

Markscheme

May 2025

Geography

Higher level

Paper 3

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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. 		
7–9	<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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesis or evaluation is required at this level. • Links between the response and the guide refer to multiple topics and are described. • Opinion or perspective presented is aligned with the response, but the links are not made explicit, or the link is a general statement. Other perspectives or interpretations are listed without details. <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>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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesis and evaluation is required at this level. • Links between the response and (sub)topics from the guide are explained and supported by the evidence in the response. • The opinion or perspective presented is explicitly linked to the range of evidence included in the response, including critical analysis of the relative certainty of evidence used, describing other perspectives or interpretations of evidence. <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.

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. Global impacts are linked with climate and ocean changes. Governments may try to mitigate 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 uneven distribution of environmental risks created by global food production systems. [12]

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

Global food production systems have been introduced by agribusinesses in order to optimize outputs and profits. For example, the production of global banana and cocoa crops, or chicken farming and aquaculture. Good answers will show clear course learning of global food production systems (role of agribusinesses, TNCs, details of cash/export crops) as opposed to more generalised material about farming ('subsistence farms in LICs').

Environmental risks include habitat loss and biodiversity threats, the use of pesticides, fertilizers and eutrophication, the spread of avian flu or other diseases.

The **uneven distribution** of risk is one which sees global South countries more likely to experience the worst negative impacts while global North consumers benefit from the food produced. However, distribution of risk is also uneven at the local level, with some local places worse affected than others; there are inequalities between and within countries and regions.

Likely themes for analysis include:

- Transboundary pollution, for example linked with palm oil production in Indonesia, and the increased scale of the resulting risks and impacts.
- The risk of eutrophication of coastal waters - caused by runoff containing fertilizers.
- Cattle production, methane emissions, transport related carbon emissions and the uneven distribution of risks associated with climate change (sea-level rise and coastal regions).
- Transnational corporations and their supply chains and the benefits for citizens in high income countries at the expense of global South communities and places, for example water insecurity as a result of intensive agriculture.

Some communities have mitigated these risks, e.g. through organic farming, effective governance and Fairtrade, which affects the distribution of risk.

Some candidates may frame the issues in inaccurate, antiquated or over-generalized ways, for example the assertion that 'subsistence farming happens in LICs and mechanised production occurs in HICs.' Or the assertion that 'farming creates no problems for HICs because most of the work is now done in the global South.' In such cases, award marks positively if possible.

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 uneven distribution at the global **scale** with the global shift of polluting and environmentally destructive agriculture to the global South. Another approach might be to analyse the complex **spatial interactions** resulting from the transboundary pollution that food production systems give rise to. Another approach might be to analyse inequalities at the local scale for particular **places**, and the disproportionate **power** of agribusiness compared to local communities.

For 4–6 marks,

expect some weakly evidenced outlining of one or two environmental or pollution problems associated with food and farming

For 7–9 marks,

expect a structured, evidenced analysis of:

- either two or more environmental risks to places created by global food production systems
- or the varying distribution/geography of environmental risks (e.g. different scales or risk, transboundary pollution issues)

For 10–12 marks,

expect both of these traits.

2. (b) “Natural resources are the main factor influencing local and global economic growth.” 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.

Natural resources are elements of the physical environment that human beings can harness in ways that enhance their wellbeing, health or wealth - utilizing whatever technology is available. The relationship between people and resources is complex, for example local people may be unable to harness a power source because they lack access to technology that others possess. Credit ideas ranging from oil to tourist landscapes.

Local and global economic growth can be measured using gross national products, gross national income, or other criteria. Natural resources play a more important role in the economic growth of some countries and regions than others. Natural resources have always been an important driver of global economic growth over time, though not necessarily for the places in which they are found (colonialism).

The phrase **main factor influencing** invites discussion of any alternative factors driving growth at varying geographic scales. These include technology, capital and information, manufacturing and other sources of income for societies; politics, governance, outsourcing and trade rules set by multi-governmental organizations. Candidates may discuss times when resources adversely impact on growth, e.g. the ‘oil curse’ idea.

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

- Natural resource availability [Guide 4.3]
- OPEC countries [Guide 4.1]
- Human development processes [Guide 5.1]
- Technology and connectivity [Guide 4.3]
- Transnational corporations and commodities [Guide 4.2 and 5.2]
- Multi governmental organizations and free trade zones [Guide 4.3]
- Rejection of globalization and its implications for growth [Guide 5.3]
- Resource nationalism [Guide 5.3]

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 factors and **processes** that may influence economic growth of varying **scales**. Another approach may be to discuss the extent to which the **possibilities** provided by natural resources are actually realized, for example due to colonialism or exploitative TNCs. Another approach might be to explore how economic growth varies for different local **places** and not just at the national **scale**, e.g. due to accessibility. 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.

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 education. 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.
