

Cambridge International AS & A Level

TRAVEL & TOURISM**9395/31**

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 **19** 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)	Explain <u>two</u> ways Saranda's slogan 'Theatre of the sun' meets the criteria for an effective destination brand. AO1 Knowledge with understanding (up to 2 marks) • Memorable • Attractive • Matched to destination attributes • Consistent with destination's popularity ranking • Easily understood by customers • Integrated into promotional activities at a local, national and global level • Sustained over a significant period of time • Reflective of customers' actual experiences • Targeted at both existing customers and at prospective visitors • Accepted by stakeholders • Credible AO2 Application (up to 2 marks) • Theatre of the sun is different enough that it will stay in the mind. • The slogan sounds appealing – association with the sun. • Because Albania has ancient amphitheatres, the slogan matches the country's assets – Saranda itself doesn't have an amphitheatre but is built into the slopes of the hill to resemble an amphitheatre. • Theatre of the sun has a clear enough meaning if visitors are familiar with the historic sites in Albania and would be reflective of their experiences if visiting these sites. • The slogan doesn't run off the tongue – it would need context in promotional materials. • No info given about when it was introduced. • The slogan works for existing and potential visitors. • Difficult to know how various stakeholders react to the slogan. • Not especially credible – it is a slightly intangible concept. Accept any reasonable answers.	4

Question	Answer	Marks
1(b)	Suggest where Saranda is on the Butler Destination Life Cycle model. Justify the reasons for your choice. Use table B to mark candidate responses to this question AO2 – out of 3 marks AO3 – out of 3 marks AO4 – out of 3 marks Indicative content AO2 – Application • Involvement or Development stage most likely. • No nearby airport. • No international fast-food chains or international hotels. • Visitor numbers are increasing. • Local nightlife. AO3 Analysis and research • It is most likely that Saranda is at late involvement/early development stage. • The fact that there is no nearby airport and travellers have to come via Corfu make Development less likely – as there are no major providers catering to the transport needs of travellers at this stage. • Local provision – bars, restaurants and family run hotels and guest houses, and the town’s old-world charm – reflective of involvement stage. • Tourism numbers are reasonably high at 150k per annum but there is no defined source market. • Development stage is likely as Saranda has little or no economic leakage/lack of foreign investor/and still only offers seasonal employment.	9

Question	Answer	Marks
1(b)	AO4 Evaluation and decision making • Saranda cannot be described as in the development stage at this point as there are insufficient markers suggesting that tourism development is taking place sufficiently at this stage. • An area that is 3.5 hours away from a major airport requires much more investment in tourism infrastructure. The fact that visitors have to make private arrangements to take a ferry from Corfu to reach Saranda suggests the destination is still in development. • The fact that visitors join locals using existing hospitality and catering infrastructure is also representative of the involvement stage. In development, a wider range of accommodation choices would be available. • Once Saranda actively develops as a tourism destination, decisions will be made to target a specific target market; inbound tour operators will liaise with local providers to offer holiday packages, purpose-built accommodation and attractions will be built and tourism numbers are likely to increase further. Accept any reasonable answers.	

Question	Answer	Marks
1(c)	Discuss why destination popularity ranking is an important key performance indicator in monitoring destination brand effectiveness. Use table C to mark candidate responses to this question AO1 = out of 4 marks AO3 = out of 4 marks AO4 = out of 4 marks Indicative content AO1 Knowledge with understanding • Destination popularity ranking is used to compare how popular a destination is against other similar destinations. • Destinations will see if they have increased or decreased position in the rankings since the previous year. • Different measures of popularity are used, based either on tourism data or on the opinions of visitors. • Improving position in the rankings suggests that destination branding messages are successful. AO3 Analysis and research • Popularity ranking is a measure of the competitiveness of a destination; destinations will try to improve their position in the ranking above that of their nearest competitors as this increases market appeal. • Destination popularity ranking helps tourists select one tourist destination over another and thus creates a positive demand/increases competitive advantage. • Ranking can be a travel motivator or a pull factor for visitors between two similar destinations. • Destinations aim to make it to the top 10 of any destination ranking as this will make them more visible/attractive to their target market.	12

Question	Answer	Marks
1(c)	AO4 Evaluation and decision-making • Destination popularity ranking is a form of benchmarking against other destinations operating within a competitive market. Benchmarking is important as it allows a destination to take stock, looking at a particular moment in time and to identify what is working well and what is less successful. • Benchmarking is another way of saying Key Performance Indicator – a broad range of measurements used to evaluate how a destination is performing. • Popularity ranking can be made up of many different data points or subjective evaluations to measure a destination's appeal to visitors at a given moment. • Popularity ranking can be affected by a wide number of factors – value for money, purpose of travel, safety, transport options, number of attractions and amenities etc. • There are a number of KPIs that can be used in isolation to measure a destination's performance – but collectively these all impact on a destination's popularity and where it ranks against its competitors. Accept any reasonable answers.	

Question	Answer	Marks
2(a)	Explain <u>two</u> different distribution channels used by Tourism NT AO1 Knowledge and understanding • Using wholesalers • Using travel agents • Using online selling • Direct selling • Indirect selling AO2 Application • Tourism NT uses direct selling through its website, with hyperlinks enabling customers to book online. • Tourism NT uses indirect selling methods involving wholesalers and travel agents who act as intermediaries, liaising with airlines, accommodation providers and other travel and tourism principals to offer package holidays to customers. • Tourism NT may use a mix and match approach with some partners e.g. airlines selling directly and may also be part of the bigger, indirect chain of distribution involved with wholesalers and travel agents Accept any reasonable answers.	4
2(b)	Assess the importance of guardians of a destination brand enhancing local, regional and national awareness of a destination. Use table A to mark candidate responses to this question AO1 – out of 3 marks AO3 – out of 3 marks AO4 – out of 3 marks Indicative content AO1 Knowledge with understanding • Enhancing awareness of the country to its own population means making sure people in the country know about the destination brand. • The best way to raise awareness is to market and promote locally, regionally, and nationally – this will then ensure that the destination brand is known within its own geographic location to increase domestic tourism. • Raising awareness locally/in the region/nationally ensures that domestic tourists contribute to their own economies rather than tourism spending abroad/prevent leakage/encourage multiplier effect. • Attracting more domestic tourists helps a destination become more sustainable as there is a lower carbon footprint as there will be less airmiles travelled/no imported foods needed etc.	9

Question	Answer	Marks
2(b)	AO3 Analysis and research - Guardians of the brand will want to try and target specific markets to the destination. Enhancing awareness of the destination, through marketing and promotion, will help attract a broad range of target markets for the destination. - Achieving global awareness is actually quite challenging for Guardians of the brand using traditional methods as it costs a lot for global marketing. Therefore, it is common that the destination brand is brought to the attention of the local market in the first instance, then promotion extends regionally and nationally. - The advance in social media marketing has enabled Guardians of the brand to raise awareness more extensively through low-cost social media posts, which get shared, reposted etc. AO4 Evaluation and decision making - The more a destination targets specific markets with its branding messages, the more it will enhance its image – this is key in raising awareness of the destination. - It is not only about bringing in overseas tourists – enhancing awareness at a local, regional and national level is crucial for domestic tourism – with the economic crisis and with the recent pandemic, domestic tourism has been the mainstay of many destinations' income this decade. - Destination branding has to be attractive to enhance awareness – if the new branding is not appealing, no matter how much the destination is marketed and promoted, then tourists are not going to visit. Accept any reasonable answers.	

Question	Answer	Marks
2(c)	Discuss the advantages to Tourism NT of carrying out primary market research with potential visitors from 12 source markets. Use table D to mark candidate responses to this question AO2 = out of 4 marks AO3 = out of 4 marks AO4 = out of 4 marks Indicative content AO2 Application • Data is specific and relevant to the key target markets of China, Singapore, Italy, Germany etc. • Primary research tends to be up to date, so Tourism NT will know that the information is still likely to be valid. • Data is more reliable than secondary data may be, so Tourism NT know that the findings are consistent and can be trusted. • The research brings Tourism NT in closer contact with its visitors and helps them understand the market better. • Research involves customers or potential customers directly, so Tourism NT connects with existing or potential visitors to ask their opinions. AO3 Analysis and research • Field research may also allow Tourism NT to make observations of customer behaviours in terms of bookings, engagement with brand messages as well as the use of questionnaires or focus groups where the target market audience can be asked questions directly. This may be done by representatives of Tourism NT or they might hire a commercial market research company to carry out the research. • By targeting customers from the main 12 source markets, the market research can be tailored specifically, asking about actual customer experiences in the Northern Territory or what customers expect from their visit to Northern territory. • Tourism NT can analyse and group the research findings by source market to better understand the needs of travellers from different geographic segments – e.g. Asian visitors, visitors from Europe etc. • By targeting specific groups of travellers, Tourism NT can have questionnaires customised to the target audience; the results of the research will further allow Tourism NT to customise brand marketing materials further.	12

Question	Answer	Marks
2(c)	AO4 Evaluation and decision making • Tourism NT would benefit most from carrying out a combination of primary and secondary market research, so that they can obtain the clearest picture of the market, the marketing environment, and fully understand their customers' needs and wants, as well as gain awareness of what the competition is also doing that Tourism NT is not. • Primary research is specific, but it is also expensive – so Tourism NT must weigh up the pros and cons of conducting in-depth market research in 12 different countries as this could be time consuming and expensive – although it will give Tourism NT a good insight into what their customers like about the destination and its branding. • There is also a danger that by carrying out market research only with the 12 current source markets, Tourism NT might be neglecting other potential sources of visitors from other destinations, whose views or customer behaviours might differ from those of the current 12 source markets – for example the 12 source markets do not represent North or central America, which could be another useful source of visitors to Northern Territory in Australia. Accept any reasonable answers.	