

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

International GCSE
Pakistan Studies
Land, People & Resources
4PA0_02

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General Comments

There was a pleasing reduction in the number of rubric errors this year, and the majority of candidates correctly answered question one (compulsory) and three other questions. In the optional section (questions two to eight); question four was significantly the most popular. There was very little evidence that candidates failed to complete the paper in the time allowed.

A small number of candidates extended their answers beyond the space provided. This needs to be clearly indicated by the use of terms such as 'continued' or, 'see page...'

Question 1

The expectation is that most candidates will perform well with this question and be able to show a sound general knowledge of the geography of Pakistan. There appeared to be fewer errors this year, and a number of candidates were able to reach ten or eleven marks for this section. In general, a majority demonstrated a very sound knowledge of Pakistan. The most common errors, as in the past, were mineral extraction locations. The term 'bunds' was known by a relatively few candidates.

Question 2

This was a less popular question than in previous series. In general, candidates displayed a sound knowledge of the climatic factors affecting Pakistan.

Question 2ai required candidates to use the map provided to help them describe the location of arid climate zones. Whilst the majority were able to carry this out successfully, a number of candidates tried to explain the distribution and therefore failed to answer the question. The explanations for the arid climate zones (2aii) were very well understood although relatively few candidates were able to fully explain the significance of the upland areas to the east of Baluchistan. Candidates displayed some very impressive knowledge of the problems and benefits resulting from flooding in Pakistan, many were able to gain full marks for this section.

Section C, a question about the importance of forests to Pakistan, produced sound, but few excellent answers. Candidates tended to write generic answers which might be applied to most endangered forested areas of the world, rather than focusing specifically on Pakistan. An example of this generic approach is provided by the following extract '... these forests provide valuable resources like timber and serve as raw material for many other industries like

pharmaceutical and paper...’ A timber industry or use, specific to Pakistan, would help raise such answers to the top marking level.

Question 3

Candidates displayed an excellent knowledge of the location of the most fertile soils within Pakistan, and the majority were able to give detailed responses for this soil fertility. Candidates were aware of the importance of flooding and the subsequent deposition of fertile alluvium but few identified the original sources of the alluvium. The importance of irrigation to Pakistan was also well known, and some candidates were able to expand their answers to consideration of the economic implications. The problems associated with irrigation, especially water-logging and the formation of salt pan area, were also very well understood (3bii).

Answers to section c, which required candidates to comment on the effects of and responses to earthquakes in Pakistan, tended to be generic, and relatively few, provided the locational or other detail necessary to reach level three. The following extract illustrates the specific detail of an actual earthquake event required to access the higher level mark band; ‘...the Great Kashmir earthquake was 6-7 on the Richter scale and caused numerous after-shocks which destroyed many buildings.’

Question 4

Although some candidates were correctly able to answer the first section of this popular question, a surprising number demonstrated poor graph reading skills. There was also a significant minority who confused the term natural increase with either the death or birth rate (4aiii). Those that correctly identified the rate of natural increase were required to describe the over-all trend with supporting data to be fully credited for this section.

The problems caused by rural to urban migration were very well understood by most candidates, and some excellent answers covering the resulting reduction in agricultural production and the changes in rural population

Section c required candidates to consider how the rapid growth of the population of Pakistan might be reduced. Relatively few candidates directly addressed either of the terms rapid or population; and answers tended to focus on birth control, therefore achieving level 2. Comments such as; ‘...the large number of refugees from Afghanistan should not be allowed to stay within the country as they contribute to

the rapidly increasing population,' helped candidates to attain the top mark band.

Question 5

This was also a very popular question. Candidates displayed an excellent knowledge of the term 'population density'; by providing definitions and examples such as '18,000,000 population divided by area 796096 sq.kms gives a population density of 226.1 persons per sq.km.'

In section 5a ii the better known factors affecting population density were physical factors such as climate and water supply with relatively few candidates mentioning human factors.

The term 'quality of life' and its indicators (5bi) were very poorly understood by most candidates, and the answers usually focused on the standard of living. Consequently candidates tended to gain low marks for part b of this question.

For section c, candidates were required to consider the benefits of reducing illiteracy among the female population of Pakistan. Answers tended to be linked to the resulting reduction in birth rate although some candidates were able to extend their answers to include economic benefits. For example; '... education of woman will provide a larger educated work force. Output would increase due to this and so Pakistan would be able to fulfil the domestic needs and also export products to earn foreign exchange, leading to economic development.' Such answers were likely to reach the higher mark band.

Question 6

The concept of multinational companies and the advantages for the host company were well understood and answered, as was the section covering renewable and non-renewable energy (6bi) Candidates were slightly less secure about the reasons of why energy production is so important to Pakistan(bii) with the typical answer stating, correctly, that energy is required to produce manufactured goods from primary commodities but failing to address the requirement for a reliable and increasingly widely available energy supply to promote manufacturing growth..

In section c, the problems connected with industrial development tended to be some-what generic, with environmental problems being the main ones considered.

In section c, the problems associated with the industrialisation of Pakistan tended to be generic, with environmental problems being the main focus for the majority of candidates. Some candidates

misread the question and described the factors preventing the industrialisation of the country, therefore limiting their answers to level 1. To reach the higher mark band, candidates need to include specific comments that directly link to specific problems within Pakistan.

Question 7

This was a relatively popular question. Ports were well known, as were the reasons for their development, which was frequently given to reduce the increasing pressure on Karachi's port. The development of port facilities to aid the economic growth of Baluchistan was less well known.

In section b, the main imports were very well known and many candidates were able to state the import and the country of origin, even although the latter was not required to reach full marks. The concept of 'invisible exports' (bii) and their importance to Pakistan were less well understood, and high level comments, such as the following extract, were unusual; '...would bring abundant foreign exchange into the country, and foreign investment would follow, allowing for industrial and other development.'

In section c, candidates were required to consider the limited contribution that tourism makes to Pakistan's economy. Candidates frequently gave reasons for the lack of tourism itself, rather than answering the set question. Where candidates concentrated on the lack of tourism and the implications for the economy, they tended to provide a high level answer. For example, in this extract the candidate directly refers to a reason for the low level of income received from tourism; '...the beautiful city of Murree is largely affected by increased pollution and so the numbers of visitors has decreased, therefore less money is spent in Murree and the income from tourism is directly reduced.'

Question 8

This was one of the less popular questions. Resource management was well known but few candidates extended their answers sufficiently to obtain two marks. Environmental considerations were also well known as were the reasons for the lack of reduction of these problems.

In section c, the factors influencing the reduction of regional differences tended to be very generic in nature, and few referred specially to Pakistan. The better answers, which achieved the higher mark bands, included such the variability of factors as electrification, infrastructure and education.

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