

Examiners' Report

June 2025

GCSE Geography B 1GB0 02

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Introduction

This report provides an overview of candidate performance in the 2025 Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9–1) Geography B Paper 2: UK Geographical Issues. The paper continues to assess a broad range of skills, including the application of geographical knowledge, understanding of UK-specific contexts, and the ability to evaluate fieldwork and enquiry processes.

The paper retained its familiar structure. Section A examined the UK's evolving physical landscape, Section B focused on the UK's human landscape, and Section C allowed for choice between coastal or river processes and urban or rural change. Most candidates opted for rivers or coastal investigations alongside the urban fieldwork investigation.

Each question is mapped to one or more of the Assessment Objectives (AOs) and includes multiple-choice questions, short open responses, calculations and 8-mark extended writing questions. There is also a range of examination command words that candidates need to be familiar with, the most common being 'describe', 'explain', 'compare', 'assess' and 'evaluate'.

The overall exam performance was similar to 2025. The report also noted that the optionality within the paper did not disadvantage candidates based on their chosen routes.

Candidates generally responded well to short 2-mark questions, particularly those requiring explanation of urban inequality, regeneration impacts, and erosion levels at different rates. Responses were often concise and focused, with increasing use of case study detail and geographical terminology. However, in the 4-mark questions, some answers lacked development or failed to fully address the command words.

Fieldwork questions continue to improve year on year. Candidates demonstrated growing confidence in identifying and explaining both quantitative and qualitative methods, with beach profiling, field sketches, and photographs being the most commonly cited techniques. The application of theory such as the Bradshaw Model was more secure in river contexts than coastal, though some candidates struggled to link theory to their own data.

Extended writing 8-mark questions continue to show steady improvement, especially at the grade 2, 3, and 4 levels. These questions, including those requiring assessment of conclusions or secondary data, were more consistently attempted than in previous series. These responses were observed across Questions 4, 7, 8E, 9E, 10B, and 11B. Stronger responses distinguished themselves by offering balanced arguments, using resource data/information, and integrating skills from both AO3 and AO4. Candidates who excelled often demonstrated a clear structure, addressing the question directly and exploring themes within the resource. In contrast, weaker responses tended to rely on copying data or presenting undeveloped points, missing opportunities to fully assess the material.

Overall, candidate performance in 2025 reflects steady progress in exam technique and understanding of geographical enquiry. Centres are encouraged to continue supporting students in developing analytical skills, applying theory with precision, and using case study detail to strengthen responses.

Question 1(b)

Two-mark 'Explain...' questions are common across the GCSE B papers and require candidates to make a clear, relevant point (1 mark) and then develop that point to show understanding (second mark). In this case, candidates were expected to identify a physical impact of glaciation and then explain how or why this feature formed.

For example, a valid response might be "Glaciation formed U-shaped valleys" (1 mark), followed by "The movement of glaciers eroded the valley sides and floor through abrasion" (1 mark).

While most candidates could name a glacial landform such as U-shaped valleys, corries, or ribbon lakes, many struggled to explain the processes behind their formation, which is necessary to access the second mark.

A common error was the inclusion of freeze-thaw weathering. While freeze-thaw is associated with cold climates and upland areas, it is a weathering process, not a direct impact of glacial movement. As the question asked specifically for an impact of glaciation, marks were only awarded for features formed by erosion or deposition by ice, such as U-shaped valleys, corries, and moraines.

Some candidates also included misconceptions about sea level rise or melting ice flooding habitats—concepts more closely related to climate change than to the shaping of upland landscapes by glaciation.

To achieve full marks, candidates need to clearly identify a glacial landform and support this with an explanation that demonstrates how glaciation created it, avoiding confusion with unrelated processes.

(b) Explain one impact of glaciation on the UK's upland landscapes.

(2)

Glaciation created U shaped valleys from eroding through land, ~~on top~~ and leaving these valleys as they ploughed through and eroded land.



The candidate demonstrates basic understanding of the impact of glaciation by identifying the transformation from a V-shaped to a U-shaped valley. Although the explanation lacks logical sequencing, they attempt to explain this change through erosion, showing partial understanding of geomorphological processes.



'Explain' is prompting candidates to explore cause-and-effect relationships. It's about saying why something happens, not just what happens.

Question 1(c)

This question was more accessible than 1b. Two-mark 'Explain' questions require candidates to state a valid reason (1 mark) and then develop it with linked explanation or reasoning (1 additional mark). In this case, candidates needed to identify a factor that influences the rate of erosion and then explain why it causes differences between rock types.

A typical full-mark response might be "Some rocks are softer than others" (1 mark) followed by "Softer rocks like clay or sandstone are more easily worn away by processes like hydraulic action or abrasion" (1 mark).

Most candidates could identify a correct factor such as rock hardness, resistance, or rock type, but fewer provided clear development to explain why this caused erosion to occur at different rates.

Commonly seen answers simply stated "Some rocks are harder than others" which correctly identified the reason but lacked development. To achieve the second mark, candidates needed to explain that harder rocks resist erosion, or that softer rocks erode more quickly under coastal or river processes.

To gain full marks, candidates must move beyond identifying a characteristic to explain how that characteristic influences erosion rates.

(c) Explain **one** reason why rocks are eroded at different rates.

(2)

Due to the type of rock. Hard or soft



In this response, hard and soft rock are identified as the reason why rocks are eroded at different rates. The candidate does not provide any extension to this point. This response scores 1 mark.

(c) Explain **one** reason why rocks are eroded at different rates.

(2)

Less resistant rocks are more easily eroded and wear away quicker than more resistant rock such as granite.



This answer correctly identifies the level of rock resistance as a factor influencing erosion rates. The candidate then extends this by explaining that rocks with lower resistance erode more quickly than those with higher resistance. 2 marks.



Point-marked questions dominate this and other GCSE papers. You need to make one explanatory point for each mark with the second mark being a development from the first.

Question 2(a)ii

This was correctly answered by the majority of candidates with the most popular responses identifying the large boulders in the forefront of the image.

Question 2(b)

The majority of candidates gained at least 1 mark here. The majority of candidates correctly identified a relevant difference, with the majority focusing on the orientation of rock layers as either parallel or perpendicular to the coastline. Some also referenced variations in rock banding, which demonstrated a solid understanding of the geological context.

Many candidates successfully earned the second mark by explaining how this difference influences erosion patterns and landform development. For example, they clearly linked discordant coastlines to the formation of headlands and bays due to differential erosion, while concordant coastlines were described as having fewer such features because of more uniform erosion.

This shows that a substantial portion of candidates not only recognized the key difference but also effectively explained the coastal landscape consequences, meeting the full requirements of the question.

(b) Explain **one** difference between concordant coastlines and discordant coastlines.

(2)

Concordant coast lines are quite straight whereas discordant have bays and headlines.



This candidate was awarded one mark for a correct difference identified. Discordant coastlines have headlands and bays, concordant ones do not.

(b) Explain **one** difference between concordant coastlines and discordant coastlines.

(2)

Concordant coastline is when rock strata is parallel to the coast, ^{usually forming bays and coves} whereas discordant is when rock strata is perpendicular to the sea, ~~usually~~ usually forming headlands and bays.



This answer earned 2 marks because it clearly explains the key difference between concordant and discordant coastlines. The candidate correctly identifies that a concordant coastline is formed when rock strata are parallel to the coast, and a discordant coastline occurs when the rock strata are perpendicular to the sea. The explanation is extended by describing the typical features formed by each type of coastline. For concordant coastlines, the candidate mentions that they usually form bays and coves, while discordant coastlines typically form headlands and bays.

Question 2(c)

Candidates performed very well on this question. The most common and well-explained impact was rising sea levels leading to increased flooding along coastlines. Many candidates not only identified this impact but also clearly explained how higher sea levels cause more frequent and severe coastal flooding, demonstrating a strong grasp of the processes involved.

Other candidates also referenced impacts such as increased erosion or loss of habitats, though these were less frequent. Overall, the majority showed a clear understanding of both the cause (climate change causing sea level rise) and the effect (more flooding) successfully meeting the criteria for full marks.

(c) Explain **one** impact of climate change on coastal landscapes.

(2)

climate change can melt ice glaciers
in the arctic, meaning sea level
rises therefore coastal landscapes
are flooded



The candidate identifies that climate change causes the melting of ice glaciers in the Arctic, leading to rising sea levels. This, in turn, results in the flooding of coastal landscapes. The response correctly connects the cause and effect, fulfilling the criteria for full marks.



For a 2-mark question, the response should explain the process in basic terms and link it to a specific impact on the coastal landscape. Be concise but specific. Mentioning both the change (e.g. melting glaciers) and the resulting consequence (e.g. flooding of coastal areas) ensures you meet the requirements for full marks. Avoid vague statements and focus on a direct impact-and-effect relationship.

Question 2(d)

Candidates generally demonstrated good understanding of soft engineering approaches to managing coastal erosion. Most successful candidates referred specifically to beach replenishment or beach nourishment, explaining how adding sediment to the beach helps to mitigate the effects of erosion by maintaining or increasing beach width.

However, a sizeable number of candidates mentioned groynes or sea walls, which are hard engineering methods and received no credit. To secure marks, candidates needed to go beyond simply naming methods and clearly explain why soft engineering techniques manage erosion effectively—for example, by working with natural processes, being cost-effective, or having less environmental impact than hard engineering.

Some candidates only listed methods without explanation, limiting their marks. Clear explanation of the benefits or mechanisms of soft engineering was essential for full credit.

(d) Explain **one** reason why coastal erosion can be managed using soft engineering.

~~replenishment~~
replenishment

(2)

Beach replenishment is a soft engineering strategy and it adds extra pebbles and sand to the beach to make beach look wider. This manages erosion as it takes more time for the original beach to be eroded.

(Total for Question 2 = 8 marks)



This answer earned 2 marks because it clearly explains the process of beach replenishment as a soft engineering strategy. The candidate identifies that extra sand and pebbles are added to the beach, which makes the beach wider. This helps to manage erosion by making it take longer for the original beach to erode. The answer addresses both the method and its effect on coastal erosion, meeting the criteria for full marks.



Simply naming the engineering method without explaining its effect wouldn't have been enough, as the question specifically asks to explain.

(d) Explain **one** reason why coastal erosion can be managed using soft engineering.

(2)

Strategies like groynes, ~~also~~ prevent mass movement of the sea bed by preventing large amounts of sand to be deposited by longshore drift to ^{an} end of a beach.



This was a common mistake by many candidates. The answer it incorrectly referred to groynes, which are a hard engineering strategy, not a soft engineering technique. 0 marks.



Make a list of key terms that cause misunderstanding and do your best to learn them before the examination.

Question 3(c)

Most candidates correctly identified a cost, typically that hard engineering is expensive, and a benefit, usually that it protects areas from flooding. Many were able to secure the benefit explanation mark by clearly describing how hard engineering reduces flood damage and protects people and property.

However, fewer candidates developed the cost explanation beyond stating “it costs a lot.” Stronger responses explained the wider repercussions of expensive flood defenses on local communities, such as budget constraints for other services or long-term maintenance challenges. This limited some candidates from achieving full marks on the cost side.

A notable number of candidates misunderstood the question focus on flood risk, particularly river or urban flooding, and instead discussed coastal flooding or coastal defenses. While this was off the main topic, examiners often credited responses where the explanation of costs or benefits could logically apply to flood risk management in general.

For example, explanations about expensive flood defenses or protection from flooding were sometimes accepted even if the context was coastal rather than rivers, as the underlying principles of hard engineering remain relevant.

Nevertheless, to maximize marks, candidates should be encouraged to address the specific context of the question—in this case, flood risk management related to rivers or inland flooding rather than coastal flooding.

(c) Explain **one** cost and **one** benefit of managing flood risk using hard engineering.

(4)

cost

Hard engineering methods such as embankments or dams are extremely expensive to build, a large amount of capital is needed to build and maintain them.

benefit

Hard engineering methods often last a long time, providing protection from flooding for far longer than soft engineering methods.



This answer received 4 marks because it clearly explains one cost and one benefit of using hard engineering to manage flood risk. The cost is well described, stating that structures like embankments and dams are extremely expensive to build and require a large amount of capital to maintain them. The benefit is also clearly explained, noting that hard engineering methods often last a long time and provide extended protection from flooding compared to soft engineering methods. Both points are accurate, relevant, and show understanding, fulfilling the requirements for full marks. Additionally, the use of specific examples and a direct comparison with soft engineering strengthens the response and demonstrates a good level of geographical knowledge.



You can never lose marks in a geography examination – you can fail to gain them. Never cross out an answer unless you replace it and never leave questions unanswered.

Question 4

The clear design of the question significantly shaped candidate responses, encouraging direct reference to the resource provided. This approach resulted in notably fewer empty scripts or zero-mark answers compared to other questions. Most candidates used the resource effectively, triggering explanations about physical processes linked to river discharge and seasonal variation. Better responses showed analytical development, applying AO3 skills to evaluate impacts on flood risk.

Strengths:

- Many candidates responded well to the *assess* command, presenting balanced conclusions about physical and human influences.
- Most used the resource to support their arguments, identifying factors such as seasonal rainfall, soil saturation, and vegetation cover.
- Strong answers included detailed analysis and precise geographical terminology such as interception, percolation, and infiltration—enhancing clarity and depth.
- Candidates who considered human activities (e.g. urbanisation or land-use change) alongside physical processes produced more rounded evaluations.
- Linked AO3 development was evident in higher-level responses, strengthening the quality of assessment.
- The best answers include a range of physical causes assessed well and then human factors to balance argument, and then used this to assess, using language such phrases as ‘more so’, ‘less so’, ‘on the other hand’, ‘more importantly’ and ‘less significant’.

Areas for Improvement:

- Some candidates simply copied data from the resource without applying it to flood risk or river discharge, limiting AO3 performance.
- A number of responses were explanatory but lacked comparative assessment between physical and human factors.
- Few candidates explored potential limitations of the resource or questioned the reliability of its data.
- Broader connections to prior learning—such as impacts of climate change or river basin management—were rare.
- In typed responses, poor punctuation sometimes hindered clarity, suggesting the need for focused practice on written communication.

Summary: Candidates generally performed well, especially in identifying physical processes. To improve further, they should aim for more critical application of the resource, compare physical and human influences with clear judgement, and work on clarity in expression and punctuation when typing.

Assess the view that physical processes are largely responsible for river flooding.

You **must** use evidence from Figure 3 in your answer.

(8)

~~the~~ ~~this view~~ is the most significant factor responsible for river flooding is rainfall. Shown by figure 3, the river's discharge is highest in the winter months. February had the highest discharge at $310 \text{ m}^3/\text{sec}$. This shows that rainfall is the most significant factor and so that physical processes are largely responsible as when the river has a higher discharge due to high precipitation, it is more likely to burst its banks and flood. However a ^{very} significant factor responsible for river flooding is urbanisation so the view that physical processes are largely responsible could be disagreed with. There have been 12 major floods since 2000. As many properties are built on the flood plain, this means that many impermeable surfaces such as concrete have been built meaning less water can infiltrate into the ground, causing more surface flow, a shorter lag time and higher peak discharge. This human reason is very significant as it causes the discharge to be higher and so massively increases the risk of flooding. However ~~a factor that~~ this is less significant or important than the physical process of rainfall as without high rainfall, the river discharge would not be high enough for flood. Similarly a physical process which is very significant is the size of drainage basin and shape. The River Severn's drainage basin is $11,000 \text{ km}^2$ and has many tributaries. This

is a ~~the~~ significant physical process and shows how important they are as this significantly increases the discharge and velocity of the river and so flood risk. This shows physical processes are significantly responsible for flooding but without urbanisation, there would still be less risk so this is

(Total for Question 4 = 8 marks)

less significant.

TOTAL FOR SECTION A = 27 MARKS

Another significant physical process is the steep slopes of river Severn's valleys. By the valley height dropping from 750m to 200m in 19km, it encourages surface flow and so increases the peak discharge and decreases the lag time of the river therefore increases the flood risk and is significantly responsible but the impermeable ~~factor~~ of urbanisation has a larger impact on surface flow and flood risk.

The least significant factors responsible are the change in land use to ~~crop~~ arable farming in the lower course as well as only 10% of the land being forest. These are responsible for flood risk as a lack of forestry, decreases the interception and absorption of rain and so increases peak discharge and arable farming leaves soil bare for parts of the year so encourages surface flow, but these are less responsible as without the physical processes of high rainfall, these would not be as significant.

Overall, physical processes provide a larger role as ~~without them~~, human processes only exacerbate them but ~~they~~ ^{physical factors} are ~~needed~~ needed for flooding.



This answer received full marks because it provides a well-rounded and detailed assessment of the physical and human factors responsible for river flooding. The candidate effectively uses evidence from Figure 3, linking the highest river discharge to increased rainfall in the winter months, demonstrating the importance of physical processes like precipitation. Additionally, the answer discusses the role of urbanisation, highlighting how development on floodplains reduces natural infiltration and increases surface runoff, which exacerbates flooding. The candidate refers to both physical and human factors (although this is not necessary for achieving top levels), assessing their relative significance and acknowledging how they interact to contribute to flooding. By balancing both perspectives and using evidence effectively the response meets the criteria for full marks. Level 3-8 marks.



For 'Assess...' questions linked to a resource, begin by describing what the data shows. You can earn marks by identifying clear patterns. For instance, from November to April, discharge is mostly below the mean, while from May to October, it consistently rises above the mean indicating a seasonal trend.

Question 5(a)i

This question assessing candidates' ability to calculate the mean performed better than the following question (5aii), indicating strong familiarity with calculating averages from data. Most candidates approached the task confidently, demonstrating secure understanding of the method, adding values and dividing by the total number of entries. The decision not to require candidates to write out the method saved time and allowed for more focused responses, though those who included their working were still able to gain credit if the final answer was incorrect. The clarity of the question and the routine nature of the skill contributed to confident responses, with very few blank or misinterpreted responses.

- 5 (a) Study Figure 4 which shows the percentage (%) of the workforce employed in manufacturing for English regions in 2018.

Region	% employed in manufacturing
East Midlands	12.8
West Midlands	11.6
Yorkshire and Humberside	10.8
North East	9.8
North West	8.8
South West	7.9
East of England	6.9
South East	5.6
London	2.4

Figure 4

- (i) Calculate the **mean** % employed in manufacturing in English regions.

Answer to **one** decimal place.

Show your working below.

$$\begin{array}{r}
 12.8 + 11.6 + 10.8 + 9.8 + 8.8 + 7.9 + 6.9 + 5.6 + 2.4 = 8.51 \quad (2) \\
 \hline
 9 \\
 \hline
 8.5 \%
 \end{array}$$



This candidate demonstrates a clear understanding of how to calculate the mean percentage, providing the correct answer to one decimal place.



Although there is no requirement to show your working, it will always be beneficial to the candidate as if the answer is incorrect there is still an available mark for a correct method.

Question 5(a)ii

The vast majority of candidates were familiar and well prepared for the numeracy skills required to determine the number of people employed in manufacturing in London. A key change this year meant candidates were no longer required to write out the calculation method, which helped streamline responses and save time. However, candidates were still encouraged to include their method, as doing so could earn a mark even if the final answer was incorrect. This adjustment contributed to a noticeably fewer blank or zero-mark responses compared to previous years.

- (ii) Study Figure 5 below which shows the population of London and the % of people that worked in manufacturing in 2018.

	Population	% employed in manufacturing
2018	8,900,000	2.4

Figure 5

Calculate the number of people that worked in manufacturing in London in 2018.

Answer to **one** decimal place.

Show your working below.

(2)

$$0.024 \times 8,900,000 = 213600.0$$

213,600.0



2 marks. The response shows a correct method and answer.



Know the difference between mean, median and mode.

Question 5(b)

Overall, this question was answered well, with many candidates correctly identifying key reasons for the decline in employment in the UK's secondary sector. The most common and accurate responses referred to the impacts of globalisation, particularly the outsourcing of manufacturing to countries with lower labour costs, and mechanisation, where automation has replaced many manual jobs.

Some candidates also referred to the emergence of the quaternary sector and increased employment opportunities in the tertiary sector, although these points were less frequently mentioned. Stronger answers demonstrated clear understanding by using terms such as deindustrialisation and outsourcing, and by linking improved education and skills to a shift towards other economic sectors.

However, a minority of candidates showed limited understanding of the question, citing unrelated factors such as immigration or the cost of living crisis. A number of responses were too vague, for example stating "people get more pay elsewhere" without explanation or context. While some candidates attempted to link demographic changes to a decline in manufacturing employment, these were often underdeveloped or lacked clarity.

A common area for improvement was the development of ideas, as many responses listed valid reasons but did not expand on them to gain full marks.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why the % employed in the UK's secondary (manufacturing) sector has fallen.

(4)

- 1 One reason is because of better education. This leads to the UK's workforce to have more skills. Therefore they work in tertiary and quaternary jobs instead of manufacturing.
- 2 A second reason is because of outsourcing. This leads to manufacturing jobs and industries being moved to countries where labour is cheaper by companies. Therefore there are less manufacturing jobs in the UK.



This answer scored 4 marks because it provides two clear and well-explained reasons for the decline in the percentage of people employed in the UK's secondary (manufacturing) sector. The first reason is that improved education leads to a more skilled workforce, pushing individuals into higher-skilled tertiary and quaternary jobs instead of manufacturing. The second reason is outsourcing, where companies move manufacturing jobs to countries with cheaper labor, resulting in fewer manufacturing positions in the UK. Both reasons are relevant, accurately explained, and demonstrate a clear understanding of the factors contributing to the decline in the sector, meeting the requirements for full marks.

Question 5(c)

This four-mark 'Explain' question revealed a significant gap in candidates' understanding of the term 'population structure'. Many responses mistakenly focused on population density or the number of people living in each region, rather than addressing the intended focus on age demographics. This confusion often led to vague or irrelevant answers that lacked the precision required for higher marks.

While some candidates did correctly identify differences such as a more youthful population in urban areas, they often failed to develop their points with a clear explanation of why these differences exist. Responses that mentioned factors like employment or higher education opportunities in cities, or the appeal of rural areas to older populations, were generally more successful.

A common limitation in weaker responses was the lack of reasoning. Candidates often stated differences in population structure without exploring the underlying causes, which restricted their ability to access the top marks. There was also a tendency for some candidates to treat age as an afterthought, with limited connection to geographical context.

Overall, stronger answers were those that demonstrated understanding of age-related patterns in population structure and linked them explicitly to urban and rural characteristics such as job availability, lifestyle preferences, and migration patterns.

(c) Explain **one** difference between the population structure of urban areas and rural areas.

(2)

The population structure of urban areas is mainly built up of ~~young~~ lots of young people due to universities + education + population structure of rural areas is mainly built up of older people due to retirement and better sense of community + peace.

(Total for Question 5 = 10 marks)



This answer earned 2 marks because it clearly distinguishes the population structure of urban and rural areas. It explains that urban areas are predominantly made up of young people, often due to universities and education, while rural areas have a higher proportion of older people, typically due to retirement and a desire for a quieter lifestyle. Both points accurately describe the population structures of each area.

(c) Explain **one** difference between the population structure of urban areas and rural areas.

(2)

More people live in the city than the countryside.



This answer scored 0 marks because it focuses on population density rather than population structure, failing to explain any difference in the age, occupation, or characteristics of the populations in urban and rural areas.

Question 6(a)i

This question was generally well answered, with the majority of candidates able to identify key characteristics of the Central Business District (CBD), such as tall buildings and high pedestrian density. Very few responses failed to recognise any CBD features.

Commonly cited examples included high-rise buildings, a dense urban layout, and large crowds, all of which demonstrated a sound understanding of the topic. References to shops were also frequent, with specific examples such as “Primark” used to support points made.

Some responses were more limited, offering vague descriptions such as “buildings,” “green space,” or “facilities,” which lacked the precision needed for higher marks. Nevertheless, most candidates showed a secure grasp of the question and performed well overall.

Question 6(a)ii

This question was generally well understood, with most candidates able to identify how green spaces contribute to improved quality of life. Common responses included references to relaxation and mental health benefits, as well as environmental improvements such as better air quality due to trees absorbing carbon dioxide.

Many candidates also identified the role of green spaces in encouraging exercise, often linking this to enhanced mental wellbeing. Stronger answers made clear and explicit connections between green spaces and quality of life, highlighting the benefits for both physical and mental health, such as stress reduction or improved respiratory conditions.

While most responses demonstrated a secure understanding of the topic, some candidates struggled to fully develop their ideas or failed to clearly link their points to the broader concept of quality of life. Nonetheless, a wide range of valid reasons was seen, and overall performance on this question was positive.

(ii) Explain **one** way in which green spaces can improve the quality of life in this city.

(2)

- Nature and green spaces are a nice place for people to enjoy the outdoors, and get fresher air, due to the vegetation which produces clean oxygen.



This answer received 2 marks because it correctly explains that green spaces provide a place for people to enjoy the outdoors and get fresh air, benefitting from the clean oxygen produced by vegetation. The explanation is clear and relevant, addressing how green spaces improve quality of life in the city.

Question 6(b)

The focus on a 'named UK city', as in other examples in the past, was to operate as an aide memoire for candidates. There was no credit given for naming a city or, indeed, a penalty for not naming one. This question was generally well answered, with most candidates correctly identifying a negative impact of regeneration and referencing a named UK city—typically London, Birmingham, or Newcastle. The most frequent point was rising house prices leading to displacement of local residents, especially in areas like Stratford or Hackney. Some candidates included local detail to support their explanation, which improved clarity. A few responses confused regeneration with general urban change or gave positive impacts, limiting marks. Most answers showed good understanding and were developed enough to access both marks, though some spent longer than necessary on a 2-mark response.

- (b) For a named UK city, explain **one** reason why regeneration can have negative impacts on some people.

(2)

Named UK city

Leeds

For example Leeds south bank regeneration project will bring new homes to the city but it also means higher prices for homes so ^{local residents} ~~local residents~~ in the area ~~area~~ will be displaced due to the rising cost of living in the regenerated area.



This answer received 2 marks because it explains that regeneration in Leeds can raise housing prices, which may displace local residents as they can no longer afford to live in the area due to the increased cost of living. The point is clearly developed by linking rising prices to the negative impact on local people.



Case study knowledge needs to be learnt—this paper has relatively few so make sure they are secure.

Question 6(c)

This question asked candidates to explain two reasons why some parts of a named UK city experience higher levels of inequality. Most candidates were able to identify at least one valid reason but struggling to develop both points fully. Responses were often generalised, with limited use of case study detail or clear explanation of how the factors contributed to inequality.

Many candidates referred to differences in job types and pay across areas, but few explained how this leads to unequal access to housing, services, or opportunities. Some used ideas from earlier questions such as regeneration to support their answers, noting that investment in certain areas can drive up house prices and displace lower income residents. However, this was not consistently linked to inequality outcomes.

Common themes included variation in education quality, employment opportunities, and investment levels. A few candidates mentioned migration, but explanations were often vague or based on misconceptions. Stronger responses named specific cities such as London, Birmingham, or Newcastle, and referred to contrasting areas within them, for example Stratford versus Hackney in London or Solihull versus inner city Birmingham. These answers showed clearer understanding of how spatial and economic factors contribute to inequality.

Most candidates scored at least two marks here.

(c) For a named UK city, explain **two** reasons why some parts of the city have high and ~~low~~ levels of inequality.

(4)

Named UK city

Leeds

- there are high levels of inequality as
1. ~~The inner city (Harehills)~~ has experienced deindustrialisation ~~and~~ ^{Harehills} and ~~factories~~ ^{Harehills} have closed. This means there is greater unemployment so lower incomes and council tax revenue ~~has been~~ ^{Harehills}. This means that there is a lack of investment in health and education services leading to ~~low~~.
 2. ~~The suburbs~~ There is high levels of inequality as some ^{by the government} parts of Leeds such as Holbeck have been invested in and had regeneration schemes. This has led to a lot of inward investment and so an improvement on services such as health and education in this part of the city.

(Total for Question 6 = 9 marks)

~~** health~~ the life expectancy and education quality being lower in ~~the inner city~~ ^{Harehills} than in other areas.



This response gained full marks because it clearly gives two detailed reasons for inequality in Leeds. It explains how areas like Harehills suffer from deindustrialisation, leading to unemployment and poor services, while areas like Holbeck have benefited from regeneration and investment. The answer uses specific place names and links causes to effects, showing clear geographical understanding.



You should be able to identify by name a number of contrasting areas of your chosen city—you won't get any credit for just naming them but it will help you remember their characteristics more effectively.

Question 7

The question assessing how 15-minute cities contribute to urban sustainability yielded strong responses from most candidates. Most candidates showed good understanding of the concept, particularly the environmental benefits such as reduced traffic, lower emissions, and increased active travel. Stronger answers used the provided resource effectively and demonstrated awareness of the 'sustainability stool'—addressing environmental, social and economic factors.

Strengths:

- Many candidates were confident with the command word *assess*, often concluding their answers clearly.
- Frequent points included reduced traffic, lowered emissions, and active travel options like walking and cycling.
- Better responses incorporated all three sustainability pillars, structuring their answers clearly and referencing the full resource.
- Use of geographical terminology was generally strong, contributing to high-scoring answers.
- SPaG was mostly well handled, with many achieving top marks for language accuracy.

Areas for Improvement:

- Answers were often weighted heavily toward environmental sustainability, with limited assessment of social (and especially economic) dimensions.
- Many responses leaned more toward description and explanation rather than balanced assessment.
- Few candidates discussed potential drawbacks of the model (e.g. construction disruption or implementation challenges).
- Wider contextual links—such as integration with public transport or cycle hire schemes—were seldom made.
- Repetitive sentence structures occasionally weakened clarity, and some typed responses showed poor punctuation, affecting readability.

Summary: Candidates generally understood how 15-minute cities promote sustainability, especially environmental benefits. To improve, they should ensure more balanced coverage of all sustainability pillars, incorporate critical viewpoints, and develop varied language use. Strengthening punctuation skills—particularly in typed exams—will also help to convey ideas more clearly.

Assess the ways in which '15-minute cities' make urban living more sustainable.

You **must** use evidence from Figure 7 in your answer.

(8)

The most important way "15 minute cities" would make urban living more sustainable is by reducing the use of cars/ public transport. for example if all areas needed for daily life are within a 5-15 minute walk or bike there would be no need to travel using external combustion.

This would improve noise and air pollution making the city more sustainable in an environmental ~~social and economic~~ way for a long-term on a city-wide scale.

The second most important way is by reducing costs on commuters for example, with offices and places of work being at most 15 minutes by bike away it would reduce the need for expensive cars or train fares. This would mean commuters could have more disposable income and a better QoL, making it an economically and socially sustainable as well as long-term and city-wide advantage.

A third most important way is by creating a greater sense of community and identity within cities. for example cities would be made up of a number of these 15 minute communities which would allow individuals to get to know the people in their zone and hold a sense of togetherness within their area improving QoL and making the city more sustainable socially ~~for the long term~~ permanently and in small localised areas within the city.

A final way it would be made more sustainable is by ensuring all inhabitants were in close proximity to all the services they require, for example each 15 minute city would have its own

(Spelling, punctuation, grammar and use of specialist terminology = 4 marks)

(Total for Question 7 = 12 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 31 MARKS

School, college, nursery, hospital place of worship and shops ensuring all inhabitants were able to access key services to live their lives making it a socially and economically sustainable long-term and large scale advantage.



This example received full marks because it demonstrated a strong understanding of how 15-minute cities contribute to urban sustainability, addressing all three sustainability pillars: environmental, social and economic. The response clearly applied the concept by explaining how reduced reliance on cars leads to less pollution and noise, benefitting the environment. It also analysed how 15-minute cities create social sustainability by fostering community connections and economic sustainability by reducing commuting costs, allowing more disposable income. The candidate effectively used evidence from the provided resource and structured the answer well, with a clear focus on the broader impacts of the model. The response showed a balanced evaluation, considering the long-term benefits without delving into drawbacks, and was communicated clearly with good language and geographical terminology. Level 3 - 8 marks



Remember that most conclusions are only partly accurate — so avoid using extreme or absolute statements in your answers.

Question 8(a)

This question was generally well answered, with most candidates able to identify a plausible quantitative method of data collection and link it to how coastal management has affected beach morphology. The majority referred to techniques such as beach profiling or sediment analysis, and successfully connected these to changes caused by management strategies like groynes or sea walls. As a result, many candidates achieved both marks.

Where marks were not awarded, it was typically due to candidates misunderstanding the question and failing to identify a valid fieldwork technique.

- 8** You have carried out your own fieldwork investigating the impact of coastal management on coastal processes and communities.

Name your coastal fieldwork location

Blyth beach

- (a) Explain **one** way that you collected your own fieldwork data on how coastal management has affected beach morphology.

(2)

One way is by measuring groyne drop height. We randomly measured groyne drop height at random points of the groynes on both sides using a metre ruler. We repeated this across all 4 groynes.



This answer received 2 marks because it provides a clear explanation of the method and how the data was collected. The first mark is awarded for explaining the basic method of measuring the groynes' drop height at random points along the beach. The second mark is given for detailing how the data was collected, specifically using a meter ruler.

- 8 You have carried out your own fieldwork investigating the impact of coastal management on coastal processes and communities.

Name your coastal fieldwork location

Blyth.

- (a) Explain **one** way that you collected your own fieldwork data on how coastal management has affected beach morphology.

(2)

We measure the drop height of groynes to measure how effective they were at ~~making~~ trapping sediment and making beaches wider.



This answer received 2 marks because it explains both the basic method and why it was used. The first mark is for describing the method of measuring the drop height of the groynes. The second mark is awarded for explaining why this method was used, specifically to assess how it affects beach morphology, such as trapping sediment and influencing beach width, which provides insight into the impact of coastal management.

Question 8(b)

This question was generally well answered, with most candidates able to identify a valid qualitative method and explain how it related to their investigation of how coastal management affects beach morphology. The most common responses were field sketches and photographs, which were often linked to visual evidence of changes caused by defences such as groynes or sea walls. These methods allowed candidates to record features like sediment build-up, beach gradient, and erosion patterns.

Many candidates successfully explained how these techniques helped capture spatial differences and supported analysis of coastal processes. A number of responses included annotations or described how repeated photographs could show change over time. Where marks were not awarded, it was usually due to confusion with quantitative methods or vague descriptions that lacked explanation of how the method related to beach morphology. Overall, performance reflected growing confidence with key terminology and appropriate method selection in qualitative fieldwork.

(b) Explain how **one** qualitative fieldwork method helped your investigation.

(2)

We used annotated photographs to collect information and opinions of the beach and to detail the management that was present on the beach.



This answer received 2 marks because it clearly explains both the method and its purpose. The candidate describes using annotated photographs as a qualitative fieldwork method. They then explain that these photographs were used to collect information and opinions about the beach and to detail the coastal management present, providing valuable insight into how the beach is being managed.

Question 8(c)

This question was moderately well answered, with most candidates referencing the Power's Index or coastal case studies. While these were relevant, explanations were often brief or lacked direct links to fieldwork data. Responses commonly described sediment shape or coastal defences but didn't fully show how theory supported analysis.

Stronger answers explained how beach morphology aligned with expected patterns from management strategies, such as sediment build-up behind groynes. Weaker responses confused theory with method or gave vague descriptions. Overall, candidates are becoming more familiar with coastal theory, but clearer application and connection to data are needed for full marks.

(c) Explain **one** way geographical case studies and theories helped you to understand your data.

(2)

The idea of longshore drift helped us understand why parts of the beach had less sand and why one side of the groynes was higher than the other



This answer received 2 marks because it clearly explains how a geographical theory helped understand the data. The candidate mentions the idea of longshore drift, which helped explain why some parts of the beach had less sand and why one side of the groynes was higher than the other. This provides a clear link between the theory and the observations made during the investigation, addressing the question fully and effectively.

Question 8(d)

Most candidates scored 2 marks on this question, showing basic understanding of secondary data but limited ability to explain its importance. Stronger responses identified specific sources such as OS maps or geology maps, explaining their use in selecting fieldwork sites or understanding landscape context. Some referred to the role of geology in site choice, drawing from Figure 8.

Weaker answers confused secondary with primary data, often mentioning questionnaires or EQS incorrectly. Others gave vague explanations without linking to their own investigation. While awareness of key terms is improving, candidates need clearer, well-developed reasons and examples to access the full 4 marks.

(d) Explain **two** reasons why secondary data was important for your investigation.

- (4)
- 1 Secondary data such as OS maps were helpful in planning where to go for our investigation, we could find where was accessible and good to survey.
 - 2 Secondary data such as ~~weather~~ council records were helpful to find out what types of beach management have been used in the area and when, helping our investigation.



This answer received 4 marks because it provides two clear reasons why secondary data was important for the investigation. First, the candidate explains that OS maps were used to help plan the survey by identifying accessible areas. Second, they mention that council records provided information about the types of beach management in the area, which helped guide the investigation. Both reasons are relevant and well-explained, justifying the full 4 marks.



When asked for two reasons make sure that they are obviously different.

(d) Explain **two** reasons why secondary data was important for your investigation.

(4)

- 1 One secondary data source I used was a geology map, to identify two sites with the same geology (the rock type at each site was dolostone) to ensure that the only factor affecting erosion was coastal management techniques and not geology.
- 2 Another secondary data source I used was Google Maps, a GIS. I used this to identify a managed and an unmanaged site to compare, and to plan the travel arrangements to, from and between sites so that I could maximise time spent collecting data to improve reliability. Google Maps also helped identify accessibility issues.



This answer received 4 marks because it clearly explains two reasons why secondary data was important for the investigation. The first reason is that the candidate used a geology map to identify suitable sites with specific geological features, ensuring that the sites chosen were appropriate for studying coastal management techniques. The second reason is that the candidate utilized Google Maps and GIS to identify and compare potential sites, helping to plan the most efficient route and optimize time for data collection. Both reasons are well-explained and directly contribute to the success of the investigation, justifying the full 4 marks.

Question 8(e)

Most candidates focused on strengths, with fewer evaluating weaknesses, although some offered a thoughtful critique of both.

Stronger responses provided balanced arguments, referencing sample size, question design, and the reliability of results. A few candidates considered how the phrasing of questionnaire categories or the method of selection could influence outcomes. Whilst most focused on accuracy, the mark scheme allowed this interpretation.

Weaker answers tended to copy data or make basic statements without explanation. Many mentioned sample size but didn't explore its impact on the validity of the conclusion. Some candidates misunderstood the question or failed to use the resource effectively.

Overall, performance showed improvement, with fewer blank responses than in previous series. Candidates are increasingly confident in evaluating fieldwork conclusions, but clearer understanding of reliability and more critical reflection on method design would help more reach higher levels.

- (e) As part of their coastal fieldwork a group of students designed a questionnaire to help them.

Their enquiry question was 'Does the public support the use of hard engineering to protect the coastal environment?'

When they arrived at their coastal location they asked people if they would be prepared to answer some questions. After one hour they only had 17 responses.

The three questions asked and the responses given are shown below.

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Do you think that hard engineering is a good idea?	5	2	9	0	1
2. Do you think that soft engineering is a good idea?	0	1	12	4	0
3. Coastal erosion will get worse. Do you agree?	10	3	0	0	4

Figure 8

The students concluded that the public does support the use of hard engineering to protect the coastal environment.

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of this conclusion.

You **must** use evidence from Figure 8 in your answer.

(8)

The students conclusion had many weaknesses because the largest response for whether hard engineering is a good idea was not sure. Whereas only 29% of people strongly agreed and only 12% agreed that hard engineering is a good idea, so clearly there is not a majority agreement by hard engineering being best. The results on soft engineering being a good idea were not very conclusive either because the greatest response again was not sure at 77% of the responses, clearly the public interviewed is more undecided than supporting hard engineering. Although, most people strongly agreed coastal erosion would get worse, this does

~~imply that~~ suggest that the public believes some kind of protection for the coast is necessary. The students only had a small sample size of 17 responses, this is likely not representative of the population and reduces the reliability of their conclusion. Also, only 3 questions were asked which limits the range of data collected, it may have been better to interview more people and ask open ending questions to get a better idea of people's opinions. Although, the quantitative data is easy to compare and present as graphs, however, this data is subjective, reducing reliability. The students also seem to have used an opportunistic sampling strategy which could have created clusters in their data by one age group and gender, reducing reliability as these factors can affect responses. The student's data also not very reliable because they only did the survey on one day, ignoring demographics, so they may not be reflective of the population.

(Total for Question 8 = 18 marks)

Overall, the student's conclusion was weak, their data did not strongly support their conclusion and their data collection methods had many reliability problems.



This answer received 8 marks because it provides a detailed and well-reasoned assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the student's conclusion. The candidate points out that the small sample size of 17 responses limits the representativeness and reliability of the data, making it unlikely to reflect the views of the broader population. The response highlights that the greatest agreement on hard engineering was only 29%, which weakens the conclusion. Additionally, the answer identifies the survey's limited scope, as only 3 questions were asked, and the survey was conducted in one day, introducing potential bias. The explanation of how subjective data collection methods, such as biased questions and inadequate sampling, further reduce the reliability of the results strengthens the response. Overall, the answer provides a thorough evaluation, using evidence from Figure 8 to support the critique, making it deserving of the full 8 marks. Level 3- 8 marks



Remember that these levels-marked 'assess' questions focus on extracting information from the resource (AO4) and then providing logical connections and judgements (AO3) supported by that extracted information.

Question 9(a)

This question was generally well answered, with most candidates able to identify a plausible quantitative method of data collection and linking it to the influence of channel characteristics on flood risk. The majority referred to techniques such as river width or velocity, and successfully developed the second mark by explaining how they collected the data, a significant difference to how candidates approached the alternative 8a. As a result, many candidates achieved both marks.

Where marks were not awarded, it was typically due to candidates misunderstanding the question and failing to identify a valid fieldwork technique.

- 9** You have carried out your own fieldwork investigating how drainage basin and channel characteristics influence flood risk for people and property along a river in the UK.

Name your river fieldwork location

River Dunsop Lancashire /

- (a) Explain **one** way that you collected your own fieldwork data on the influence of channel characteristics on flood risk.

(2)
One way I collected data was by measuring the depth of the river with a metre ruler to see how deep it was.



This response clearly stated a basic data collection method—measuring river depth with a metre ruler and explained its purpose, which was to see how deep the river was. This links the method to assessing flood risk, meeting both criteria for full marks.

- 9** You have carried out your own fieldwork investigating how drainage basin and channel characteristics influence flood risk for people and property along a river in the UK.

Name your river fieldwork location

River Dunsop

- (a) Explain **one** way that you collected your own fieldwork data on the influence of channel characteristics on flood risk.

(2)

We measured the width, depth and velocity of the river.
This was to see the amount of water the river held
and how fast it could travel.



This answer gets 2 marks because it clearly explains how they measured the width, depth, and velocity of the river. It also says why they did this — to find out how much water the river holds and how fast it flows. This shows both the method and the purpose, which is what the question asks for.

Question 9(b)

This question was well answered, with most candidates identifying valid qualitative methods such as field sketches and photographs. These were linked effectively to observations of riverbank conditions, erosion, or flood defences. Responses often described how these methods captured visual evidence and supported analysis of physical processes and flood risk.

Where marks were lost, candidates confused qualitative with quantitative methods or failed to explain the link to river processes. Overall, answers reflected increasing confidence with fieldwork terminology and method selection.

(b) Explain how **one** qualitative fieldwork method helped your investigation.

(2)

By sketching a diagram of each location of the river we could analyse ~~the~~ how the shape of the river and the land around it changes depending on upper, lower, or middle course.



This response earned 2 marks because it clearly explains one qualitative fieldwork method (sketching diagrams) and how it helped the investigation (by analyzing changes in the shape of the river and surrounding land in different river sections). It links the method directly to the understanding gained, which satisfies the requirements for full marks.



Be clear about the definitions of qualitative and quantitative data.

(b) Explain how **one** qualitative fieldwork method helped your investigation.

(2)

It allowed us to plot graphs for our investigation
and present them so that it is visually easy to
compare the data



The response describes a presentation technique rather than a qualitative fieldwork method, so it does not fully address how the data was collected to help the investigation.



Be clear about the definitions of qualitative and quantitative data.

Question 9(c)

This question was well answered, with most candidates confidently applying the Bradshaw Model to their river fieldwork. There was strong evidence of clear understanding of how theory can aid data interpretation. Candidates often compared patterns in velocity, discharge and sediment size with the model's expectations, using this to assess their findings.

Stronger responses directly linked their data to the model's predictions, while weaker ones lacked clear connections or gave vague mentions of theory. Very few candidates used case studies in the rivers option—those that did struggled to achieve 2 marks as these were less developed. Overall, answers reflected growing confidence in using geographical theory to support fieldwork analysis.

(c) Explain **one** way geographical case studies and theories helped you to understand your data.

(2)

Bradshaws model helped us understand
and the change of the rivers
characteristics as you move further
up the river



This response was awarded 2 marks because it clearly identifies a relevant geographical theory (Bradshaw's Model) and explains its application to the investigation. The candidate explains that the model helped them understand how river characteristics change as you move further upstream.



Always explain how the case study or theory directly helped you understand or interpret your data.

Question 9(d)

Most candidates scored 2 marks, showing basic understanding of secondary data but limited assessment of its importance. Stronger responses referred to sources like OS maps, geology maps or Environment Agency river level data, explaining how these supported site selection or helped interpret seasonal variation and flood risk.

Some candidates used the Bradshaw Model to compare their results with expected downstream changes, though this was less common. Weaker answers confused secondary with primary data or gave vague explanations without linking this to their own investigation. Overall, candidates are becoming more familiar with key terminology, but clearer examples and developed reasoning are needed to reach full marks.

(d) Explain **two** reasons why secondary data was important for your investigation.

(4)

1. To compare results to see the differences, how things have changed or how far off our results are from the already collected data.
2. To see if our results add up to the theory we were comparing them to.

The candidate achieved 2 marks by giving two valid but undeveloped reasons: to compare their results with existing data and to check if their findings aligned with theory. However, the explanation lacked depth, such as how this helped improve reliability or understanding in the investigation.

(d) Explain **two** reasons why secondary data was important for your investigation.

(4)

- 1 Flood risk map - Showed us how the surrounding areas of the river were urbanised which meant land was impermeable. This led to surface run-off so risk of flooding was shown to increase.
- 2 Newspaper article from 2014 - Showed us the past events when a flood occurred. There was a high frequency of floods during that time suggesting how downstream areas are where the flood risk is the highest.



This response was awarded 4 marks because the candidate gives two clear, developed reasons for using secondary data. They explain that flood risk maps showed how urban land increased runoff, raising flood risk, and that a newspaper article provided past flood events, highlighting high-risk downstream areas. Both points are relevant and well-explained, fully meeting the question requirements.

Question 9(e)

Most candidates focused on strengths, with fewer evaluating weaknesses, though some offered a thoughtful critique of both.

Stronger responses provided balanced arguments, referencing sample size, question design, and the reliability of results. A few candidates considered how the phrasing of questionnaire categories or the method of selection could influence outcomes. While most focused on accuracy, the mark scheme allowed this interpretation.

Weaker answers tended to copy data or make basic statements without explanation. Many mentioned sample size but didn't explore its impact on the validity of the conclusion. Some candidates misunderstood the question or failed to use the resource effectively.

Overall, performance showed improvement, with fewer blank responses than in previous series. Candidates are increasingly confident in evaluating fieldwork conclusions, but clearer understanding of reliability and more critical reflection on method design would help more reach higher levels.

- (e) As part of their river fieldwork a group of students designed a questionnaire to help them.

Their enquiry question was 'Does the public support the use of hard engineering to protect them from river flooding?'

When they arrived at their fieldwork location they asked people if they would be prepared to answer some questions. After one hour they only had 17 responses.

The three questions asked and the responses given are shown below.

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Do you think that hard engineering is a good idea?	5	2	9	0	1
2. Do you think that soft engineering is a good idea?	0	1	12	4	0
3. River flooding will get worse. Do you agree?	10	3	0	0	4

Figure 9

The students concluded that the public does support the use of hard engineering to protect them from river flooding.

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of this conclusion.

You **must** use evidence from Figure 9 in your answer.

(8)

The data collected supports their conclusion, due to 7 people either agreeing or strongly agreeing that hard engineering is a good idea, and only 1 person agreeing that soft engineering is a good idea, however, for both questions the majority answer is unsure, which could also suggest that the group questioned largely either did not know what hard & soft engineering are or don't have an opinion. This could clash with the conclusion they produced, as there is a higher proportion unsure than supportive of hard engineering. For all

of the questions asked, the results were very one sided, with few opposing the general opinion, which makes their conclusion more concrete. However, only 17 people were asked the questions, which is a small sample size. This would mean that percentages of people with one viewpoint would be higher, which may not reflect the actual numbers across the entire area. Furthermore, the smaller amount of responses would mean that the responses are potentially far less balanced than if a larger group of people were interviewed, which could affect the results and make their conclusion less credible.

Overall, the students' conclusion has verifiable strengths but also critical weaknesses which reduce its credibility.



The response shows some understanding of the data by explaining that some people agree hard engineering is a good idea, which supports the conclusion. It also mentions that many people were unsure, which is a weakness because it means the public may not have a clear opinion. The answer points out the small sample size of 17 people, explaining this limits how reliable the results are. It uses numbers from the table to back up these points. However, the explanation is sometimes unclear and could be more detailed. The answer shows some good points but doesn't fully explain or develop all ideas, so it fits into bottom of Level 3. Level 3- 7 Marks.



Remember that these levels-marked 'assess' questions focus on extracting information from the resource (AO4) and then providing logical connections and judgements (AO3) supported by that extracted information.

Question 10(a)i

Candidate responses to this question varied considerably. While most showed an understanding that the figure should be used to form an enquiry question, often centring on types of shops and comparison between locations, a significant minority misunderstood the task and instead recalled their own fieldwork questions unrelated to the figure, leading to low scores and a mean mark of just 1. Effective answers demonstrated a grasp of how to frame a geographical enquiry, occasionally showing consideration of shop diversity or consumer patterns, but many lacked precision or feasibility. To raise performance, candidates should focus on tailoring their enquiry to the resource given, ensuring the question is specific, comparative, and rooted in the unfamiliar geographical enquiry. Clear familiarity with enquiry design and better interpretation of figures would support stronger, more accurate responses.

- (a) (i) Suggest a suitable enquiry question that the students could have investigated.

(2)

and non-tourist
Compare the amount of tourist shops between two towns, one local and one tourist



This response gained 2 marks because it poses a clear, focused, and measurable enquiry question. It compares tourist and non-tourist shops in two contrasting towns, making it appropriate for data collection and fieldwork.



Make sure your enquiry question is clear, focused, and measurable. It should compare or investigate a specific aspect (e.g. shops, traffic, land use) between two locations or over time. Use keywords or phrases like "compare", "investigate", or "to what extent", and ensure it's something you could realistically collect data on during fieldwork.

Question 10(a)ii

Candidate understanding of the reliability issues in shop classification was generally sound. Many recognised the limitations of the “other” category and acknowledged how grouping diverse shops into a vague label could lead to unreliable data. Several responses also identified human error in assigning shops to categories, though fewer developed this into explanations of inconsistency or subjectivity. Some candidates recognised the challenge of distinguishing between tourist and non-tourist shops, pointing to differing opinions on classification and a lack of sufficient categories to capture variety. The strongest answers explored how these factors undermine data validity and influence result interpretation, though many responses remained underdeveloped or lacked clarity in justification.

(ii) Explain **one** reason why the classification of shops might not be reliable.

(2)

Shops could be used by both
tourists and locals, the classification is
opinion based.



This answer got 2 marks because it clearly explains that shops can serve both tourists and locals, making classification tricky, and that the classification relies on personal opinions, which can reduce reliability.

Question 10(a)iii

This question proved challenging for many candidates due to a misinterpretation of the term "record". Rather than explaining how retail land use could be recorded, a significant number discussed how data was collected or presented, with incorrect suggestions such as bar charts or pie charts. The most frequently cited correct method was the use of a tally chart, though many candidates failed to explain how this would be applied, missing the opportunity to gain full marks. Land use surveys were also mentioned, and candidates who described how to systematically walk along streets, categorising and marking shop types onto a base map or recording sheet, tended to score more highly. To succeed with questions of this nature, candidates need to distinguish clearly between data collection, recording, and presentation, and ensure they explain their chosen method with appropriate detail.

(iii) Explain **one** method the students might have used to record the retail land-use in the two towns.

(2)

Walk around street and count each
type of retail shop and add to
my tally



This response clearly explains a simple and appropriate method: walking around the street, counting each type of retail shop, and recording the data. It shows an understanding of a direct observation and tally method, which is a common and effective way to record retail land use in fieldwork. The answer is straightforward and relevant, meeting the criteria for full marks.

Question 10(a)iv

Thanks to a generally solid grasp of data collection improvement strategies, the majority of candidates were able to achieve two marks or more on this question. Many identified practical ways to enhance reliability, such as increasing sample size by surveying additional locations or repeating data collection across different days. Several recognised the potential bias of conducting fieldwork in familiar areas and proposed collecting data from unfamiliar locations to improve objectivity. Other suggestions included standardising the number of shops surveyed in each category or refining sampling techniques. Although a few responses focused on alternative methods rather than improving existing ones, candidates were generally well prepared and capable of expanding their points to secure both marks.

(iv) Explain **two** ways in which the students could have improved their data collection methods.

(4)

1 One way is to ask workers / owners of the shops what the shop is used for. This reduces ~~the~~ bias when making a judgement on the type of shop it is, making data more accurate.



This answer received 2 marks because it clearly explains one way to improve data collection: asking workers or owners what the shop is used for. It also explains why this helps, stating that it reduces bias and makes the data more accurate. By providing both the method and its benefit, the answer meets the requirements for full marks for one improvement. However, since the question asks for two ways and only one is given, it only earns 2 out of 4 marks.

(iv) Explain **two** ways in which the students could have improved their data collection methods.

(4)

- 1 They could repeat it at a different time of year to see how that varies and effects what types of ^{shops} ~~jobs~~ are open. Therefore they can see how retail land use varies in the towns.
- 2 They could ask members of the public their opinion on the shops in the town. This leads to insight into how effectively the land is used. Therefore they will have better data collection.



This response clearly explains two different ways to improve data collection, providing reasons for each. First, repeating the survey at different times of the year helps capture seasonal changes in shop types and retail land use, making the data more complete and reliable. Second, asking the public for their opinions offers valuable insights into how effectively the land is used, adding depth and accuracy to the data. Both improvements show understanding of how to collect better, more detailed data, which meets the full mark criteria.

Question 10(b)

This 8-mark question prompted candidates to assess the accuracy and reliability of results from their own fieldwork investigating how and why quality of life varies in urban areas. There was a noticeable improvement in candidate understanding and preparation compared to previous series. Most candidates could distinguish between accuracy and reliability and attempted to relate these to their data collection, though few accessed the highest level due to underdeveloped assessment or generic discussion.

Stronger responses gave specific examples of methods used—such as environmental quality surveys, perception studies, or noise counts—and showed an awareness of how consistency in timing, location, and technique contributed to reliable results. These candidates also assessed possible inaccuracies, including subjectivity in scoring, sample bias from location choice, or uncontrolled variables like weather conditions. There was increasing evidence that students were being encouraged to reflect critically on why their methods were chosen and how this affected the validity of their findings.

Less successful answers focused too heavily on describing fieldwork rather than assessing data quality, or discussed results without linking back to method. Some confusion remained around the terminology, with candidates using “accuracy” and “reliability” interchangeably, or failing to connect their definitions to their own investigation. In several cases, candidates discussed improvements they could make without referring to current limitations or linking directly to how results may have been affected.

(b) You have carried out your own fieldwork investigating how and why the quality of life varies in urban areas.

Assess the accuracy and reliability of the results of your investigation.

(8)

We used an environmental quality survey to rank different parts of the environment in two contrasting areas, Gosforth and Byker. We had to rate them ^{from} -2 to 2 based on amount of green space, traffic, litter and graffiti. This was accurate as it helped us to answer our enquiry question of how does the quality of life vary in Gosforth and Byker. This gave us a good indicator about crime, cleanliness and environment. However, we may have not been accurate because it is subjective and answers may have been completed randomly if some didn't know what to put.

Our reliability may be low as some people live in Gosforth and Byker so bias may have impacted results. However, we found both quantitative and qualitative data, increasing our reliability. This is because we also carried out questionnaires, asking locals about their opinions. However sample size was small due to little time so less representative reducing accuracy and reliability of our findings. We used both primary and secondary data which allowed us to compare and ensure our results were accurate through using a quality of life index.

Overall, I think our investigation was reliable and accurate in terms

(Total for Question 10 = 18 marks)

of data collection as we used multiple methods which gave us similar findings.



This response clearly explains the methods used, such as the environmental quality survey and questionnaires, and links them to how they helped answer the investigation question about quality of life. It acknowledges that the survey was subjective and could be influenced by people not knowing what to put, which affects accuracy. It also mentions bias from local residents potentially impacting reliability and points out the small sample size as a limitation reducing representativeness. The inclusion of both primary and secondary data and the use of a quality of life index show an attempt to increase reliability and accuracy by comparing results. However, the explanation remains quite general and doesn't go into detailed analysis or suggest improvements. Overall, it shows a good understanding but would need more depth, clearer explanations, and critical evaluation to score higher marks. Level 2-6 marks.

Question 11(a)i

Candidate responses to this question varied considerably. While most showed an understanding that the figure should be used to form an enquiry question, often centring on types of shops and comparison between locations, a significant minority misunderstood the task and instead recalled their own fieldwork questions unrelated to the figure. Effective answers demonstrated a grasp of how to frame a geographical enquiry, occasionally showing consideration of shop diversity or consumer patterns, but many lacked precision or feasibility. To raise performance, candidates should focus on tailoring their enquiry to the resource given, ensuring the question is specific, comparative, and rooted in the unfamiliar geographical enquiry. Clear familiarity with enquiry design and better interpretation of figures would support stronger, more accurate responses.

(a) (i) Suggest a suitable enquiry question that the students could have investigated.

(2)

How do the types of shops differ in rural and urban areas?



This response earned 2 marks as it clearly states what is being compared (shop types), where they are (rural vs urban), and allows for practical fieldwork. It is focused, relevant, and achievable.



Make sure your enquiry question is specific, comparative, and clearly linked to a place. Use words or phrases like "how", "why", or "to what extent", to show focus and make it suitable for investigation.

Question 11(a)ii

Candidate understanding of the reliability issues in shop classification was generally sound. Many recognised the limitations of the “other” category and acknowledged how grouping diverse shops into a vague label could lead to unreliable data. Several responses also identified human error in assigning shops to categories, though fewer developed this into explanations of inconsistency or subjectivity. Some candidates recognised the challenge of distinguishing between tourist and non-tourist shops, pointing to differing opinions on classification and a lack of sufficient categories to capture variety. The strongest answers explored how these factors undermine data validity and influence result interpretation, though many responses remained underdeveloped or lacked clarity in justification.

(ii) Explain **one** reason why the classification of shops might not be reliable.

(2)

Especially for the non-tourist shops - they need to classify/question more and usually more visited shops to gain better reliable quantitative data. Saying 'other' is not very explicit.



This answer earned 2 marks because it gives a valid reason why classification might be unreliable—it points out that non-tourist shops require more detailed classification and repeated visits for better quantitative data. Despite some wording issues, it shows understanding of the problem with reliability by mentioning the need for clearer categories and more data, which meets the criteria for full marks.

Question 11(a)iii

This question proved challenging for many candidates due to a misinterpretation of the term "record." Rather than explaining how retail land use could be recorded, a significant number discussed how data was collected or presented, with incorrect suggestions such as bar charts or pie charts. The most frequently cited correct method was the use of a tally chart, though many candidates failed to explain how this would be applied, missing the opportunity to gain full marks. Land use surveys were also mentioned, and candidates who described how to systematically walk along streets, categorising and marking shop types onto a base map or recording sheet, tended to score more highly. To succeed with questions of this nature, candidates need to distinguish clearly between data collection, recording, and presentation, and ensure they explain their chosen method with appropriate detail.

(iii) Explain **one** method the students might have used to record the retail land-use in the two towns.

(2)

Set a certain area and ~~use~~ tally to total retail stores. This helps to give an estimate of how much land is dedicated to retail.



This response clearly describes a valid method: setting a specific area and using a tally to count retail stores. It also explains why this method is useful — to estimate how much land is dedicated to retail. The answer shows understanding of both the practical step and its purpose, which meets the criteria for full marks.

Question 11(a)iv

Thanks to a generally solid grasp of data collection improvement strategies, the majority of candidates were able to achieve two marks or more on this question. Many identified practical ways to enhance reliability, such as increasing sample size by surveying additional locations or repeating data collection across different days. Several recognised the potential bias of conducting fieldwork in familiar areas and proposed collecting data from unfamiliar locations to improve objectivity. Other suggestions included standardising the number of shops surveyed in each category or refining sampling techniques. Although a few responses focused on alternative methods rather than improving existing ones, candidates were generally well prepared and capable of expanding their points to secure both marks.

(iv) Explain **two** ways in which the students could have improved their data collection methods.

(4)

- 1 Looking down more than one street/site to see how/if data differs depending on location in the town, this will create a better understanding
- 2 Asking the public which shops they tend to go in most even if they are tourists, this will give opinion based data and personal data that can be used

This response clearly explains two distinct ways to improve data collection. The first way is by observing multiple streets or sites to see how data varies by location, which provides a more comprehensive understanding of the retail distribution. The second way involves asking the public about their shopping habits, especially regarding tourists, which adds valuable opinion-based and personal data. Both points show thoughtful consideration of improving accuracy and depth in data collection, meeting the full criteria for the question.

(iv) Explain **two** ways in which the students could have improved their data collection methods.

- (4)
- 1 Ask more questions. The questions asked were too vague
 - 2 Ask more people for better outcome.



To earn 2 basic marks for improving data collection methods, you can suggest simple but effective steps. First, asking more specific questions helps make the information clearer and more useful. Second, increasing the number of people asked improves the reliability of the data by providing a wider range of responses. These basic improvements show an understanding of how to make data collection better. 2 marks.

Question 11(b)

This 8-mark question prompted candidates to assess the accuracy and reliability of results from their own fieldwork investigating how and why quality of life varies in rural areas. This reflects a noticeable improvement in candidate understanding and preparation compared to previous series. Most candidates could distinguish between accuracy and reliability and attempted to relate these to their data collection, though few accessed the highest level due to underdeveloped assessment or generic discussion.

Stronger responses gave specific examples of methods used—such as environmental quality surveys, perception studies, or noise counts—and showed an awareness of how consistency in timing, location, and technique contributed to reliable results. These candidates also assessed possible inaccuracies, including subjectivity in scoring, sample bias from location choice, or uncontrolled variables like weather conditions. There was increasing evidence that candidates were being encouraged to reflect critically on why their methods were chosen and how this affected the validity of their findings.

Less successful answers focused too heavily on describing fieldwork rather than assessing data quality, or discussed results without linking back to method. Some confusion remained around the terminology, with candidates using “accuracy” and “reliability” interchangeably, or failing to connect their definitions to their own investigation. In several cases, candidates discussed improvements they could make without referring to current limitations or linking directly to how results may have been affected.

(b) You have carried out your own fieldwork investigating how and why the quality of life varies in rural areas.

SSSO
Assess the accuracy and reliability of the results of your investigation.

(8)

The most significant factor in our Malton fieldwork was questionnaires as the primary data allowed us to collect other local opinions on the different sites. However, most candidates of the surveys were elderly, meaning most opinions could've been biased and therefore make our results unreliable.

The second most significant was our environmental survey as this allowed us to assess the key aspects such as pollution, sound, land quality which we recorded on a scoring table which was out of five. We used a box and whisker diagram to rule out anomalies.

and bias which therefore made our results more reliable.

The third most significant factor is our use of census data as this allowed us to gain access to sensitive data such as average incomes. The census data also became vital in our conclusion as we were able to compare and adapt our conclusions which therefore made them more accurate. However, some data may have been outdated which ~~would~~ ^{could've} have a large impact on our reliability.

Overall, our results for our investigation were mostly accurate as we ruled out anomalies and concluded East malton was more deprived than the West.

(Total for Question 11 = 18 marks)



This response identifies key factors affecting the accuracy and reliability of the investigation, such as the use of questionnaires, environmental surveys, and census data, and offers some basic evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses. The candidate recognizes potential biases, like the elderly respondents skewing opinions, and notes the use of box and whisker diagrams to improve reliability by ruling out anomalies. However, the explanation lacks depth and detailed analysis, with limited discussion of how these factors specifically impact the results or clear distinction between accuracy and reliability. There is also minimal critical evaluation of the data's limitations or suggestions for improvement. Overall, the response shows a reasonable understanding but does not provide the thorough, well-justified assessment required for the highest marks. Level 2 - 6 marks.

Paper Summary

Candidates are expected to use **accurate geographical terminology** from the specification to access higher marks. Misuse or vague language can limit responses.

Marks are awarded for **distinct and well-developed ideas**, especially when explaining or assessing factors. Repetition or overlap may reduce credit.

Extended writing questions require clear understanding of command words. For example, 'assess' involves weighing importance, while 'evaluate' demands balanced judgement supported by evidence.

Candidates should refer to the **level descriptors** in the specification to guide the depth and development required for each question.

Time management is essential. Responses should be planned and structured, with diagrams used purposefully to support written answers.

Some questions involve **numerical skills**, such as calculating averages or interpreting data. Confident use of a calculator and clear working are recommended.

Overall, successful responses demonstrate confident use of terminology, precise case study application, and structured extended answers aligned with command words.

Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

