

Cambridge International A Level

TRAVEL & TOURISM**9395/33**

Paper 3 Destination Marketing

May/June 2026**MARK SCHEME**Maximum Mark: 50

Published

This mark scheme contains the instructions and marking guidance that our examiners used to mark candidate responses for this component.

Before they start marking, examiners complete a standardisation process. They review a range of candidate responses and discuss the mark scheme in detail to agree which answers can and cannot be accepted. Examiners award marks where it is clear that candidate responses have met the requirements of the mark scheme. These requirements may vary between different components or different versions of the same component, depending on the exact requirements of the question and the candidate responses seen during the standardisation process.

Sometimes, our mark schemes may allow marks to be awarded to responses which contain elements that are factually incorrect or for content not covered by the syllabus. We do this in response to the demands of a specific question to support candidates and make sure that our assessments are fair. However, these allowances should not be used as a guide for teaching and learning.

We cannot discuss the mark scheme with schools, and we recommend that schools read the mark scheme together with the assessment material and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

This document consists of **17** printed pages.

General marking principles

All examiners must apply these marking principles when marking candidate responses.

1	Examiners must award marks for each response in line with: • the specific content defined in the mark scheme • the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the level descriptions • the standard of response required as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.
2	Examiners must award whole marks (not half marks, or other fractions).
3	Examiners must award marks positively . This means that: • marks are not deducted for errors or omissions • marks are awarded for correct/valid answers as defined in the mark scheme and also for other valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme referring to your team leader as appropriate • the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar are judged only when the mark scheme indicates that these features are specifically assessed in the question. However, the meaning of all responses must be unambiguous.
4	Examiners must consistently apply the requirements of the mark scheme and any rules for what to do when candidates have not followed instructions correctly.
5	Examiners must use the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme, unless limited by the quality of the candidate responses seen.
6	Examiners must award marks according to the mark scheme and must not award marks with grade thresholds or grade descriptions in mind.

**Social Sciences-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
BOD	Benefit of doubt given
REP	Repetition
NAQ	Not answered question
VG	Content of response too vague
SEEN	Page or response seen by examiner
BP	Blank page
KU	Knowledge and understanding
APP	Application
AN	Analysis
EVAL	Evaluation

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	AO3 Analysis and research 3 marks	AO4 Evaluation 3 marks
	Description	Description	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	AO3 Analysis and research 3 marks	AO4 Evaluation 3 marks
	Description	Description	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	AO3 Analysis and research 4 marks	AO4 Evaluation 4 marks
	Description	Description	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 points with most having a detailed explanation.	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	AO3 Analysis and research 4 marks	AO4 Evaluation 4 marks
	Description	Description	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> reasons why a change in arrival numbers in 2023 may be a key performance indicator for Cabo Verde. Award one mark for each correct reason and a second mark for explanation in context. • Visitor arrival numbers are used to measure success of a new brand (1) the increase in 2023 might signify that the Cabo Verde rebranding has been successful (1) • An increase in visitor numbers might indicate that the marketing campaign has led to increased brand awareness in Europe (1) as it shows where marketing has been particularly effective (1) • The record number of visitors shows that Cabo Verde is gaining popularity/is attractive to tourists (1) this means they can compare themselves with their competitors (1) Accept any reasonable responses.	4

Question	Answer	Marks
1(b)	Assess why stakeholders may choose to review the marketing mix for a destination. Use table A to mark candidate responses to this question. Indicative content: AO1 Knowledge with understanding • If a destination is coming to the end of its natural lifecycle, stakeholders may choose to reassess the marketing mix that was in place and make amendments under a rebranded destination identity • Stakeholders may choose to review the marketing mix to improve how they market themselves to attract tourists back to the destination, for example diversified products may be offered to attract repeat visitors • Reviewing the marketing mix may help stakeholders become more competitive, if they find that the destination is struggling to keep up with more popular destinations/allow the destination to grow • A review of a destination's marketing mix may allow stakeholders to improve efficiency and effectiveness by changing the emphasis on one or more of the 4Ps • The destination may adapt the product they offer, putting more emphasis on their cultural heritage rather than their beaches • Tourism providers in a destination may change their pricing strategies under a review of the marketing mix – off season discounts or prestige pricing for augmented products • New distribution channels may be adopted to make the destination more accessible to customer e.g. by creating a new booking app • The destination may rebrand itself using a new promotional campaign or brand to create more awareness of the destination with customers AO3 Analysis and research Analysis of any of the above may be exemplified using any of the 4Ps, for example: • A review of the marketing mix may be necessary to amend for example the prices charged in line with increases in overheads, changes in taxation or other levies imposed by the government. Stakeholders might have no option other than to pass these increased costs onto the visitors, or a new approach to pricing might be chosen to become more competitive, by adopting the going rate, for example, following the market leader's pricing strategy. • A change in the destination's brand would necessitate a change in the promotion used by various stakeholders; the new brand identity would need to be shared via corporate websites etc, and new social media accounts might be created to help raise awareness of the change in the destination brand.	9

Question	Answer	Marks
1(b)	- Product developments might be required as a result of a change in customers' preferences, and travel behaviours, and as such the product element of the marketing mix might have to change. More sustainable practices may be included, with renewable energy sources, lower carbon footprints and the use of local produce instead of foreign imports. - Distribution channels may need adjusting in line with the growth in dynamic packaging, self-serviced ticketing options etc. Stakeholders need to keep up to date with the advances in the use of AI, chatbots etc and how this might impact on visitor experiences, e.g. at a visitor attraction. AO4 Evaluation - A destination's stakeholders must ensure that they reflect regularly on the chosen marketing mix and make any necessary adjustments in line with whatever internal or external influences affect the marketing environment at any given time. - It is important to recognise when is the correct time to act to amend the existing marketing mix in line with any influences on the marketing environment. The 4Ps can be altered separately or together at any point in time, depending on how the destination is performing in comparison with rival destinations. Accept any reasonable responses.	

Question	Answer	Marks
1(c)	Using a SWOT analysis approach, evaluate the opportunities for Cabo Verde as a tourism destination. Use table D to mark candidate responses to this question. Indicative content: AO2 Application Opportunities: • This island nation has unique geology, marine life, flora and fauna: this provides Cabo Verde with opportunities to develop specialist eco-packages within these biospheres. • The recent rebrand: this provides the islands with the opportunity to give each island its own identity, focusing on the unique attributes of each island under the banner of the Islands of Cabo Verde from the heart brand identity. • Tourism is a key economic driver, with a contribution of 25% to the nation's GDP. Cabo Verde is improving the number of visitor nights tourists spend, and by effective marketing of the newly diversified packages under the new rebrand, this should increase further. • The government of Cabo Verde is committed to the preservation of the country's culture and heritage, as well as developing the tourism infrastructure needed to attract more international visitors providing Cabo Verde the opportunity for tourism development. • The opportunity exists to diversify tourism in Cabo Verde with packages that highlight beach experiences, nature-based packages and cultural packages for example. AO3 Analysis and research • Cabo Verde has the opportunity to develop its tourism provision because of its stable political background and government support for the new destination brand and because of its vision to market the separate islands under one destination brand. • Government support for preserving the culture and heritage of the islands provides a key opportunity for developing new tourism products to diversify the destination's offer to different market segments. • The island nation has lots of natural attractions which can be managed sustainably to attract eco tourists and nature lovers and so meet the changing tastes and preferences for leisure travellers today. • The destination has the opportunity to improve tourism marketing because of the destination rebrand to raise awareness at a global level, to attract more tourists from different source markets as well as attracting more customers from the UK, Germany and the Netherlands.	12

Question	Answer	Marks
1(c)	AO4 Evaluation - TdCV need to conduct competitor analysis to understand why more tourists prefer to visit other tropical destinations rather than this destination. More effective marketing would be beneficial in raising awareness of Cabo Verde under the new brand image. - Cabo Verde has multiple opportunities to develop its tourism offering. The most important of these is using the government support to preserve cultural heritage and be able to use these assets to appeal to a wide target market sustainably. - If Cabo Verde does not make the most of the opportunities it has whilst popularity is increasing, or the new brand does not appeal to its visitors, the destination may damage its reputation/lose customers. Accept any reasonable responses.	

Question	Answer	Marks
2(a)	Explain <u>two</u> possible disadvantages of conducting primary market research. Award one mark for each disadvantage and a second mark for explanation of why it is a disadvantage. - Primary research takes a long time to complete (1) as gathering data from a significant number of respondents/enough respondents to mean anything is time consuming (1) - Primary research can be costly (1) as it involves setting up the research yourself and employing staff to carry out the survey (1) - Primary research does not always have a good response rate (1) as people do not always want to fill in surveys/easy to ignore email questionnaires (1) - Primary research can be unintentionally biased by the researcher (1) who may influence the responses people give in interviews/lead people to respond as they think the researcher wants them to (1) - Primary research may not be fully representative of the whole population (1) only a small sample of people may be involved which might skew the results (1) Accept any reasonable responses.	4

Question	Answer	Marks
2(b)	Discuss why spending power is an important characteristic of Iceland's visitor profile. Use table B to mark candidate responses to this question. Indicative content: AO2 Application • The data shows that more than half of visitors to Iceland have above average spending power. • Less than 10% of visitors to Iceland have below average spending power. • 38% of visitors have average spending power. • Spending power can be used alongside other visitor profiling characteristics to meet the specific needs of visitors to Iceland. • Information about spending power tells tourism organisations in Iceland who their target market are/what products they should provide. AO3 Analysis and research • Where a significant number of visitors to Iceland have above average spending power, tourism providers can offer high quality products with a premium price tag. • There is only a minority of visitors to Iceland who have below average spending power, so fewer customers need budget accommodation/products/services. • Visit Iceland can use the data on spending power to identify other target markets to diversify its tourism offer. • Tourism organisations might offer additional products for tourists to encourage additional/higher/secondary spending within Iceland. AO4 Evaluation • Spending power is an important characteristic as it helps Visit Iceland better understand the needs, wants and customer preferences of its visitors based on their ability and willingness to spend money in the destination. • Visit Iceland can use the data on spending power alongside accommodation preferences and choice of products and services from their market research to provide a fuller picture of a customer profile. Those with higher levels of disposable income may prefer to stay in boutique hotels and spend extra on fine dining and spa facilities, for example. • Spending power links with a KPI, i.e. changes in visitor spend, so if Visit Iceland understand the likely spending power of visitors to the destination, they can carefully monitor these changes in visitor spend to analyse reasons for any unexpected increase or decrease in average visitor spend per trip. Accept any reasonable answers	9

Question	Answer	Marks
2(c)	Evaluate how online media can be used to monitor the effectiveness of a destination brand. Use table C to mark candidate responses to this question. Indicative content: AO1 Knowledge with understanding - Marketing activities such as online press releases, editorial features, blogs etc. - Website traffic, e.g. number of hits to online travel guides/NTO website - Search engine optimisation, e.g. where the destination brand appears in the list of results - Social media response rates, e.g. number of new followers, shares, comments, likes etc. - Online surveys e.g. can be sent via email to existing customers to gain specific feedback AO3 Analysis and research - The tourism authority can monitor the number of viewers, readers of online press release etc. to see how widely the coverage has spread. - Where a destination creates an online travel guide, they can monitor the number of times the guide has been downloaded directly from the online link to judge how much brand awareness has been raised in this way. - SEO means that the number of times the destination brand is searched will mean that it is displayed higher up the list and so if a destination has not paid for this it will provide the tourism authority with broad markers of brand success. - Social media response rates will show how well potential visitors are engaging with the destination branding through the type of comments they make, the number of shares and reposts made etc. AO4 Evaluation - Online media is definitely important in helping the tourism authority monitor the effectiveness of the destination brand as the internet is the main way that people use to find out about destinations. - Social media response rates are very easy to use but the tourism authority should be cautious about using the number of likes a post on social media gets as a measure of brand effectiveness. People scroll endlessly through social media platforms, putting likes on everything but not always paying attention. A comment is a better measure of effectiveness, as the user has to properly engage with the content of a post or story to make a comment, for example. - SEO is only effective if it is on merit rather than being paid for. A range of different online measures should be used to get a true picture of the effectiveness of the brand. Accept any reasonable responses.	12