

# Examiners' Report January 2013

## GCSE Geography 5GA1F 01

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## Introduction

Centres are reminded that this unit examines candidates' ability to apply their geographical skills and to answer knowledge-based questions on Global Challenges. As in previous series, a significant proportion of the candidates did not score well on the first two questions, which tested map and graphical skills. The linkage to ICT and graphical presentation was especially difficult for some candidates. On balance, candidates scored more highly on the knowledge-based global challenge questions. Centres are reminded that there is a skills list provided on the Edexcel website and that candidates will be expected to be competent in the range of skills that are listed.

As is often the case, the greatest discriminator was often a lack of clarity about what to do, with command words too often ignored and problems of scale and context all too apparent when looking at the map extract.

It looked as though some candidates may have run out of time since there were some blank responses on occasion towards the end of the examination paper. Centres should advise candidates not to over-write; they should really only need to use the space provided for their answers.

This was the first year of the introduction of SPaG (spelling, punctuation and grammar). The award of these additional four marks is based both on the technical quality of written communication (eg sentence structure, full stops, capitals as well as the complexity of writing) and the use of technical geographical language and/or complex terms. It is worth stating that a candidate who is not awarded any marks because their answer is incorrect would normally be given zero marks for SPaG, since there is a requirement to write in the 'context of the demands of the question'.

This report will provide exemplification of candidates' work, together with tips and/or comments, for a selection of questions. The exemplification will come mainly from questions that required more complex responses from candidates.

## Question 1(a)

This question required candidates to recognise features on a sketch and relate them to the map. A large number of candidates were unable to identify all three features and there was some confusion over cliff/sand from the box. The majority of candidates were able to identify the church.

## Question 1(b)(i)

Most candidates were able to complete the description of St Nicholas in the Wade using the items in the box, although many thought the land was hilly, where in fact it was flat. Once again, basic map skills were lacking from some candidates.

## Question 1(b)(ii)

There was some confusion here regarding shape. Some candidates gave details of the physical site (eg relief and topography), but of course these could not be credited since the focus of the question was shape. Other candidates tried to link shape with relief and provide an explanation, which was not required. The comparison is important here, so examiners were looking for evidence of comparative statements (eg 'whereas', 'but', etc).

The following response was awarded three marks.

(ii) Find the village of Monkton in grid square 2865.

Compare the shape of Monkton with the shape of St Nicholas at Wade (2666).

(3)

St Nicholas at Wade is a nucleated village ~~whereas~~  
whereas Monkton is linear. So all of St Nicholas  
at Wade has its houses close together but  
Monkton has its houses either side of a road.



**ResultsPlus**  
examiner comment

This is a concisely written response that uses correct geographical terminology and implies comparison through the 'but' word.

This is another response to Q1(b)(ii).

(ii) Find the village of Monkton in grid square 2865.

Compare the shape of Monkton with the shape of St Nicholas at Wade (2666).

(3)

Monkton has contour lines which are closer together than the contour lines at St Nicholas at Wade meaning that there are more hills. The housing is in ~~one~~ a line along a road but there are no houses in St Nicholas at Wade suggesting it is not as busy. St Nicholas at Wade has a river running through it but Monkton does not.



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examiner comment

This response scores one mark only (for the idea of houses along a road). The rest of the response, while geographically sound, unfortunately is not related to the question and cannot be rewarded.

## Question 1(d)

A number of candidates failed to score any marks on this question as they did not provide a land feature from the key on the map (emboldened in the question). Precision, when answering questions, is very important in this section of the paper so that candidates do not lose out on the opportunity for gaining marks.

(d) There are many different land features on the map extract.

Complete the table below with **one land feature** for each of the grid squares.

A land feature can only be used once.

(4)

Grid square	Name of land feature	Symbol
1864	Nature Reserve	
1661	Telephone	



**ResultsPlus**  
examiner comment

Unfortunately this response was typical of many candidates who failed to select land features from the key on the map. This response did not score any marks.

(d) There are many different land features on the map extract.

Complete the table below with **one land feature** for each of the grid squares.

A land feature can only be used once.

(4)

Grid square	Name of land feature	Symbol
1864	non coniferous	
1661	orchard	



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examiner comment

Four marks were awarded here for a correct selection of land features.



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examiner tip

Reading the question exactly is very important in this section of the examination.

## Question 2(a)(i)

It was pleasing to see that most candidates were able to link correctly the data provided in the box on page 7 of the examination paper to Figure 2a. Examiners accepted shapes that were similar in both size and style to those found in Figure 2a, but they did not credit responses that were too different from what should have been included in the boxes. Once again, there was a need here for reasonable accuracy and precision.

## Question 2(a)(iv)

A proportion of candidates did not use evidence/information/data from Figure 2a (eg the actual number of rounded stones, etc), which tended to limit the number of marks they could get to just one. Others insisted on describing changes in both the size and shape of pebbles, which was not required.

(iv) Describe what is happening to the **shape** of the pebbles between site 1 and site 4.

Use pebble data in your answer.

At Site 1 and 2 there is only 1 rounded <sup>(2)</sup>  
~~pebble~~ pebble. Then at site 3 the number of rounded  
pebbles goes up to 2. Finally, at  
site 4 all of the pebbles are rounded



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examiner comment

Two marks were awarded for this response.



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examiner tip

The instruction to use pebble data was not carried out by a large number of candidates. Please read the question carefully!

## Question 2(a)(v)

Far too many candidates were giving answers such as 'it's easy' or 'it's a good way' in the Advantage section of Q2(a)(v). This is simply too vague to be worthy of any credit. A key component of the Figure 2a diagram is that it allows comparison of rocks/sites – it was a shame that so many candidates missed this aspect.

With respect to the Disadvantage section, a number of candidates incorrectly stated that 'it doesn't show many rocks / small sample size'.

The response below was awarded two marks.

(v) State **one** advantage and **one** disadvantage of using the technique, shown in Figure 2a, to display data. (2)

Advantage

It is very easy to compare the information

Disadvantage

It is sometimes confusing between 2m to 4m and less than 2m



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examiner comment

Credit was given for 'easy to compare the information'. The disadvantage is also valid: the idea of it being difficult to see differences between the sizes.

## Question 2(b)

Importantly, this question asked **how**, rather than what can be displayed (eg a graph). The 'how' part needs a more detailed description of how ICT is actually used. Many responses got two marks for naming a technique, eg using Excel and then creating pie charts from the software. The question is not about the advantages of using ICT (it's quicker, easier, etc). Some candidates wrote about using the Internet for comparison with other locations, but this of course is not linked to presentation.

There were some good references to GIS by many candidates, including the ideas of layering and geo-locating particular items of information and data.

(b) Describe how ICT can be used to present data that has been collected in the field.

(3)

- GIS could be used to present the data as you can display lots of different data on top of each other.
- Google Maps could be used to map on the rocks on the actual place and you could use a photo of it as a symbol -



**ResultsPlus**  
examiner comment

The first bullet – GIS and idea of layers – was worthy of two marks. Google Maps is valid, but GIS has already been given credit. However, there is credit in the second bullet point for using 'photo of it as a symbol'. Application is evidenced, which is more development, so overall the response can be awarded three marks.

### Question 3(a)(i)

There were some good map skills demonstrated in answering this question, but a few candidates did reverse shading, i.e. shaded areas that would **not** be flooded. This could not be awarded any credit since the question was explicit about the areas that should be shaded.

### Question 3(a)(iii)

Overall, there were high-quality responses to this question but some candidates wrote generally about the negative effects of global warming (eg melting ice), which is not the same as rising sea levels. Sea level rise is mostly linked to thermal expansion of the oceans. There were occasional references to river flooding – again this was not part of the question. The effects on people were generally better dealt with than the effects on the environment, but these categories are not mutually exclusive.

(iii) Outline the negative effects of rising sea levels on people and the environment.

Use examples in your answer.

(4)

Rising sea levels, such as in around Bangladesh, can lead to widespread flooding which destroys infrastructure and crops, which in turn can cause homelessness and famine. The polluted water also carries sewage and dead bodies, this can lead to disease and further pollute other water sources, meaning people have to travel great distances for clean water.



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examiner comment

There is some good geographical linkage demonstrated in this response, saying how flooding leads to other consequences, eg disease and famine.



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examiner tip

Use of examples usually refers to place examples, but in this question candidates could get maximum marks if they covered a range of developed ideas so that examples here could be taken as meaning 'examples of effects'.

### Question 4(a)(iii)

Linking map evidence to key geographical words, such as distribution, is an important skill in Unit 1. Many candidates had only a vague idea of how to tackle a question such as this and failed to see overall patterns. Even more were unable to link their statements to actual map evidence.

The following is an example of a response that was awarded full marks.

(iii) Describe the distribution of Park and Ride sites around Canterbury.

Use evidence from the OS map extract in your answer.

(3)

There are 4 park and ~~the~~ ride sites all at the end/cor-  
ner of the Canterbury. One park and ride is ~~to~~ Southern  
west to ~~the~~ Canterbury, one is southwest, one is north  
with the grid reference of 1759 and the last ones  
Northwest to the Canterbury. There are not much  
park and Ride sites ~~in~~ around Canterbury.



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This answer gives details of the distribution, supported by map data/evidence. There is enough here to get three marks.



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examiner tip

Many candidates failed to use explicit map evidence, eg names of roads or grid references.

### Question 4(a)(iv)

There were some very strong answers to this question with good details on London congestion charging and other schemes, eg dedicated bicycle lanes, car-sharing, etc. Once again, those candidates who were able to provide locational details combined with one or two facts and figures inevitably got the maximum marks.

(iv) Other than Park and Ride schemes, outline **one** method used to manage traffic in urban areas.

(2)

They have built more bus lanes which would encourage more people to use buses as it would have more room on the road and could get to destinations faster.



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The two marks were awarded as follows: developed ideas about bus lanes (one mark), more room on the road (links to 'how' part) (one mark).

## Question 4(b)

A very mixed bag of responses was provided in this part of the examination: some answers were very good, others very poor. There were lots of references to Costa Rica, but case studies and examples can be taken from a range of texts and resources at different scales. There is absolutely no requirement to use material from approved textbooks or other accredited resources; material just needs to be geographically appropriate and fit for purpose. As usual, facts, figures and locational details are well rewarded and characteristic of work in the top band. Unfortunately, some candidates chose to describe the impacts of tropical rainforest destruction, rather than explain the management that was obviously the focus of the question.

\*(b) Explain how the effects of resource extraction from tropical rainforest areas are managed.

Use examples in your answer.

(6)

In Brazil, they use their army to track down illegal loggers taking trees from the amazon <sup>tropical rainforest</sup> in Brazil, there are 600 soldiers and 4 planes in this operation. 91 areas of the amazon is now protected. Large organisations are now starting to get resources away from tropical rainforests and the amazon. Nike now gets leather from animals that are not in tropical rainforests. And has reduced packaging. People can buy an acre of land for around £20 so that that area cannot be deforested or logged. Also logging is now more controlled as they limit the amount of trees that can be logged and in Brazil they use tape measures to measure the trees that are logged.

(Total for spelling, punctuation and grammar = 4 marks)



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There is one well-developed idea here and an attempt to explain three other ideas with facts and figures to support them. This answer was awarded six marks, which puts it at the top of Level 3, although it has a repetitive style in places. It was awarded two marks for SPaG (Amazon is lower case, for instance).

## Summary

This paper revealed some inconsistencies in candidates' performance.

- There were some excellent answers linking together knowledge and understanding through case study material, eg Q3 and Q4.
- This was in marked contrast to the performance on the skills elements of Q1 and Q2. Map skills were sometimes quite poor even from candidates who did well later on in the paper.
- A particular aspect of this was the inability of some candidates to grasp the idea of scale and to read the 'white' areas on a map. Some also ignored the key words in questions, eg 'shape'.
- It is probably a good idea for centres to try and integrate these map skills into general teaching and learning of topics so that they can become more firmly embedded.

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