

Cambridge International A Level

TRAVEL & TOURISM**9395/31**

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 **19** 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 TCO works in partnership with inbound tour operators. Award one mark for a correct reason and a second mark for explanation in context. • To share expertise/co-ordinate marketing campaigns (1) TCO will provide regional knowledge/offer advice, training and industry insights/inbound tour operators will provide advice on how to attract tourists to the region (1) • To share the costs of marketing and promotion (1) marketing is expensive, so the tour operator can help spread marketing messages about the region as well as the products/services they offer (1) • To represent tourism organisations in product development (1) TCO will help put the inbound tour operators in touch with accommodation providers, visitor attractions, and other travel and tourism organisations in Central Otago to help create holiday packages (1) • To attract a larger customer base/new markets (1) through partnership working both organisations will benefit from one another's customers to achieve wider reach (1) Accept any reasonable responses.	4

Question	Answer	Marks
1(b)	Assess the effectiveness of the Central Otago destination brand. Use table B to mark candidate responses to this question Indicative content: AO2 Application - Central Otago is written clearly and in capital letters in a contrasting colour within the logo which makes it stand out - The tagline is also part of the logo, the words 'a world of difference' are easy to understand, even by anyone who has not visited Central Otago - The logo is striking and this helps make it attractive – using a bold colour scheme of black, blue for the cloud and gold for the representation of the bird/landscape will also help make the logo memorable - Using the native falcon/bird as part of the image helps match the brand to the destination, its people and its seasons, as does the use of the golden colour which also resembles the landscape of Central Otago - The logo reflects what customers might experience during a visit to Central Otago, which helps target existing and new customers - The logo is credible as a result of being representative of the features of the landscape in Central Otago that it represents AO3 Analysis and research - The logo creates a bold and memorable impression because of its simple but powerful design, bold and contrasting colours, and because it uses capital letters to attract attention to its name - The design is attractive because of its simplicity – it is eye-catching and the name and tagline are easy to read at a quick glance - Although the design includes a cloud and a falcon, as well as the representation of the Central Otago landscape, those looking at the logo for the first time, might not be aware that the falcon is a native bird to the area, and might not easily recognise the cloud in the circular shape of the image, which means it might not easily be understood, without the name and tagline - The logo is suitable for including in local, regional and national marketing as those audiences will recognise the name of the area. It would be harder to market at a global level without some reference to New Zealand - The logo is credible, because it is similar to many other logos used in destination branding. AO4 Evaluation and decision-making - The destination brand logo is effective as it shares many of the characteristics of an effective brand logo – it is attractive and memorable, can be used in marketing in local and national campaigns and can be used with existing and new customers, as it is credible.	9

Question	Answer	Marks
1(b)	• The text is easy to understand but the TCO would need to think about how new customers could interpret the images within the design and know that Central Otago is in New Zealand if they are not familiar with the region. A recommendation may be to add NZ to the logo as most people would be familiar with NZ as an abbreviation of New Zealand and this would not spoil the clean lines of the design unduly. • There are many characteristics of an effective brand that are not addressed through this logo. It is not possible to judge how well the logo aligns with the destination's popularity ranking, although if understood correctly, it could be said that the logo aligns with Central Otago's popularity as a leisure tourism destination due to its wildlife and natural landscapes. • As TCO has recently rebranded it is not possible to judge how effective the destination brand will be over a significant period of time. The case study does suggest that TCO works with the NTO (Tourism New Zealand) and other stakeholders which implies that the destination brand must have been accepted by other stakeholders within the tourism network. Accept any reasonable responses.	

Question	Answer	Marks
1(c)	Evaluate the importance of a guardian of the brand in planning the launch of a new destination brand. Use Table C to mark candidate responses to this question Indicative content AO1 Knowledge and understanding - Guardians of the brand are stakeholders who play a major role within the national, regional or local tourism network - Guardians are the brand champions, who will protect the destination reputation and image from negative stereotypes or criticism, especially for a brand relaunch - They will be instrumental in each stage of branding or rebranding a destination, and its overall branding campaign - Guardians of the brand agree timing for action to ensure the brand is launched on time - Guardians of the brand agree costs and resources, working with other organisations within the tourism sector to set a budget for the branding process - Guardians of the brand agree the level of involvement of key personnel; they allocate tasks to other key stakeholders - Guardians of the brand establish the key performance indicators that will help monitor how successfully the objectives they set have been met - Guardians of the brand decide the communication methods and events for the brand launch working with other stakeholders. They will choose promotional techniques to raise awareness AO3 Analysis and research - Guardians of the brand have a good understanding of the destination and its tourism sector and so play a crucial role in managing the brand launch. - Guardians of the brand will coordinate all of the activity between interested partners from local stakeholder groups to ensure that the branding process is understood by everyone involved. - The role is significant because the guardian of the brand is expected to manage the image and reputation of the destination, even if the brand comes under criticism. - The role of guardian of the brand is important in ensuring that the brand messages are communicated consistently and in accordance with brand guidelines. - The role of guardian of the brand ensures that brand promises are upheld. The brand promise tells your customer, either explicitly or implicitly, what they can expect from your product or service. AO4 Evaluation and decision-making - The role of guardian of the brand is essential to the success of a destination brand as it requires someone with excellent knowledge of the destination, its various stakeholders and someone who commands respect within the tourism industry to be able to manage the numerous demands and challenges that destination branding may bring.	12

Question	Answer	Marks
1(c)	- It is recommended that the role of guardian of the brand is appointed to someone at executive level of a NTO or RTO because it needs someone with experience of managing large teams of people and controlling a large budget and because of the decision-making powers associated with the role. - The guardian of the brand will lead the team of stakeholders through each of the stages in planning for the destination launch, in a facilitating role, authorising budget spend, agreeing on venue choices, liaising with media outlets for PR coverage etc, in a high-profile way, which can be stressful. They will need to be skilful at delegation and authoritative about keeping to schedule and within budget to ensure the launch can be successful. Accept any reasonable responses.	

Question	Answer	Marks
2(a)	Explain <u>two</u> ways a clearly communicated destination image helps Cape Cod to position its tourism products. Award one mark for each correct way and a second for explanation in context. • Using an appealing marketing message i.e. the tagline ‘Cape Cod: Truly Yours’ which is easy to understand (1) so builds a positive association in the minds of customers (1) • Creating a clear/consistent image/reputation which enables customers to understand the type of tourism products the destination offers (1) by using the fingerprint concept, Cape Cod is trying to portray the uniqueness of every visit (1) • The Cape Cod logo/tagline is simple/attractive (1) which is easy to recognise appealing to a wide range of tourists (1) • Cape Cod’s sandy beaches/world class leisure facilities/amazing accommodation/lively arts and culture programme/fresh seafood/famous golf courses are attractive/appealing/reliable (1) which positions Cape Cod as an attractive/appealing/reliable/summer/coastal destination (1) Accept any reasonable responses.	4

Question	Answer	Marks
2(b)	Assess the reasons why tourism organisations target different market segments. Use table A to mark candidate responses to this question Indicative content: AO1 Knowledge with understanding • Different market segments allow tourism organisations to classify customers according to different pre-set characteristics • Market segments allow tourism organisations to focus marketing only on those segments most likely to be interested in the products and services they offer • Using different forms of segmentation allows an organisation to target many different customer types simultaneously • To overcome seasonality, some market segments are likely to visit all year round, whereas others will only come at certain times of the year AO3 Analysis and research • They target different market segments so that they widen their appeal/customer base • By targeting different market segments and overcoming seasonality tourism organisations will have income all year round • By widening their market this will reduce business risk as it reduces overreliance of one market segment • Targeting specific customers increases customer loyalty as the organisation provides for their specific needs and so customers are more satisfied • Tourism organisations can differentiate themselves in a competitive market by appealing/targeting specific customer types (USP) AO4 Evaluation and decision making • It is hugely beneficial for a tourism organisation to broaden its appeal to as many different customer types as possible as this may contribute to the success of the organisation or destination. However, if a tourism organisation diversifies its products too much, it may not benefit from targeting any specific customer type, as it becomes more of a mass market appeal. • A tourism organisation could build its customer profile using market segmentation, to identify specific characteristics from different segments – this way the products and services offered can become very specialised. However, this is a risky strategy as if the product fails, then the organisation or destination might need to completely rebrand to start again. • Market segmentation can be extremely helpful in allowing an organisation to focus its marketing efforts on specific characteristics shared by its typical customer. The more that an organisation focuses on these broad traits, the more the organisation is moving towards visitor profiling rather than just trying to use different target markets through the market segmentation process. Accept any reasonable responses.	9

Question	Answer	Marks
2(c)	Evaluate the range of communication methods used to raise awareness of the destination brand identity in Cape Cod. Use Table D to mark candidate responses to this question Indicative content: AO2 Application • Banner advertisements on partner websites/online advertisements were used to share information about the Cape Cod marketing campaign • Cape Cod has invested in print advertisements which could be in the form of flyers or other sales literature which are easily distributed within the destination • Cape Cod used social media and influencer marketing which is the most commonly used means of communicating with large numbers of potential and existing visitors due to its global reach • Partners were asked to use #VisitCapeCod which tags stories which can then be found easily by visitors/increases visibility of the # • Cape Cod used TV commercials which have a high visual impact and can show what the destination looks like • Digital billboards are eye catching and can be placed in various locations e.g. near airports/sports grounds/roads/railway stations AO3 Analysis and research • Online advertisements/social media have good reach, allow for 24-hour marketing and carry detailed information, so these are good methods of communication to raise awareness • Social media is a popular choice as they can garner a huge following with easy global reach and allow for the benefits of shared media and earned media through customer word of mouth reviews • the use of influencer marketing/# is popular, especially with younger generations who trust the endorsement of lifestyle influencers they follow on these social media platforms. • TV commercials can be very expensive, have a long lead time and do not have the kind of reach that online advertising does. • Digital billboards can be limited by geography, unlikely to be global, but will raise awareness of a place in the country already being visited AO4 Evaluation and decision making • There are many different forms of communication that Cape Cod could have chosen to promote their destination brand and to raise awareness. When making the decision about communication methods, it will be important that the Chamber of Commerce take into consideration things like cost, lead time, global reach, the ability to customise and the ability to track success or conversion rates for each method. • Cape Cod has chosen to use a broad range of communication methods for their Truly Yours campaign, which indicates that Cape Cod had a large marketing budget as they could afford the high cost of TV commercials, digital billboards, etc. This indicates the scale of the campaign being run by Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce to raise awareness of the destination.	12

Question	Answer	Marks
2(c)	- The broad range of methods ensures that the campaign has as wide a reach as possible/has as broad an appeal as possible to attract as many customers as possible to Cape Cod. - The choice of using TV commercials is an interesting one; people nowadays often watch TV through online streaming services which often allows you to skip ads after a 15 second clip. This means that Cape Cod might only have 15 seconds in which to make a lasting impression via their TV advertisements, which means relying on other platforms and methods for wider brand awareness; social media is very good at brand exposure in this way, as it is often more subtle than other forms of promotion. Accept any reasonable responses.	