

Markscheme

May 2025

Geography

Higher level

Paper 3

© International Baccalaureate Organization 2025

All rights reserved. No part of this product may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without the prior written permission from the IB. Additionally, the license tied with this product prohibits use of any selected files or extracts from this product. Use by third parties, including but not limited to publishers, private teachers, tutoring or study services, preparatory schools, vendors operating curriculum mapping services or teacher resource digital platforms and app developers, whether fee-covered or not, is prohibited and is a criminal offense.

More information on how to request written permission in the form of a license can be obtained from <https://ibo.org/become-an-ib-school/ib-publishing/licensing/applying-for-a-license/>.

© Organisation du Baccalauréat International 2025

Tous droits réservés. Aucune partie de ce produit ne peut être reproduite sous quelque forme ni par quelque moyen que ce soit, électronique ou mécanique, y compris des systèmes de stockage et de récupération d'informations, sans l'autorisation écrite préalable de l'IB. De plus, la licence associée à ce produit interdit toute utilisation de tout fichier ou extrait sélectionné dans ce produit. L'utilisation par des tiers, y compris, sans toutefois s'y limiter, des éditeurs, des professeurs particuliers, des services de tutorat ou d'aide aux études, des établissements de préparation à l'enseignement supérieur, des fournisseurs de services de planification des programmes d'études, des gestionnaires de plateformes pédagogiques en ligne, et des développeurs d'applications, moyennant paiement ou non, est interdite et constitue une infraction pénale.

Pour plus d'informations sur la procédure à suivre pour obtenir une autorisation écrite sous la forme d'une licence, rendez-vous à l'adresse <https://ibo.org/become-an-ib-school/ib-publishing/licensing/applying-for-a-license/>.

© Organización del Bachillerato Internacional, 2025

Todos los derechos reservados. No se podrá reproducir ninguna parte de este producto de ninguna forma ni por ningún medio electrónico o mecánico, incluidos los sistemas de almacenamiento y recuperación de información, sin la previa autorización por escrito del IB. Además, la licencia vinculada a este producto prohíbe el uso de todo archivo o fragmento seleccionado de este producto. El uso por parte de terceros —lo que incluye, a título enunciativo, editoriales, profesores particulares, servicios de apoyo académico o ayuda para el estudio, colegios preparatorios, desarrolladores de aplicaciones y entidades que presten servicios de planificación curricular u ofrezcan recursos para docentes mediante plataformas digitales—, ya sea incluido en tasas o no, está prohibido y constituye un delito.

En este enlace encontrará más información sobre cómo solicitar una autorización por escrito en forma de licencia: <https://ibo.org/become-an-ib-school/ib-publishing/licensing/applying-for-a-license/>.

Paper 3 part (a) markbands

Marks	Level descriptor		
	<p>AO1: Knowledge and understanding of specified content</p> <p>AO2: Application and analysis of knowledge and understanding</p>	<p>AO3: Synthesis and evaluation</p>	<p>AO4: Selection, use and application of a variety of appropriate skills and techniques</p>
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.		
1–3	<p>The response is general, not focused on the question, and lacks detail and structure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response is very brief or general, listing a series of unconnected comments or largely irrelevant information. Evidence is general or relevant to the topic, but not to the question. • Evidence (that is, facts, statistics, examples or theories) is listed, lacks detail, and the relevance to the question is unclear. • Evidence is not used to formulate an argument or an analysis. • Everyday language is used; there is little use of geographical terminology or it is used with errors in understanding. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence of synthesis or evaluation is expected. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is listed but is not grouped together in paragraphs, or paragraphing is erratic. • If present, the conclusion is brief, does not summarize the argument and/or does not address the question. 		
4–6	<p>The response only partially addresses the question; evidence is both relevant and irrelevant and is largely unstructured.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response partially addresses the question and/or does not meet the requirements of the command term. Key evidence is not included. • A mix of relevant and irrelevant evidence is outlined (that is, facts, statistics, examples or theories) and any links to the question are only listed. • The evidence presented supports only one element or interpretation of the question. • Key geographical terms are defined briefly. The terminology used is both relevant and irrelevant to the question. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence of synthesis or evaluation is expected. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraphs do not reflect grouping of information that addresses a specific element of the question. • If present, the conclusion is one-sided, addressing only part of the question. 		

<p>7–9</p>	<p>The response addresses most parts of the question and outlines an analysis supported by relevant evidence but may lack clear links between paragraphs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The question is broken down into parts and most parts of the question are addressed in the response, with supporting evidence for each aspect of the question. The response meets the requirements of the command term. • Relevant evidence (that is, facts, statistics, examples or theories) is described, focused on the question and mostly correct. Links with the question are described. • The analysis outlines a two-sided argument briefly (if appropriate) and is mostly descriptive, using examples as explanation. • Correct definitions are given, and relevant and irrelevant specialist geographical terms are used with occasional errors; or everyday language is used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence of synthesis or evaluation is expected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of standalone paragraphs each addressing a specific element of the question but lacking clear links connecting them all into a coherent whole. • The conclusion repeats and summarizes the analysis or argument, but may contain new information as well.
<p>10–12</p>	<p>The response addresses all aspects of the question; the analysis is explained using evidence integrated in the paragraphs, and it is well structured.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All aspects of the question are addressed and the response meets the requirements of the command term. • Detailed evidence (that is, facts, statistics, examples or theories) are integrated in sentences and paragraphs, and links made between evidence and the question are explained and relevant. • The response explains how the two sides of the argument (if appropriate) are supported by detailed evidence that is integrated in sentences. • Clear, correct definitions and use of geographical language is integrated in the sentences and throughout the response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence of synthesis or evaluation is expected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraphs focus on a relevant point of the argument and integrate the supporting evidence. Paragraphs are linked and support the logical flow of the argument and response. • The conclusion summarizes the evidence and argument, and links all back to the question.

Paper 3 part (b) markbands

Marks	Level descriptor		
	<p>AO1: Knowledge and understanding of specified content</p> <p>AO2: Application and analysis of knowledge and understanding</p>	<p>AO3: Synthesis and evaluation</p>	<p>AO4: Selection, use and application of a variety of appropriate skills and techniques</p>
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.		
1–4	<p>The response is general, not focused on the question, and lacks detail and structure.</p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response is very brief or general, listing a series of unconnected comments or largely irrelevant information. Evidence is general or relevant to the topic, but not the question. • Evidence (that is, facts, statistics, examples or theories) is listed, lacks detail, and the relevance to the question is unclear. • Evidence is not used to formulate an argument or an analysis. • Everyday language is used; there is little use of geographical terminology or it is used with errors in understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No synthesis or evaluation is expected at this level. • No links are presented between the response and (sub)topics in the guide. • No valid opinion or perspective on the issue is formulated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is listed but is not grouped together in paragraphs, or paragraphing is erratic. • If present, the conclusion is brief, does not summarize the argument and/or does not address the question.
5–8	<p>The response only partially addresses the question with limited links to the guide; evidence is both relevant and irrelevant and is largely unstructured.</p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response partially addresses the question and/or does not meet the requirements of the command term. Key evidence is not included. • A mix of relevant and irrelevant evidence is outlined (that is, facts, statistics, examples or theories) and any links to the question are only listed. • The evidence presented supports only one element or interpretation of the question. • Key geographical terms are defined briefly. Terminology used is both relevant and irrelevant to the question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No synthesis or evaluation is expected at this level. • The link(s) between the response and the guide focus on one topic; other potential links are listed. • A valid but limited opinion or perspective on the issue is formulated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraphs do not reflect grouping of information that addresses a specific element of the question. • If present, the conclusion is one-sided, addressing only part of the question.

<p>9–12</p>	<p>The response addresses most parts of the question with developed links to the guide and outlines an analysis supported by relevant evidence but may lack clear links between paragraphs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The question is broken down into parts and most parts of the question are addressed in the response, with supporting evidence for each aspect of the question. The response meets the requirements of the command term. • Relevant evidence (that is, facts, statistics, examples or theories) is described, focused on the question and mostly correct. Links with the question are described. • The analysis outlines a two-sided argument briefly (if appropriate) and is mostly descriptive, using examples as explanation. • Correct definitions are given, and relevant and irrelevant specialist geographical terms are used with occasional errors; or everyday language is used.
<p>13–16</p>	<p>The response addresses all aspects of the question; the analysis is explained and evaluated using evidence integrated in the paragraphs, and it is well structured.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All aspects of the question are addressed and the response meets the requirements of the command term. • Detailed evidence (that is, facts, statistics, examples or theories) are integrated in sentences and paragraphs, and links made between evidence and the question are explained and relevant. • The response explains how the two sides of the argument (if appropriate) are supported by detailed evidence that is integrated in sentences. • Clear, correct definitions and use of geographical language is integrated in the sentences and throughout the response.

1. (a) Analyse ways in which remittances from migrants have made different places more interconnected.

[12]

Marks should be allocated according to the markbands on pages 3 to 4.

Interconnectivity describes the way in which places at varying scales become linked together in mutual relations of exchange. Connectivity can be economic, social and cultural - there are many dimensions. Connectivity can lead to interdependency, when two places become mutually self-reliant.

Migrant remittances are the sums of money that economic migrants return to families and communities and the places where they lived previously.

Place is a concept that is applicable at varying scales. Responses are likely to focus on connections between countries, but strong answers may identify named cities and rural regions that have become connected.

Likely themes for analysis include:

- The economic contribution that remittances make to the gross national product of certain countries, or the economic importance of these flows for particular local places.
- The increase in connectivity of regions or countries in receipt of remittances for example local communities may be better able to afford access to shrinking world technologies.
- The strengthening of connections over time for example when remittances provide the financial means for further chain migration from the source region.
- The importance of remittances as a reason for the strengthening of cultural or political relationships between migrant host and source countries where significant flows of people and capital are involved.

Good answers may **apply** (AO2) a **wider range** of knowledge and understanding (AO1) in a **well-structured** way (AO4). One approach might be to provide a structured systematic analysis of the economic **interactions** that occur between migrant host and source **places** for different case studies at varying scales. Another approach might be to analyse a broader range of ways in which places become interconnected for example by exploring cultural or social **processes** of change, or changes over **time**.

For 4–6 marks,

expect some weakly evidenced outlining of one of more examples of economic migration.

For 7–9 marks,

expect a structured, evidenced analysis of:

- either a range of places (one or more examples of source and destination countries) that are connected socially and economically by migrants and the sending and receipt of remittances
- or a wider detailed range of dimensions (cultural, technological) or scales (countries, cities, local places) of interconnectivity.

For 10–12 marks,

expect both of these traits.

1. (b) “Governments cannot protect their own citizens from the environmental impacts of globalization.” To what extent do you agree with this statement? [16]

Credit all content in line with the markbands. Marks should be allocated according to the markbands on pages 5 to 6. Credit unexpected approaches wherever relevant.

Globalization is a complex set of processes by which the world has become increasingly integrated as a single economic unit and local places have become more interconnected and interdependent. Globalization is a process that leads to environmental degradation at both local and global scales.

Environmental impacts are experienced at varying scales. Local impacts may be linked with weak regulation for polluting industries or agribusinesses such as palm oil production. Global impacts are linked with climate and ocean changes. Governments may attempt to mitigate environmental impacts; so too do other stakeholders including transnational corporations (TNCs) with social responsibility frameworks, and civil society organizations. ‘Built (urban) environment’ impacts are creditable.

The **citizens** of a country may be exposed directly to local impacts of polluting industries or indirectly to challenges such as climate change and plastic pollution on beaches. The extent to which governments can offer protection against either local or global challenges is debatable. There are different scales of **government** and governance including national governments and multi-governmental organizations. National governments may join **multi-governmental** agreements e.g. 2015 Paris Agreement for reduced carbon emissions.

Possible **applied** themes (AO2) include **knowledge and understanding** (AO1) of how:

- The concepts of globalization [Guide 4.1]
- The range of different global networks and flows [Guide 4.2]
- Global shift of polluting industries and agribusinesses [Guide 6.2]
- Transboundary pollution issues [Guide 6.2]
- Atmosphere and oceans issues [Guide 2.2]
- TNC corporate social responsibility frameworks and global agreements [Guide 5.1]
- Civil society management of environmental risks [Guide 6.3]

Good answers may **synthesize** (AO3a) three or more of the above (or other) themes in a **well-structured** (AO4) way.

Good answers may additionally offer a **critical evaluation** (AO3b) of the statement that discusses different types and **scales** of environmental impact linked to globalization. Another approach might be to discuss different **places** e.g. contrasts between global North and South contexts. Another approach might be to explore **possible** ways citizens may be protected when governments fail, e.g. TNC frameworks. Another approach might be to discuss **scales** of governance, e.g.: global efforts to tackle climate and plastic issues; national government failure to protect some **local places** or marginalised people. A good evaluation may conclude with a substantiated final judgement on the overall degree to which the statement is true.

For 5–8 marks,
expect weakly evidenced outlining of two or three relevant themes.

For 9–12 marks, expect:

- either a structured synthesis that links together several well-evidenced themes from the guide
- or a critical conclusion (or ongoing evaluation) informed by geographical concepts and/or perspectives.

For 13–16 marks,
expect both of these traits.

2. (a) Analyse the influence that **two** superpower countries have on global interactions. [12]

Marks should be allocated according to the markbands on pages 3 to 4.

The **superpower countries** may be contemporary, historical or potential. Examples might include the US, Japan, China, India, Russia, Brazil, South Africa, Nigeria, Qatar, major EU economies. Credit any reasonable suggestion of a country that demonstrably has above average influence in a global or world region context.

Power and influence may take the form of hard power (military, economic) soft power (culture, diplomacy), smart power (the previous two combined) and sharp power (for example manipulating geopolitical events using the internet). This framework is not required for the award of full marks, though many candidates will use it. Relevant terminology from the Guide includes cultural imperialism.

Global interactions may include, among others, patterns of investment, transfers of culture and ideas, influence over multi-governmental organizations and military operations. All international interactions are creditable, even at a relatively localized or regional scale.

Likely themes for analysis include:

- Details of two actual or potential superpower states.
- Powerful organizations or global groups e.g. OPEC and trade agreements.
- The diffusion of culture and cultural imperialism of powerful countries past and present.
- Transnational corporations and branded commodities based in superpower countries.
- New technologies and their uses by powerful state actors.
- Migration patterns and policies.

Good answers may **apply** (AO2) a **wider range** of knowledge and understanding (AO1) in a **well-structured** way (AO4). One approach might be to provide a structured systematic analysis of different types of **power** and influence. Another approach might be to analyse how countries exert power at different **scales** for example through unilateral operations but also through multi governmental organizations, or analysis of the difference between regional and truly global influence. Another approach might be to analyse how the power of a country is the outcome of both state and private sector **players**, e.g. government but also transnational corporations in the case of the US.

For 4–6 marks,

expect some weakly evidenced outlining of one or two relevant forms of influence for one or two countries.

For 7–9 marks,

expect a structured, evidenced analysis of:

- either different ways/strategies by which two countries exert their influence
- or the different types of global interaction that can be influenced/affected.

For 10–12 marks,

expect both of these traits.

2. (b) “The best way to manage contemporary global risks is by developing new technologies.” To what extent do you agree with this statement? [16]

Global risks are large-scale threats and hazards that are experienced by different places, environments and societies. Contemporary examples include global cybersecurity threats and climate change. Global risks are distinct from local risks such as localized flooding. Some natural hazards can be viewed as global risks, for example tsunamis and large mega-eruptions.

New technologies consist of recent digital developments including artificial intelligence and faster computing and internet. Newer energy technologies including renewables and carbon capture play an important role in managing global climate risks.

Whether technology is **the best way** is debatable. There are other ways of managing risks, including changing behavior or creating new political policies or corporate strategies. The fact that new technologies have unintended consequences could also be debated. Technology introduced to manage one risk may give rise to others, notably so in the militarization of technologies originally intended to help humanity, from nuclear energy to A.I.

Possible **applied** themes (AO2) include **knowledge and understanding** (AO1) of:

- Issues surrounding cybersecurity [Guide 6.3]
- The uses of drones and 3D printing [Guide 6.1]
- Re-shoring as a way of managing global supply chain risks [Guide 4.2]
- Government policies to mitigate sovereignty risks posed by global flows [Guide 5.3]
- Managing climate change risks e.g. local sourcing [Guide 5.3]
- Management of transboundary pollution [Guide 6.2]

The essay focus is ways to manage global risks - technology being one possible way. Do not over-credit material that describes the problems that technologies create, if the material is entirely unrelated to the management of a global risk (e.g. a paragraph detailing legal problems that 3D printers create - how does this relate to the management of a global risk?)

Good answers may **synthesize** (AO3a) three or more of the above (or other) themes in a **well-structured** (AO4) way.

Good answers may additionally offer a **critical evaluation** (AO3b) of the statement that discusses whether management of some risk is **possible** using new technologies or other strategies. Good answers may recognize some **places** have better access to technology than others to mitigate risks. Equally, the uneven distribution of global **power** means there is not a level playing field for risk management. Another approach might be to recognize **perspectives** vary on whether technology is the best way, due to unintended consequences. A good evaluation may conclude with a final judgement on the degree to which the statement is true.

For 5–8 marks,
expect weakly evidenced outlining of two or three relevant themes.

For 9–12 marks, expect:

- either a structured synthesis that links together several well-evidenced themes from the guide
- or a critical conclusion (or ongoing evaluation) informed by geographical concepts and/or perspectives.

For 13–16 marks,
expect both of these traits.

3. (a) Analyse criticisms of attempts to measure human development. [12]

Marks should be allocated according to the markbands on pages 3 to 4.

Human development is a complex multidimensional process that encompasses economic, social and other criteria. As such, it is inherently challenging to measure. It is a widely used though an increasingly controversial concept.

Measuring human development is normally done using the human development index, the gender inequality index or purely economic indicators such as gross domestic product.

Criticisms of human development indicators and indices may relate to reliability (the accuracy of any data) or more fundamentally to validity (questions over what the focus should be) and whether development is a flawed concept (and attempts to measure it should be abandoned).

Likely themes for analysis include:

- The economic classification of countries as high income or low income based on gross domestic product or gross national income or another economic indicator.
- The Human Development Index with its three linked sets of data comprising income, life expectancy and health. The gender inequality index with its emphasis on the social development of countries and political rights of women.
- Alternative indicators and indices such as the happiness index or the Kuznet's curve
- Reliability issues relating to fieldwork and research data accuracy, the conversion of currencies in order to compare wealth and income, *etc.*
- Validity issues such as the legitimacy of indicators and their universal applicability and varying perspectives on for example the use of women's rights, democracy, LGBTQ+ rights and freedoms as development indicators.
- Anti-racist and decolonial arguments in favour of abandoning development as a flawed concept in geography and social science.

Good answers may **apply** (AO2) a **wider range** of knowledge and understanding (AO1) in a **well-structured** way (AO4). One approach might be to provide a structured systematic analysis of the drawbacks of several different development indicators or indices and **possibilities** for error and misuse. Approach might be to explore varying **perspectives** on the validity or legitimacy of some indicators and indices. Another approach might be to explore how development Indicators are used to create a hierarchical worldview which continues to devalue **places** in the Global South.

For 4–6 marks,

expect some weakly evidenced outlining of one or two development measures.

For 7–9 marks,

expect a structured, evidenced analysis of:

- Either reliability problems associated with the use of two development measures
- or the validity / legitimacy of some (or all) attempts to measure / study development.

For 10–12 marks,

expect both of these traits.

3. (b) “Cultural issues are the main cause of opposition to globalization.” To what extent do you agree with this statement? [16]

Credit all content in line with the markbands. Marks should be allocated according to the markbands on pages 5 to 6. Credit unexpected approaches wherever relevant.

Cultural issues may relate to a wide spectrum of cultural traits (language, food, music, religion etc.) and a shared sense of belonging. Issues surrounding any or all these traits, can form the basis for a discussion. Candidates may view a retreat from cultural globalization as being synonymous with the reassertion of sovereignty - this is an acceptable interpretation.

Globalization is a complex set of processes by which the world has become increasingly integrated as a single economic unit and local places have become more interconnected and interdependent. Globalization is a process that leads to changes in national culture and identity, and the growth of a global culture.

The idea of **opposition** invites possible discussion of different contexts for opposition and resistance, including global North and global South contexts. Alternatively, they might look at different stakeholders and players, e.g. opposition by governments, citizens, civil society, etc.

Possible **applied** themes (AO2) include **knowledge and understanding** (AO1) of:

- The concept of globalization [*Guide 4.1*]
- The spectrum of cultural diversity and cultural imperialism [*Guide 5.2*]
- Diasporas, diversity and identity [*Guide 5.2*]
- Resistance to global interactions [*Guide 5.3*]
- Renewed nationalism and tribalization [*Guide 6.1*]
- Civil society organizations and campaigning [*Guide 6.3*]

Good answers may **synthesize** (AO3a) three or more of the above (or other) themes in a **well-structured** (AO4) way.

Good answers may additionally offer a **critical evaluation** (AO3b) of the statement that discusses cultural Issues and opposition in a range of different **places**, highlighting broad differences between global North and global South contexts for example. Another approach might be to systematically evaluate the importance of different cultural **processes** of change, including the spread of language or religion. Another approach might be to explore varying **scales** and **perspectives** on cultural issues e.g. attitudes to globalization vary within countries and not just between them, for example populist parties in Europe and the US. A good evaluation may conclude with a substantiated final judgement on the overall degree to which the statement is true.

For 5–8 marks,
expect weakly evidenced outlining of two or three relevant themes.

For 9–12 marks, expect:

- either a structured synthesis that links together several well-evidenced themes from the Guide
- or a critical conclusion (or ongoing evaluation) informed by geographical concepts and/or perspectives.

For 13–16 marks,
expect both of these traits.
