

Examiners' Report
June 2015

GCSE Geography B 5GB1F 01

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Introduction

This report covers responses from the Foundation Tier Unit 1 paper of GCSE Geography Specification B.

As with previous years, Section A (Questions 1-4) was compulsory; whilst candidates were required to select a topic from Sections B (Rivers and Coasts) and C (Marine or Extreme Environments).

The aim of the unit/paper is to provide candidates with a broad and varied understanding of the natural environment. Question paper completion requires candidates to apply a range of skills. Candidates need to be able to interpret and read maps, diagrams and charts.

Question 1 (b)

The command word is 'give' so the candidate just needs to identify the immediate responses. Some candidates misinterpreted 'response' for 'impact' and so were not able to access any of the marks. Some also gave the effects of volcanoes such as 'flow of magma'. Candidates need to read questions carefully and learn terminology thoroughly.

(b) Give **two** likely **immediate** responses to an earthquake.

(2)

1. Evacuation
2. Dead people



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Examiner Comments

This response receives only one mark as 'evacuation' is a valid response, however 'dead people' is an impact so is not creditable.

Question 1 (c)

The command word here is 'describe' which means extension is needed for at least one of the primary impacts identified, the answer needs more than for a 'give' instruction. Therefore, as the mark scheme shows, at least two primary impacts are required and some extension. The answer also asks for a named location, so a completely generic response could only access three out of the four marks. A mark is available for data which can be anything from the year of the earthquake to the number of deaths. It can really help candidates to learn some facts and figures for their case studies and use them in the point marked as well as the levelled responses. There was some good case study knowledge of Haiti, where relevant facts and figures were used. Nepal was used as a named location but most lacked data for this case study. The focus needed to be on 'primary impacts' so diseases and financial issues being secondary impacts were not credited. The answer also required reference to both people and property and most candidates achieved this by linking houses falling down with homelessness.

(c) For an earthquake in a named location, describe the **primary** impacts on property and people.

Haiti

(4)

Named location:

~~Haiti~~ Haiti 2010

Primary impacts such as buildings falling down, so that means that ~~they~~ people don't have a house anymore. That also means they would of lost most of the stuff in your house so people won't have any clothes or food. People can die in earthquakes easily from just falling over and banging there head at speed.



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Examiner Comments

This response received full marks. The candidate was credited with a mark for data – 2010, the year of the Haiti earthquake. They also gained a mark for buildings falling down and another for extension of that point by linking it to homelessness. There was another mark awarded for loss of possessions and the candidate could also have been awarded a mark for death, but they had already achieved the maximum four marks by then.

(c) For an earthquake in a named location, describe the primary impacts on property and people.

(4)

Named location: ~~Mount Everest~~ Japan

~~All buildings were destroyed~~ It destroyed a load of buildings causing economic problems and left people homeless, and caused social problems ~~for the area~~.



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Examiner Comments

This response was awarded two marks for destroying buildings and homelessness. The economic problem is not a valid primary impact and 'social problems' is not specific enough to warrant a mark.

Question 1 (d)

The majority of candidates were able to identify the layers of the Earth but with the command word 'describe' being used, more detail about the layers was required to access full marks. There was a maximum of two marks for identifying the layers. There were many opportunities to gain full marks as can be seen from the mark scheme and many candidates did so through identifying the solid inner core and liquid outer and the plates of the crust.

(d) Describe the layered structure of the Earth's interior.

(4)

First of all there is the lithosphere, made up of continental and oceanic crust, after that you have the mantle (upper and lower). The Earth's outer core and inner core are solid and liquid molten metal (Nickel). The core is the hottest part of the Earth's interior.

Ⓢ The oceanic crust is made of basalt and is more dense than continental (which is made of granite, and is thicker).



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Examiner Comments

This response easily achieved the full four marks available by expanding on the two layers, the core and the crust, with accurate details.



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Examiner Tip

This response could have been answered with a diagram, which some candidates did. As the command word was 'describe' annotations were needed or written description as well. A diagram just labelling the layers of the Earth could only achieve two marks.

Question 2 (b)

This question with the command word 'outline' requires an impact to be identified and then extended to gain both marks. Many candidates knew that the changes to the climate occur due to the release of ash and greenhouse gases but there was some confusion as to their actual impact. At its simplest: ash results in cooling; greenhouse gases result in heating. Some candidates omitted to identify a change to the climate, just that it changes, so were not able to access a second mark.

(b) Outline **one** way that volcanic eruptions can lead to climate change.

(2)

volcanic ash once in the atmosphere can cool down the climate.



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Examiner Comments

This is a simply written answer that was rewarded with full marks.

(b) Outline **one** way that volcanic eruptions can lead to climate change.

(2)

The smoke released can give off greenhouse gases e.g. CO₂ or Methane and can cause the climates temperature to change



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Examiner Comments

Greenhouse gas achieves a mark but the change to the climate has not been given.

Question 2 (c)

The responses to this question were disappointing because many candidates did not grasp that the question required a spatial pattern for the UK, not a seasonal one, so focused on the reasons for seasonal changes rather than the differences in temperature between the north and south of the UK.

Question 2 (d)

This question featured another 'describe' command word so extension of an idea was required and also a focus on environmental impacts rather than economic or social was needed, which caused a few candidates problems; impacts on tourism were not creditworthy. The responses clearly showed that the impacts of climate change are understood, though it would have helped some responses if they had been clearly focused on the UK, as examples could gain marks as extensions. Many candidates wrote about changes to habitats, migration and flooding and the likelihood of more unpredictable weather. It is important for a four mark question that the candidates come up with at least two points and extend them.

(d) Describe the possible **environmental** impacts of future climate change in the UK.

(4)

The possible environmental impacts of future climate change in the UK could mean sea level rises which could destroy a lot of land due to flooding. Also another possible impact is that if the temperature rises we could have droughts which would also destroy crops and ~~woods~~ would also mess up the water cycle meaning less water.



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Examiner Comments

Full marks were awarded for this response because it contains two extended impacts: sea level rises, resulting in flooding; and temperature increase resulting in droughts.

(d) Describe the possible **environmental** impacts of future climate change in the UK.

(4)

If the UK heats up, then this would mean that animals would have to adapt to the change in heat.



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Examiner Comments

However, this response could only gain two marks because it consists of one extended idea.

Question 3 (b)

Many responses did not seem to have a clear understanding of 'soil health' or how it is maintained by the biosphere. Many answers focused on the hydrological cycle rather than vegetation. Key terms need to be clearly understood by the candidates so that they are not thrown by questions.

(b) Outline **one** way in which the biosphere maintains soil health.

(2)

When trees and plant matter decays, this releases nutrients into the soil that encourage the growth of flora. As a result of this, soil health is maintained because the soil is made more fertile.



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This response was awarded both marks, one for 'plant matter decaying' and the second for 'releasing nutrients into the soil'.

(b) Outline **one** way in which the biosphere maintains soil health.

(2)

The biosphere maintains soil health by producing the nutrients that the soil needs to stay healthy.



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However, this response achieved one mark for 'producing the nutrients that the soil needs', but failed to mention where the nutrients have come from, which was the extension necessary for the second mark.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

'Outline one way' for two marks needs a 'because' from candidates to access both marks. Many tend to write two simple unconnected statements rather than one extended statement.

Question 3 (c)

There were some good responses that focused on National Parks and Ramsar or CITES and contained detail about how they manage the biosphere. Biosphere management does not include climate change so any responses referring to strategies, such as Kyoto, were not able to be rewarded. Some candidates were able to identify relevant schemes but were unsure about their purpose.

(c) Describe **one** local/national and **one** global approach used to manage the biosphere.

(4)

Local or national approach

National parks to preserve the animals that live there so their habitats don't get ruined.

Global approach

Ramsar. This stops people from trading/selling animals which countries have agreed on doing.



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Examiner Comments

Two marks awarded for National Parks protecting habitats. One mark for identifying Ramsar, however the description is for CITES so cannot gain the final mark.

Question 3 (d)

This question required candidates to do two things: identify why destruction of the rainforests is taking place and detail the impact that this is having. Many focused on one or the other, with many valid reasons given for deforestation with examples such as 'logging' for 'mahogany'. Some detailed impacts of the destruction were also given, linking habitat destruction to extinction of animals. The more able candidates were able to link the two elements.

(d) Explain how human activity is causing the destruction of tropical rainforests.

(4)

Cattle ranching is one of the main causes of deforestation. In Brazil they cut down trees so farmers can put their cattle there to graze. We also get paper and other materials, for example rubber, from trees. Deforestation also happens because the trees are cleared so roads can be built.



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Examiner Comments

This example just lists the reasons for deforestation, without any detail about the impacts this has, so was awarded only two marks.

Question 4 (b)

This was a well-answered question with many candidates achieving full marks. Many identified a valid impact and extended it. Popular impacts were: 'failure of crops leading to famine'; 'dehydration leading to death'; and 'having to drink dirty water leading to diseases such as cholera'. All of these responses gained full marks. Where only one mark was awarded it was because no extension of a correct impact was given.

(b) Outline **one** possible impact on people of a limited water supply.

the people can become dehydrated and
also things cannot grow (2)



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Examiner Comments

Two valid impacts are given, 'dehydration' and 'things cannot grow', but there is no extension, so only one mark is awarded.

Question 4 (c)

Many candidates were able to identify the human activities such as 'construction of dams' or 'farmers using fertilisers' but few developed their answers to say how they disrupted the water supplies. 'Pollutes' was not enough to gain a mark.

(c) Describe **two** human activities that disrupt water supplies.

(4)

1 Factories over abstracting water. This leads to the water supply in the ground to go down.

2 Fertilisers in the water. This might cause eutrophication.



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Examiner Comments

Two valid human activities, 'over abstraction' and 'fertilisers', with relevant extensions 'water supply going down' and 'eutrophication', so maximum marks given.

Question 4 (d)

There was some confusion over 'intermediate technology', with a number of responses referring to large-scale management schemes such as The Three Gorges Dam. Responses that did identify the correct type of technology tended to achieve at least two marks by writing simple responses such as 'cheap' and 'easy'. To be awarded more marks, the command word 'describe' needed to be understood and extensions which were relevant to the initial benefits given, were required.

(d) Small-scale water management schemes often use intermediate technology.

Using a named example, describe **two** benefits of using intermediate technology.

(4)

Named example: deep wells

- 1 It ~~also~~ allows people to obtain fresh clean water without having to travel miles.
- 2 It is very cheap to create and easy to maintain.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The first benefit, 'clean water' is valid, as is the extension 'without having to travel miles', so this part is awarded two marks. The second benefit is actually two simple benefits, 'cheap to create' and 'easy to maintain'. These are worth one mark each. The question asks for two benefits so the total mark given for this response is (1+1) +1, so three marks.

Question 5 (b)

Many candidates were able to identify the fact that waves would be stronger and more destructive. Where they failed to get the second mark was because they did not then link it to more erosion, just that it would affect erosion. Repeating the question will not result in a mark being awarded.

Question 5 (c)

This was mostly well-answered as candidates could articulate the benefits of why hard engineering is beneficial to a coastline. Candidates understood that it reduces the impact of erosion and protects the community. Many also identified that hard engineering is also long-lasting. Just writing the word 'effective' was not enough – it needed to be linked to 'protecting houses' or 'preventing erosion'. As the command word was 'give', no extension was required.

Question 5 (d)

There was a large minority of candidates who did not seem to understand the term 'coastal retreat' and wrote about the benefits of hard engineering. Those who did understand the term wrote about a range of impacts but only in a very generic way, without using any case study details, so were only able to access level 2. This is a question that contains marks for SPaG, an important element. Candidates need to ensure that they focus on the construction of their answer. At a basic level, punctuation and grammar matter, as well as the handwriting, because the response needs to make sense and be read easily. Poor spelling does not restrict a candidate to one SPaG mark if the grammar and punctuation are accurate.

*(d) For a named coastline, explain the impact of coastal retreat on local communities.

(6)

Weymouth beach
Named coastline: West Bay (Dorset)

Coastal retreat affects locals because the beach is one of the Weymouths biggest attractions, this therefore affects the locals as they want to keep tourists and bring in GDP. One of the ways we keep the beach, is by beach renourishment, this is where sands are pumped onto the beach.



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Examiner Comments

This is a level 1 response that was awarded two marks. Coastal retreat is understood and an impact is identified, 'tourism'. There is little extension and no case study detail. The second half of the answer focuses on coastal management so is not relevant. SPaG is awarded one mark because the response makes sense and is legible; however it lacks accurate punctuation and use of capital letters.

Question 6 (b)

The majority of candidates did not understand the term 'slope process' so were unable to outline one. The response required was one that outlined a form of mass movement such as 'soil creep', or a type of weathering. Terms like these need to be understood by the candidates because relatively easy marks are being lost. Many candidates outlined river processes especially the formation of 'slip off slopes' which were not valid answers.

(b) Outline **one** slope process.

(2)

Freeze thaw weathering which involves water getting into cracks in rocks, freezes and then shatters.



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Examiner Comments

A type of weathering is identified and explained so two marks are awarded.

Question 6 (c)

Some candidates did not answer this question well. There were many simple one word answers which lacked the detail of the change. For example 'width' and 'depth' did not score any marks, however 'the river gets wider' and 'the river gets deeper' gained two marks. Candidates were also able to access the marks by referring to changes in the type of river features as you move from source to mouth such as 'waterfalls are common in the upper course of the river and meanders in the middle'.

Question 6 (d)

Many responses achieved level 2 because they contained a named river and some generic impacts. Candidates tended to write in the future tense about what would happen if their chosen river flooded, rather than referring to an actual flood event where they could have used data and detail and so been able to access level 3. The mark scheme asks for 'Response is specifically focused on the chosen case study river' for level 3. This is a similar issue to Question 5(d). Candidates need to be able to show specific case study knowledge, through details about the location or data on the impacts.

*(d) For a named river, explain the impact of flooding on local communities.

(6)

Named river: Allendale river

A lot of ~~businesses~~ land would be destroyed and many animals would get harmed, causing farmers a loss nearby businesses in ~~st~~ livestock.

Nearby businesses would be affected as their ~~business~~ business may potentially be destroyed resulting in a loss of income.

Many nearby houses / barns / landmarks may be destroyed causing people with no where to go, and a loss of tourist interest.



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Examiner Comments

This response contains a wide range of possible impacts which are relevant. However, the candidate is writing in the future tense with 'would' and 'may', rather than using a past flood event. This therefore limits them to level 2 because it lacks specific focus on a chosen case study; it is too generic. The mark given was level 2 – 4 marks and SPaG – 2 marks.

Question 7 (b)

The command word was 'give' so a detailed, extended answer was not required. However, the response did need to be linked to marine ecosystems so 'pollution' and 'tourism' were not enough on their own. This did impact on the ability of some candidates to access any marks. Common responses were 'overfishing' and 'coral bleaching'.

(b) Give **two** threats to marine ecosystems.

(2)

1. overfishing

2. pollution and contamination



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Examiner Comments

'Overfishing' gains a mark, however 'pollution' is not enough for the second mark.

Question 7 (c)

The majority of the candidates answered this question well and many extended their response as the command word 'outline' required them to do. Coral reefs were a more popular option than mangrove swamps and the most common reason given was 'overfishing'.

(c) Outline **one** reason for the decline in **either** coral reefs **or** mangrove swamps over the past 50 years.

(2)

A reason for the decline in coral reefs over the past 50 years is due to the climate and water temperature rising which bleaches the coral, causing all the fish to swim elsewhere.



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This response was awarded two marks for the rise in water temperature (a valid reason) leading to coral bleaching (an extension).

(c) Outline **one** reason for the decline in **either** coral reefs **or** mangrove swamps over the past 50 years.

(2)

~~There are less coral reefs in the world because sea levels here risen since 50 years ago.~~



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This response gained one mark for the rising sea levels. No extension was given.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

If work is crossed out but nothing written to replace it, then the crossed out work will be marked where it is possible to read it – as is the case in the above example. So it is a good idea not to scribble out work, just put a single line through it so that it can still be read and marked if necessary.

Question 7 (d)

Many candidates were able to describe management strategies and were able to achieve level 2. However, they struggled to use more detail than name a location; the most popular being St. Lucia. Again, candidates need to move away from the generic to the specific with more examples being used instead of general management strategies.

*(d) Using examples, explain how marine ecosystems can be managed sustainably.

(6)

One example of sustainably managing the marine ecosystems is the SmmA treaty. The SmmA treaty is a way of protecting marine ecosystems in Soufriere Bay in St Lucia. SmmA includes zoning the bays which means that conflicting groups can have certain bay areas where they have a chance to do what they want. This manages ecosystems because it means that some areas will be left alone by these groups, ^{as a result} the ecosystem can develop further and be protected.

Another example of sustainably managing marine ecosystems is banning fishing. ~~This~~ Fishing is a problem towards marine ecosystems as they take fish out of the coral reefs which can disrupt the food chain. Therefore banning fishing means that the food chains and coral reefs will be left unharmed.

(Total for spelling, punctuation and grammar – 3 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This is a really strong answer that gained maximum marks for both content and SPaG. The response is clearly focused on specific measures in St. Lucia and explains how the management strategies work. The answer clearly covers both zoning and fishing.

* (d) Using examples, explain how marine ecosystems can be managed sustainably.

(6)

Marine ecosystems could be managed sustainably by a tighter control on fishing so that whole food chains are not disrupted and that methods that damage coral reefs, such as dragging a net across the sea bed, are banned. Also the farming of coral to help preserve coral reefs is another way. Creating new habitats and ~~other~~ areas where fishing is not allowed so to encourage the fish population to grow.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate clearly understands how marine ecosystems can be managed sustainably and describes strategies, but it is totally generic with no places mentioned or specific details so is a level 2 – 4 mark answer.

Question 8 (b)

Many candidates did not gain both marks on this question, only being able to come up with one valid strategy, often renewable energy sources. Some candidates were not specific enough, writing about farming or water, without any detail as to how it is going to make the extreme environment more sustainable.

Question 8 (c)

'Out-migration' was often misinterpreted as 'in-migration' so candidates were unable to write a response that could gain any marks. Many also focused on why people were leaving rather than on the impact of it on communities. Where the responses were correct, many alluded to the loss of culture, though often without any valid extension, so could only gain one mark.

(c) Outline how out-migration is threatening communities in extreme environments.

(2)

out-migration is threatening because they think they are loosing their culture



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Examiner Comments

This is an example of a simple 'losing culture' statement which gained only one mark.

(c) Outline how out-migration is threatening communities in extreme environments.

(2)

Too many people are going to live there so there is an increase in supplies for the community.



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Examiner Comments

Here there is clear misunderstanding of the terminology so no mark was awarded.



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Examiner Tip

It is really important that all the terminology is understood, so that candidates are able to access the questions.

Question 8 (d)

This was a very well-answered question by many of the candidates, who clearly understood how flora and fauna have adapted to various extreme climates. There were very good references to individual plant and animal species with cacti, camels and polar bears being especially popular. This was a well-taught topic that the candidates clearly enjoyed.

*(d) Explain how plants (flora) and animals (fauna) have adapted to extreme climates.

(6)

Plants have adapted in many different ways, for example the cacti which is usually found in a desert area has adapted by having extremely spiky shape spikes so no predator will want to eat it or if it tries it will not be successful, it has also adapted by having extremely long roots allowing it to dig deeper to find and a supply of water. One other adaptation is that it has its own water storage inside of ~~the~~ it so if it gets really hot it can use that to keep it cool and use it for energy to survive. The animals have adapted really well as well, for example the camel has adapted by having a large surfaced foot so it can move across the sand easily, it also has 3 layers of eye lashes so it does not let sand get in when a sand storm comes. (Total for spelling, punctuation and grammar = 3 marks)

It also has a hump of fat so it can produce energy when there is no food or water, it can have. (Total for Question 8 = 15 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This response contains great extended detail for an example of flora – cactus, and fauna – camel. It was awarded maximum marks for content and two marks for SPaG because of the simple punctuation and spelling errors.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Double check on literacy on SPaG responses to ensure marks aren't being carelessly lost. Ensure all sentences start with a capital and end with a full stop. Avoid using capitals mid-sentence unless spelling a place name or other proper noun. Take care when structuring responses to ensure answers are clear and easy to read.
- Ensure answers to questions with the command terms 'outline', 'describe' and 'explain' include developed statements.
- When drawing diagrams to support written explanations, include annotations, symbols or coding to highlight key features. Make sure you refer to your diagram in your written answer.
- Take care when selecting case studies for questions, ensure that they are relevant to the question.
- Read questions carefully, as marks are lost by candidates referring to 'impacts' rather than 'responses' and 'economic' rather than 'environmental'.
- When describing a map or graph, make sure your response includes accurate compass directions or axis readings.
- On questions where SPaG is being assessed, try to maximise the effective use of subject specific terms.
- On extended response questions, location specific knowledge can often be used to enhance an answer, even when not specifically requested in the question.
- Learn terminology thoroughly which will enhance understanding of the questions being asked and so improve responses.

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