

Examiners' Report
June 2013

GCSE Geography A 5GA1F 01

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Introduction

This was another paper which exposed the best and the weakest of responses. Excellent case-study knowledge (which was focused on the questions set) saw generally high marks for many in the last section of the paper. Importantly however, this had to be combined with a response which actually answered the question, eg 'explain'. In marked contrast, Section A once again revealed very patchy skills, with OS map-skills especially weak. The fact that the map extract was based in a popular area of North Wales seems to have worried some candidates (they were perhaps expecting maps always to be based on an English extract). Of course map skills can be examined irrespective of geographical location. It is probably a good idea for centres to try and integrate these map skills into general teaching and learning of topics rather than seeing them as a stand-alone unit of work.

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.

There were a few candidates who looked as if they may have run out of time since there were some blank responses on occasion towards the end of the exam. Please remember to advise candidates that they really should only need to use the answer-space provided, and not over-write.

This was the second series to see the introduction of SPaG. This additional 4 marks (Question 4(b)) 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 a reminder that a candidate who provides a zero response for an answer (ie it is incorrect) would normally be given zero for the 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 which required more complex responses from candidates.

Question 1 (b) (ii)

Few candidates were able to correctly label Snowdon Mountain Railway ('R') on the cross-section provided on page 8 of the exam booklet. Clearly many found this difficult and could not mark it accurately even within the given tolerances on the mark-scheme. A significant number didn't bother trying. Section 2.3 (Topic 2) in Unit 1, Section A clearly states that candidates will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate understanding of OS map cross-sections.

This answer did not score any marks.

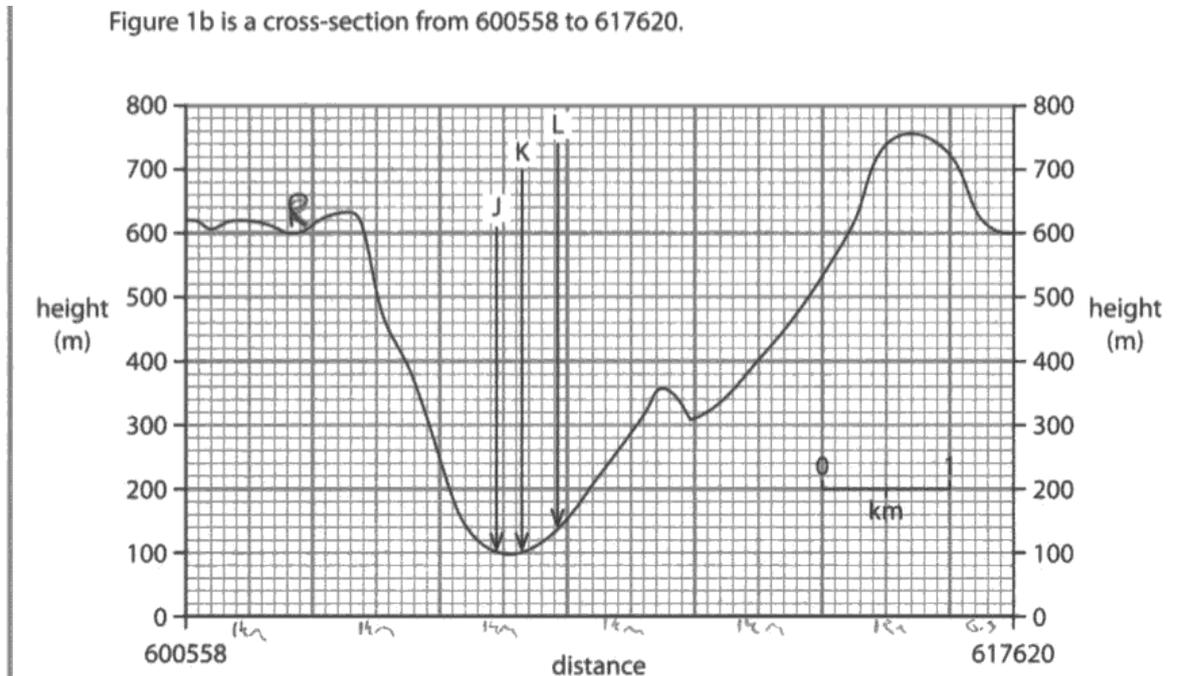


Figure 1b – A cross-section of the 'Pass of Llanberis' (valley)

- (i) Identify the feature found at each of J, K and L on Figure 1b.

(3)

Letter	Feature
J	Public House
K	Site of antiquity
L	Camp site

- (ii) The Snowdon Mountain Railway crosses this cross-section.

Mark with an R on Figure 1b where the Snowdon Mountain Railway crosses the cross-section.



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Examiner Comments

This was a common example where the maps skills simply were not strong enough. The 'R' was too far from its correct position to get credit.

Question (2) (a) (i)

Some candidates gained 2 marks for correctly completing the data onto the flow line map, although at times many were not on the lines of paths and railway but linked to it. Other candidates failed to gain any marks as arrows were not pointing in the correct direction towards the summit. Sometimes the arrow sides were not parallel to each other which is not good practice. Clearly for many candidates they had never seen diagrams like this before, even though on page 13 of the specification (Topic 3 Graphical Skills), 'interpret a variety of graphs, including those located on maps' is stated. Once again, the quality of these responses would suggest that increased exposure to these kinds of diagrams is essential as part of this geography course.

This answer was not awarded any marks.

2 (a) Look at Figure 2 which shows the average number of tourists per hour on different routes to the summit of Snowdon in August 2012.

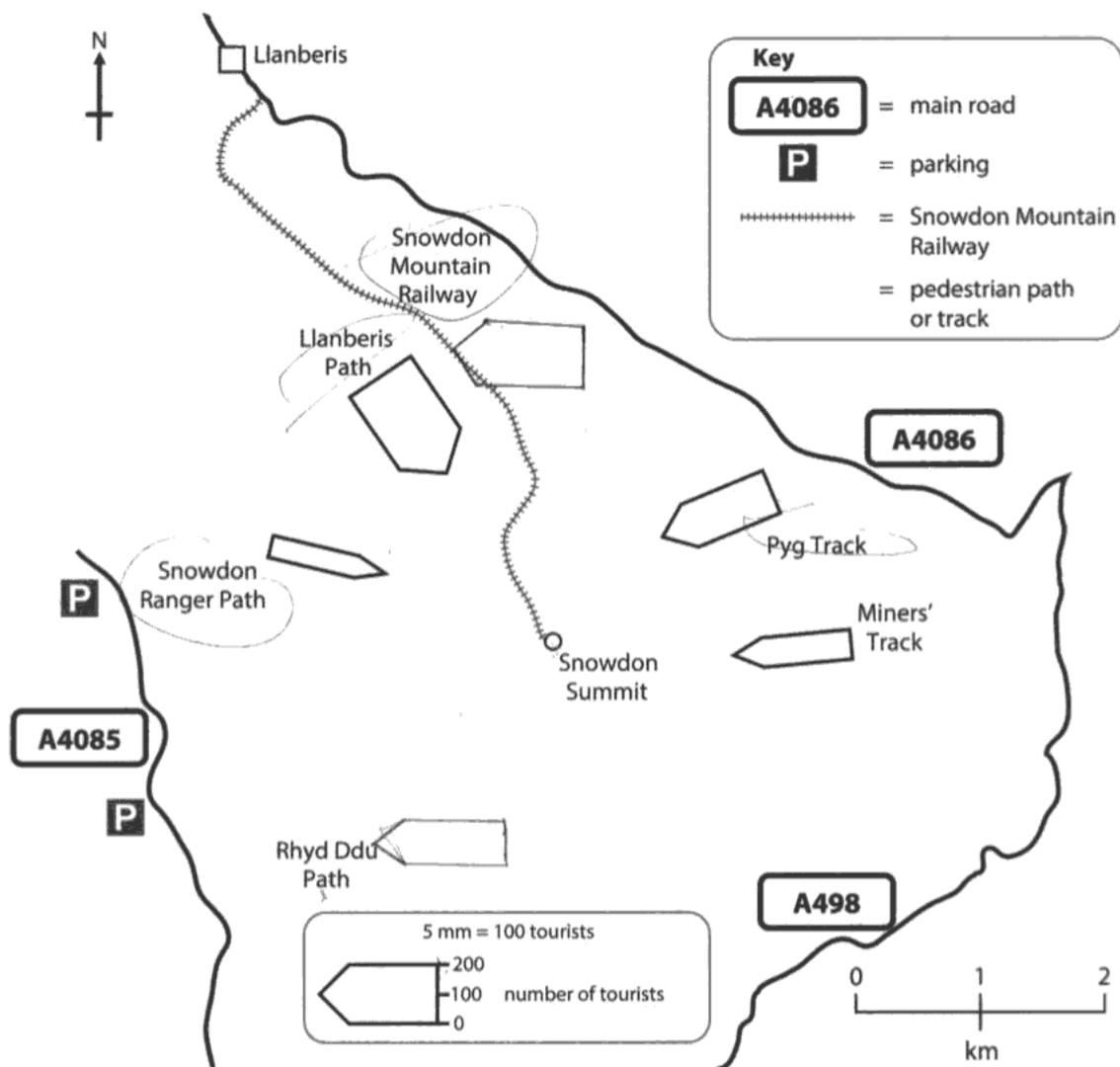


Figure 2 - Routes to the summit of Snowdon using flow-lines to show the average number of tourists per hour

(i) Complete Figure 2 using the data in the table below.

(2)

Route	Average number of tourists per hour in August 2012
Snowdon Mountain Railway	200
Rhyd Ddu Path	150



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Examiner Comments

This is an example of a response where there was no credit available since the arrows were in no way pointing uphill.



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Examiner Tip

These kinds of located graphs and diagrams are essential teaching and learning.

This response, on the other hand, scored both marks.

- 2 (a) Look at Figure 2 which shows the average number of tourists per hour on different routes to the summit of Snowdon in August 2012.

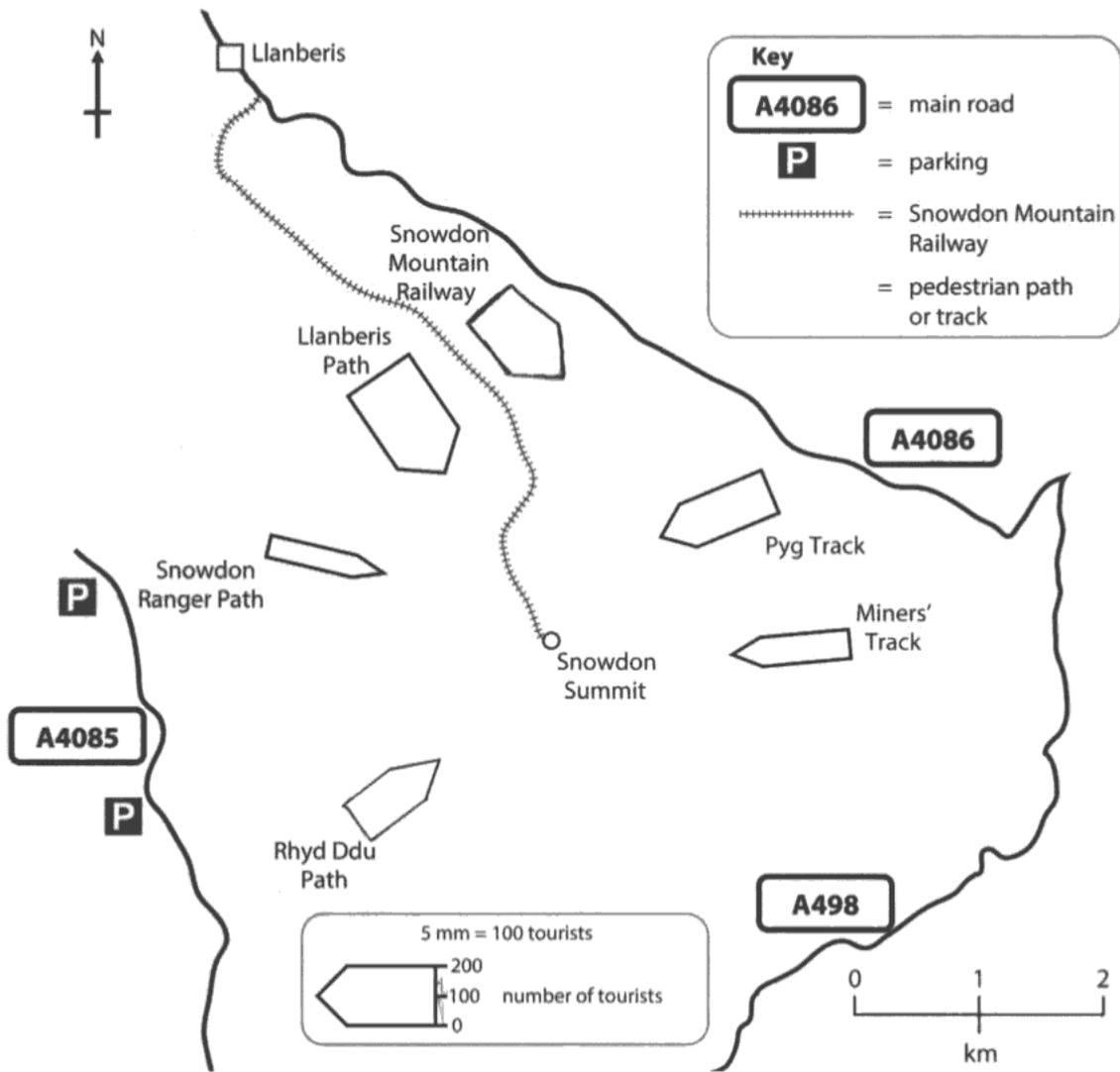


Figure 2 – Routes to the summit of Snowdon using flow-lines to show the average number of tourists per hour

- (i) Complete Figure 2 using the data in the table below.

(2)

Route	Average number of tourists per hour in August 2012
Snowdon Mountain Railway	200
Rhyd Ddu Path	150



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Examiner Comments

Good quality diagrams were produced here. 2 marks were awarded.

Question 2 (a) (iv)

The majority of candidates were able to identify two advantages of flow line diagrams with 'easy / clear to read' and 'shows numbers of people' as being the most popular. Some candidates did refer to 'quick / easy to draw' which was rejected. The best responses actually indicated why this particular data presentation approach was used in terms of being able to display multiple pieces of information and also the fact that it had a clear spatial element.

This response scored both marks.

(iv) State **two** advantages of using flow-line diagrams such as Figure 2 to show movement of people. (2)

Advantage one
You can place multiple amounts of data on at once.

Advantage two
It is an accurate way of showing movement of people.



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Examiner Comments

The answer gives two solid reasons for why diagrams such as this have advantages when showing the movement of people.

Question 2 (a) (v)

There was a very wide variation in the quality of answers produced for this question. Some very good answers provided data as well as patterns and a few actually provided reasons (eg access from car parks etc) but the idea of describing a 'pattern' was something that was clearly not in their normal repertoire for a large proportion of candidates.

This is an example of a response that scored 4 marks.

(v) Outline the pattern of tourist movement to the summit of Snowdon in August 2012.

Use evidence from both the OS map and Figure 2 in your answer.

(4)

Llanberis path has the largest amount of tourists with 240 per hour going towards the summit. Snowdon Ranger Path has only 80 tourists per hour meaning it has the smallest amount. The Snowdon Mountain Railway is next to the Llanberis path and both come off the main road A4086. Snowdon Ranger path and Rhyd Ddu path come off the A4085 and where there are two parking places. There is also the Pig track and the miners track which come off of the A4086. (Total for Question 2 = 10 marks)



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Examiner Comments

A good range of ideas well linked to pattern are identified through this response.



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Examiner Tip

Pattern and distribution are very important geographical ideas, not only in this Unit but also Units 2, 3 and 4.

This answer was not awarded any marks.

(v) Outline the pattern of tourist movement to the summit of Snowdon in August 2012.

Use evidence from both the OS map and Figure 2 in your answer.

(4)

The pattern of tourist movement of summit of Snowdon in August 2012 shows that the move not horizontally but in different direction (snake kind of movement).



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Examiner Comments

This response is very short for a 4 mark answer. It also makes no sense, so no marks could be awarded.

Question 3 (a) (ii)

Most candidates were able to give at least one way in which increasing public transport can help to improve urban areas, often stating that it reduces pollution and congestion. Some candidates struggled to give two clear, distinct, separate answers, so on occasion this led to repetition both within and between sections of this question.

Question (3) (a) (iii)

Most candidates were able to identify one way in which traffic can be managed in urban areas. However some candidates identified the way traffic can be managed but did not give a description of what this scheme actually was or how it works. A number of candidates failed to get maximum marks as they had focused on the benefits of the scheme instead, which was not part of the question. Where candidates wrote about two schemes it was only the best one which was credited.

This example scored full marks.

(iii) Increasing public transport is one way of managing traffic in urban areas.

Describe **one** other way in which **traffic** can be managed in urban areas.

(3)

One other way in which traffic can be managed is either use park and ride, where you can pick a bus into the area or introduce congestion charging which means you need to pay to drive into an area because of a low emission zone, like London.



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Examiner Comments

This answer scored 3 marks, as it has three clear points, including a location (London) which is also worth 1 mark.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates must follow the instructions carefully in the question, ie **one** way traffic can be managed.

Question 3 (b)

A reasonable number of candidates were able to identify basic ways in which the effects of resource extraction can be managed eg using bans, permits or replanting trees. However further development of detail was needed in some responses on the way this was managed. Some candidates focused largely on the effects of resource extraction, with little specific information and detail on the management scheme. Examples were poor and the knowledge of what 'management' was seemed to be lacking.

This response scored all 4 marks.

(b) Describe **two** ways in which the effects of resource extraction can be managed.

You should use an example(s) in your answer. (4)

- 1 In Costa Rica tree logging has been forbidden so they have made an national park which is run by the local people and that you are only allowed to cut down trees if you have a permit.
- 2 Esquinas in Brazil companies are paying for their pipes to be put under ground. Also to take out the oil from the lakes this will stop the oil from entering the water supply.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Two ways have been described in reasonable detail, allowing a maximum of 4 marks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Examples can be very brief, eg located places or examples of how the management is being applied.

Question 4 (a) (ii)

The vast majority of candidates answered this question correctly. Although some candidates wrote the word 'sea' for the last response, this was accepted.

Question 4 (b)

At nearly all levels candidates were able to identify general basic effects of climate change, eg ice caps melting and sea level rising. However some candidates did not elaborate on these to identify specific locations / places. Few candidates were able to achieve top Level 3 marks on the mark-scheme, as their answers lacked detailed factual information to support their response. Many candidates' responses involved an overlap between people and the environment, a minority of candidates discussed them separately. There were a small percentage of candidates who became confused with the answer and wrote about the causes of climate change rather than the effects.

It is essential that candidates are provided with correct and up-to-date information about climate change, eg the likely range of temperature rises (IPPC 2007 report and the Met Office are good sources for example), plus accurate models of sea level rise (estimated to be somewhere between 80-100cm over the next hundred years or so). Often published facts and figures that exist in textbooks are somewhat dated and as a result are less reliable than the most current estimates. Good teaching and learning should always be supported by the most up-to-date information relating to this dynamic part of the specification.

For SPaG the commonest mark was 1 with a few responses gaining 2 marks. Rarely was there a zero without some reason.

This response scored 9 marks in total.

*(b) Explain why climate change can have negative effects on both people and the environment.
Use examples in your answer. (6)

Climate change is having negative effects in the Maldives. The Maldives is a low lying island, that is mostly in above sea level. climate change cause temperature to increase. This causes water to expand and glaciers to melt. This increase the height of the sea by 4mm a year. By 50 years most of the Maldives will be gone.

Climate change is also having negatives on the crop yield. As the temperature increases, it causes more droughts to occur and soil the ground to be infertile. This reduces the amount of crops being produced. This will affect countries dependant on imported crops like America and Russia.



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Examiner Comments

This is an explicit answer. There are explanations of two negative effects of climate change on people and the environment. Examples are supported by factual information (and/or location). It is well-communicated with good use of geographical terminology so scores 3 marks for SPaG.



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Examiner Tip

The use of words such as 'causes' really helps to convey the idea of explanation. SPaG can be supported with the use of glossaries.

Paper Summary

Once again, the paper this series revealed some inconsistencies in candidates' performance. There were some excellent answers linking together knowledge and understanding through case study material, eg slightly longer answers in Questions 3 and 4 but this was in marked contrast to the performance on the skills elements of Questions 1 and 2.

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

- practise developing your map skills since this was a real area of weakness on this paper, even from candidates who did well on the rest of the paper
- it is important to revise carefully ways of displaying and interpreting data since this too seemed to be a weakness (Question 2(a) was a particular example of this problematic understanding)
- some candidates found it particularly difficult to grasp the idea of scale and cross-sections, this lack of skill was exposed in Question 1(b), it is important therefore to take time to practise these ideas.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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