previous working, the 'own figure rule' applies: full marks will be given if a correct and complete method is used. Further guidance will be included in the mark scheme where necessary and any exceptions to this general principle will be noted.

4 Annotation:

- For point marking, ticks can be used to indicate correct answers and crosses can be used to indicate wrong answers. There is no direct relationship between ticks and marks. Ticks have no defined meaning for levels of response marking.
- For levels of response marking, the level awarded should be annotated on the script.
- Other annotations will be used by examiners as agreed during standardisation, and the meaning will be understood by all examiners who marked that paper.














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
	Correct point
	Incorrect point
	Benefit of doubt given
	Repetition
	Not answered question
	Content of response too vague
	Page or response seen by examiner
	Blank page
	Knowledge and understanding
	Application
	Analysis
	Evaluation
	Development of point

Assessment objectives**AO1 Knowledge and understanding**

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of facts, terms and concepts of travel and tourism.

AO2 Application

Apply knowledge and understanding of facts, terms and concepts to familiar and unfamiliar contexts in travel and tourism.

AO3 Analysis

Analyse travel and tourism issues, showing an understanding of the possible impacts of those issues on travel and tourism, and use appropriate research techniques.

AO4 Evaluation

Evaluate information to develop arguments, understand implications, draw inferences and make judgements, recommendations and decisions.

Tables **A–D** will be used for specific questions. Please refer to the question for which tables should be used when appropriate.

Table A

Level	AO1 Knowledge and understanding 3 marks Description	AO3 Analysis and research 3 marks Description	AO4 Evaluation 3 marks Description
3	3 marks The response contains a range of explained valid points.	3 marks The response is well-balanced and considers the significance of each of the valid points mentioned. AND/OR The arguments for and against each valid point mentioned are given.	3 marks The response contains a well-supported evaluation or recommendation/s with supporting evidence or reasoning given.
2	2 marks The response contains some explained valid points.	2 marks The response gives some consideration of the significance of some of the valid points mentioned. OR The arguments for and against most of the valid points mentioned are given.	2 marks The response contains evaluation or a recommendation with some supporting evidence or reasoning given.
1	1 mark The response is likely to be a list of valid points with little or no explanation.	1 mark The response gives some consideration to the significance of at least one valid point. OR The arguments for or against at least one of the valid points are given.	1 mark The response contains evaluation or a recommendation, but no supporting evidence or reasoning is given.
0	0 marks No creditable response.	0 marks No creditable response.	0 marks No creditable response.

Table B

Level	AO2 Application 3 marks Description	AO3 Analysis and research 3 marks Description	AO4 Evaluation 3 marks Description
3	3 marks The response includes an explanation of why each of the points mentioned are relevant/suitable to the context of the question.	3 marks The response is well-balanced and considers significance of each of the valid points mentioned. AND/OR The arguments for and against each valid point mentioned are given.	3 marks The response contains a well-supported evaluation or recommendation/s with supporting evidence or reasoning given.
2	2 marks The response includes an explanation of why some of the points mentioned are relevant/suitable to the context of the question.	2 marks The response gives some consideration of the significance of some of the valid points mentioned. OR The arguments for and against some of the valid points mentioned are given.	2 marks The response contains evaluation or a recommendation with some supporting evidence or reasoning given.
1	1 mark At least one point has an explanation of why it is relevant/suitable to the context of the question.	1 mark The response gives some consideration of the significance of at least one valid point. OR The arguments for or against at least one of the valid points are given.	1 mark The response contains evaluation or a recommendation, but no supporting evidence or reasoning is given.
0	0 marks No creditable response	0 marks No creditable response	0 marks No creditable response

Table C

Level	AO1 Knowledge and understanding 4 marks Description	AO3 Analysis and research 4 marks Description	AO4 Evaluation 4 marks Description
4	4 marks The response contains a range of valid points with a detailed explanation of each.	4 marks The response is well-balanced and considers the significance of each of the valid points mentioned. AND/OR The arguments for and against each valid point are given.	4 marks The response contains a well-supported and reasoned evaluation or recommendation/s. Judgements are made why some points are more valid than others.
3	3 marks The response contains a range of valid, explained points.	3 marks The response considers the significance of most of the valid points mentioned. OR The arguments for and against most valid points are given.	3 marks The response contains a well-supported evaluation or recommendation/s with supporting evidence or reasoning given.
2	2 marks The response contains some explained valid points.	2 marks The response gives some consideration of the significance of some of the valid points mentioned. OR The arguments for and against some valid points are given.	2 marks The response contains evaluation or a recommendation with some supporting evidence or reasoning given.
1	1 mark The response is likely to be a list of valid points with little or no explanation.	1 mark The response gives some consideration of the significance of at least one valid point. OR The arguments for or against at least one of the valid points are given.	1 mark The response contains evaluation or a recommendation, but no supporting evidence or reasoning is given.
0	0 marks No creditable response.	0 marks No creditable response.	0 marks No creditable response.

Table D

Level	AO2 Application 4 marks Description	AO3 Analysis and research 4 marks Description	AO4 Evaluation 4 marks Description
4	4 marks The response includes detailed explanation of why each point mentioned is relevant/suitable to the context of the question.	4 marks The response is well-balanced and considers the significance of each of the valid points mentioned. AND/OR The arguments for and against each valid point are given.	4 marks The response contains a well-supported and reasoned evaluation or recommendation/s. Judgements are made why some points are more valid than others.
3	3 marks The response includes an explanation of why most of the points mentioned are relevant/suitable to the context of the question.	3 marks The response considers the significance of most of the valid points mentioned. OR The arguments for and against most valid points are given.	3 marks The response contains a well-supported evaluation or recommendation/s with supporting evidence or reasoning given.
2	2 marks The response includes an explanation of why some of the points mentioned are relevant/suitable to the context of the question.	2 marks The response gives some consideration of the significance of some of the valid points mentioned. OR The arguments for and against some valid points are given.	2 marks The response contains evaluation or a recommendation with some supporting evidence or reasoning given.
1	1 mark At least one point made has an explanation of why it is relevant/suitable to the context of the question.	1 mark The response gives some consideration of the significance of at least one valid point. OR The arguments for or against at least one of the valid points are given.	1 mark The response contains evaluation or a recommendation, but no supporting evidence or reasoning is given.
0	0 marks No creditable response.	0 marks No creditable response.	0 marks No creditable response.

Question	Answer	Marks
1(a)	<p>Explain <u>two</u> factors the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) will have considered when selecting communication methods for the new marketing campaign.</p> <p>AO1 Knowledge with understanding (up to 2 marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs / expenses • Global reach • 24-hour marketing • Lead times • Options for personalisation / customisation • Ability to track success / conversion rates <p>AO2 Application (up to 2 marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAT will have set a budget / need sufficient finance / money / funding to ensure the campaign is affordable. • The campaign has been launched to key markets – New York, Barcelona, Osaka and Sydney – using online communication methods will ensure the message spreads further. Marketing communications must be seen by potential visitors from local, national and international markets. • Online methods remove the issue of time zones and contact hours to ensure potential customers can access information 24/7. • Communication methods will be chosen to support the campaign based on how long the materials take to produce – TV advertisements have a long lead time; posts on social media do not take long to prepare. • Direct marketing means customers' names can be used to customise emails, for example. • Numbers of likes, shares, reposts are good; number of visits to the website compared with numbers of bookings, etc. <p>Accept any reasonable answers.</p>	4

Question	Answer	Marks
1(b)	<p>Discuss the role of commercial travel and tourism organisations in communicating a destination brand.</p> <p>Use table A to mark candidate responses to this question.</p> <p>AO1 – out of 3 marks AO3 – out of 3 marks AO4 – out of 3 marks</p> <p>Indicative content</p> <p>AO1 Knowledge with understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial organisations make up the majority of the travel and tourism businesses in a destination. • They provide many of the goods, services and experiences enjoyed by visitors. • Commercial operators, especially attraction providers, often draw visitors to a destination. • They often have their own corporate brand identity – e.g. international hotel chains. • They also contribute to the destination branding process – investing in infrastructure, funding marketing efforts, joining in the launch etc. • Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) who support NTOs, RTOs and local tourism organisations in destination are usually commercially run. <p>AO3 Analysis and research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination branding is usually achieved through a partnership between the public sector – Ministry of Tourism or NTO, RTO, local tourism organisations and the private sector – commercial operators, including accommodation providers, transport providers and attraction operators. • Commercial enterprises have expertise in branding and marketing so are useful in the branding process, often offering their resources in this way. • They also tend to contribute towards the financing of a new destination brand as they know increased exposure will benefit them as an organisation, with increased customer bases. • Commercial organisations often incorporate the destination brand into their own marketing efforts to help bring more exposure. 	9

Question	Answer	Marks
1(b)	<p>AO4 Evaluation and decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commercial organisations can really help support the destination branding process, with their experience and expertise in marketing and with their financial resources.• Commercial organisations may already have a loyal customer base, and they can help bring the new destination brand to the attention of their existing customers to help bring wider exposure at no extra cost.• Commercial organisations often act as sponsors to the destination brand – they put their name to all marketing, and in many cases, the draw of a well-known privately-owned business helps a destination brand attract attention.• Joint marketing campaigns between commercial operators and NTOs are common, but it is important that the destination branding does not get overshadowed by the branding of the commercial organisation. This could lead to confusion from a customer's perspective. <p>Accept any reasonable answers.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
1(c)	<p>Evaluate Thailand's decision to focus more on increasing visitor spending as a key performance indicator.</p> <p>Use Table D to mark candidate responses to this question.</p> <p>AO2 = out of 4 marks AO3 = out of 4 marks AO4 = out of 4 marks</p> <p>Indicative content</p> <p>AO2 Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAT has traditionally used the number of tourist arrivals as its main measure of performance. • The latest tourism strategy identifies that TAT should be less concerned with attracting large numbers of tourists and should focus on increasing the tourism spend of a smaller number of tourists. • This strategy is more sustainable for Thailand as a destination. • Encouraging visitors to take part in multi-centre stays might mean more money is spent within the local economies. <p>AO3 Analysis and research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAT's tourism strategy has identified that high visitor arrival numbers do not necessarily benefit Thailand as a destination. • More visitors can have a detrimental impact on the tourism footprint in Thailand and is not sustainable – carrying capacities may be stretched, which leads to problems with infrastructure and resources, which will impact local residents also. • The tourism strategy has identified that it is more important to encourage fewer visitors to spend more time, at multiple sites throughout Thailand, and to spend more money in the destination. • High-value tourism, not high-volume tourism is a key decision for TAT. Visitor arrival numbers are easy to obtain data about; tourism spending is also already monitored but more data may be required. 	12

Question	Answer	Marks
1(c)	<p>AO4 Evaluation and decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any data that enables TAT to track the impact of a destination marketing campaign and helps them design more sustainable tourism practices is useful. Tourism spending can be useful data, but currently this is collected as a total or an average. It may be difficult to track individual tourism spend across a range of holiday destinations within Thailand. High value tourism means attracting the luxury market. This may require inward investment by tourism providers in Thailand to increase the accommodation stock to meet the high value, luxury market's needs. Thailand currently attracts a large number of budget travellers as well – the tourism strategy needs to address this market too – tourism spend from this group is unlikely to be considered high value. Visitor arrival numbers are also important to track as a KPI – but it is sensible to be wary of too great an influx of visitors if the carrying capacity of Thailand is under strain and if the tourism provision is unsustainable. There are a number of other KPIs that TAT could also incorporate into their strategy, including destination popularity ranking, changes in average length of stay, changes in occupancy rates, job creation / job losses within the tourism sector, changes in market share and increase/decrease in brand awareness. Each of these will add value to TAT's market research when adjusting their tourism strategy in the future. <p>Accept any reasonable answers.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
2(a)	<p>Explain <u>two</u> differentiation strategies the CTM uses to make Cuba stand out from its competitors.</p> <p>AO1 Knowledge and understanding (up to 2 marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlighting the destination's USP. • Using a slogan or a hashtag. • Emphasising the uniqueness of the local people / culture / attractions. • Promoting the beaches / climate / natural environment. <p>AO2 Application (up to 2 marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasising Cuba's name as part of the brand slogan and reinforcing it with the #cubaunica will make Cuba unique compared to other destinations. • Recognising that the people of Cuba is what makes it unique as a destination is a good differentiation strategy – using the people as ambassadors enables others to recognise the uniqueness of the people by them being warm and welcoming to tourists. • The music and dance of Cuba is traditional – using this as a cultural appeal will help make Cuba stand out from other Caribbean Island destinations. • Using the natural environment as a USP helps attract visitors to Cuba instead of other destinations. <p>Accept any reasonable answers.</p>	4

Question	Answer	Marks
2(b)	<p>Use PESTLE analysis to assess the external influences on Cuba as a tourist destination.</p> <p>Use Table B to mark candidate responses to this question.</p> <p>AO2 – out of 3 marks AO3 – out of 3 marks AO4 – out of 3 marks</p> <p>AO2 Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political – Cuba is a socialist state / there is political instability. • Economic – in economic decline; imports 70% of its food; has highest inflation rate in the Caribbean. • Social – 3% migration; demands for freedom of speech. • Technological – power shortages during hurricane season. • Legal – limits imposed on social media and internet access. • Environmental – prone to hurricanes; has beautiful beaches and generally excellent weather. <p>AO3 Analysis and research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being a socialist state, Cuba has a communist society with one state, one party, and political dissent is not allowed. This impacts the local population. There are laws restricting the general public's access to the internet and social media, especially following demands for more freedom of speech. This has caused large numbers of Cubans to migrate elsewhere – this causes a 'brain drain', with educated Cuban workers leaving their roles. • As a tourist destination, the political situation in Cuba makes visitors curious about life in a communist state. More importantly a country in economic decline and with huge rates of inflation and the need to import so much of its food is likely to be expensive for tourists which may put people off visiting. • Hurricane season, although not usually the cause of serious damage, is enough to interrupt power supplies, which again makes Cuba less appealing to tourists. • Beautiful beaches and a generally good climate are the major reasons for the appeal of Cuba. Introducing more emphasis on Cuban culture is likely to bring in more tourists. 	9

Question	Answer	Marks
2(b)	<p>AO4 Evaluation and decision making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuba has a difficult political situation, with no form of dissent allowed and people forced to follow the legislation of the government, even where freedom of speech and expression is limited. Tourists may not realise the conditions under which the locals live, especially as the new tourism campaign involves the people as tourism ambassadors – it gives the impression that the government and the local community are working harmoniously together. • Beach tourism and the excellent climate being seen as a pull factor in Cuba masks the fact that electricity supplies are often interrupted during hurricane season and that life for the locals is difficult under these circumstances. Tourists would not be happy if their hotels are plunged into darkness and will also be frustrated if they cannot access internet pages that they want because of the government limitations imposed; tourists from democratic countries are unaccustomed to having such restrictions imposed. • Economic pressures, high inflation rates and high importation of food items will also impact on tourists visiting Cuba. Many wish to sample local dishes as part of their trip – 70% of food being imported means the cuisine is not made up of local produce, so may be disappointing for those looking to taste authentic Cuban gastronomy. <p>Accept any reasonable answers.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
2(c)	<p>Discuss the level of involvement the local community may have in helping to launch a new destination brand.</p> <p>Use Table C to mark candidate responses to this question.</p> <p>AO1 = out of 4 marks AO3 = out of 4 marks AO4 = out of 4 marks</p> <p>AO1 Knowledge with understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local community members might be asked to represent the destination brand as a brand ambassador. Local community members are often those employed in the tourism industry as taxi drivers, hotel workers, tour guides etc, so they would be involved in upholding the destination brand and may attend the event to service the invited guests. Local community members might be amongst the key personnel appointed by the Guardians of the Brand to help launch the new destination brand, preparing for the launch and attending the launch event. Local community members may be interviewed by local media outlets to give insight into how they feel the destination brand represents them in the community. <p>AO3 Analysis and research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representing the interests of the local community in a destination brand's activation plan is crucial to the success of launching the brand – local people form part of the network of key personnel working with the guardians of the brand. Visitors like to interact with the local community – it is important that the local population are seen as part of the launch event, as this leads everyone to believe there is an interdependent relationship between the event designers and those responsible for upholding the brand identity. Local community members network with all other stakeholders to plan and prepare for the launch event. There will often be 'stories' about local community members, those who act as ambassadors, told through promotional films etc. and shared during the launch event – these are often touching moments of how tourism has turned these locals lives around. 	12

Question	Answer	Marks
2(c)	<p>AO4 Evaluation and decision making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ultimately, the local community must be on board with the destination brand as they are the ones that tourists come into regular contact within the destination – they work in the cafes, the supermarkets, the banks and on the reception desk at the hotel. Involving locals in the destination brand launch is important, as it makes them feel included and much more likely to endorse the destination brand. • Local community members become a crucial part of the human resource team behind the launch events – their local knowledge may help inspire the design of marketing communications, logos, slogans – they know the destination better than anyone else. • Locals may be featured in destination guidebooks and other promotional materials – they may be pleased to share their personal stories. • However, some destination guardians of the brand are better than others at including the local community in the launch preparations. It depends on the scale of the event, the extent to which locals are involved in the planning preparation, and the launch itself. 	