



Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2023

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Geography (4GE1)
Paper 02: Human Geography

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

November 2023

Publications Code 4GE1_02_ER_2311

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2023

Principal Examiner Report
International GCSE Geography
Paper 2
4GE1_02
November 2023

There was a small entry for this exam series as this is the first time Pearson have offered a November series for this qualification (apart from one exceptional November series during the covid-19 pandemic).

The paper had a total of 105 marks. The exam included a mixture of multiple choice, short answer, data response and extended response questions. Each of the questions was mapped to one or more of the Assessment Objectives (AOs). Comments on the overall quality of responses and particular issues related to questions across the exam paper are considered in this report.

While the paper is considered accessible, the cohort of candidates entered for this exam seemed to find it challenging. The paper provides question choice in each section, allowing candidates to select which areas of the specification they wish to respond to. Questions on economic activity and energy (Q1) were slightly more popular than rural environments (Q2) and urban environments (Q3) which were about equal in popularity. In the fieldwork section again economic activity and energy (Q4) and urban environments (Q6) proved more popular than then rural environments (Q5). In Section C around candidates tended to choose either fragile environments and climate change (Q7) or globalisation and migration (Q8) with very few answering the development and human welfare question (Q9). For Section C this follows the pattern of responses seen in previous series.

Examiners noted a number of issues related to how candidates responded to different types of questions:

- The breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding demonstrated by candidates was varied, but with many candidates struggling to provide clear knowledge and understanding across the paper.
- In the level response questions where candidates are required to use resources to inform their answers, many candidates simply lifted information from the resources and provided little development to display their own knowledge and understanding. The most successful candidates would use the resources as a starting point to develop their arguments and then link to other concepts and examples from their own knowledge and understanding.
- Where there were lower tariff questions which required reference to the resource candidates were capable of identifying trends and patterns and providing basic reasons for these.
- While candidates were able to successfully complete some of the unfamiliar fieldwork questions, most candidates did not provide strong answers in the familiar fieldwork section of the paper. Candidates were required to use their own fieldwork experiences for the extended response question on

fieldwork. Many candidates referred to the unfamiliar fieldwork section or ideas from earlier in the exam paper, rather than drawing on their own experiences.

- For the longer extended response questions there was often a lack of fluency and structure in the longer answers, many candidates just describing and sometimes explaining the resources, rather than a focus on analysis or discussion (depending on the question). It was felt that candidates were not always recognising how to tailor their answer to the command word in the question (for analyse or discuss questions). Where candidates are directed to more than one resource it is important that they refer to both to support their answer. It maybe they use one more than the other which is acceptable depending on how they have developed their response, but it is important they draw from both at some point in the response.

Recommendations for centres based on this exam performance:

- Centres should review the specification content alongside the sample assessment materials and previous papers to ensure they are familiar with the range of key vocabulary that candidates need to recognise and understand, and how they can be used in different types of questions. There are a range of papers from previous series available which should provide examples of the range of question types which can be included in this paper, as well as the different potential formats of the fieldwork section.
- Ensure that candidates are familiar with the different command words used in this specification. For example, the difference between what is expected for 'analyse', 'assess' and 'discuss', and what the key components of an answer for this type of question should include. Candidates should practice using resources to show their ability to analyse, assess, and discuss geographical issues for example, and demonstrating their own knowledge and understanding.
- Candidates should continue to be supported to develop their 'integrated skills' incorporated in their delivery. These can be found below the subject content in each section of the specification. Being able to interpret different resources from graphs to maps is an important aspect of this paper. Candidate should ensure they can interpret material from graphs and correctly recognise different axis to be able to read the data on the graphs.
- In questions that refer to a resource, either in the paper or resource booklet, it is important that evidence from the resource is used to answer the question in some way. There will be specific marks available for the interpretation of these resources. This is in both the short answer and the extended response questions which are accompanied by resources. Candidates may find it useful to refer to the resources clearly in some of the extended response questions, making clear reference to the resource in their responses.
- Some questions ask for a particular number of responses e.g. one way, or two strategies, it is important to ensure candidates develop their responses

accordingly and provide sufficient development of their responses to achieve the marks in the question. These will differ depending on the command word, and how many marks relate to the question. The space for candidates to response will indicate where there are multiple responses required to try and support candidates structure their response.

Individual Question Feedback

There was some mixed performance in this Section, but with few excellent responses but and many that were quite weak, particularly for the extended response questions. Questions that incorporated the use of resources and application tended to discriminate the most.

Question 1

1 (a) (i) The multiple-choice questions provided an accessible introduction to the paper. Candidates were usually able to successfully identify the factors that affects the location of primary industry.

1 (a) (ii) Many candidates were able to successfully provide an example of a quaternary sector industry. The most common correct responses related to research and development, computer programming and jobs involving artificial intelligence (AI).

1 (b) The multiple-choice questions were designed to provide an accessible introduction to the paper. Candidates were usually able to successfully identify the impact of a shift from primary industry (agriculture) to secondary industries. Where candidates were incorrect, they tended to select growth in rural areas.

1 (c) Candidates were usually able to provide a suitable reason for the difference in employment structure. The most common response related to development. Candidates that were able to effectively demonstrate this difference with evidence from the resource were able to obtain both marks.

1(d)(ii) Many candidates were able to state what is shown by the Clark Fisher model, they recognised that it related to changes in employment structure and this was linked the different phases of development.

1(e) Most candidates scored some marks in this question demonstrating some knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of informal employment in megacities. Common responses for advantages focused on the potential to avoid taxes, while the disadvantages focused on lack of job security and safety.

1(f) For this question candidates were required to use a resource which showed energy use per capita in Europe. Candidates were often able to recognise the pattern of difference shown in the resource and suggest a basic reason for this. Candidates found it more challenging to develop this idea, simply stating reasons such as development, use of more technology or growth industry. Candidates should practice recognising where questions require a development of an idea based on the number of marks for the question.

1(g) Most candidates scored marks on this question, with some very strong responses which suggested candidates had a good awareness of the environmental impacts of using non-renewable energy sources. The most common responses focused on deforestation and burning of fossil fuels. Although many candidates did not develop these ideas with any explanation as the question requires, they could score some marks for the basic ideas.

1(h) Responses to this question were very variable. The question required candidate to analyse ways to make energy use sustainable referring to the material provided in the resource booklet. Candidates engaged with different ways shown in the resource booklet but often just described them. Occasionally candidates would analyse them in terms of those done by the individual and those done by the household. Most candidates were able to recognise the benefits of the measures shown but could do little explanation or analysis to develop their ideas and access the marks in the higher levels. There quite a few responses that only achieved Level 1 as a result.

Question 2

2(a) (i) The multiple-choice question provided an accessible introduction to the question. For those who chose this option most candidates recognised the type of farm diversification correctly.

2(a)(ii) Candidates were usually able to provide a reason why genetically modified (GM crops) are used.

2(b) The multiple-choice question appeared accessible. For those who chose this option most candidates recognised the correct definition of intensive farming. Where the incorrect option was chosen it tended to be the growing crops to support the farming suggesting that candidates were mixing this up with subsistence farming.

2(c) For this question candidates were required to use a map of different of biomes that centred on the African region to explain one reasons for the distribution of different biomes. Most candidates were able to provide a basic reason (such as distance from the equator/latitude/climate etc), but fewer would link this to evidence from the resource, such as description of the distribution shown or linking it to a particular biome that is shown in the resource. Where development was provided it tended to be related to tropical rainforests.

2(d) Variable responses to this question with some candidates providing very vague answers, although many successfully provided rainfall ranges or indicated suitable vegetation that could be found in this biome.

2(e) Candidates were usually able to score some marks in this question to explain two ways natural ecosystems provide services. Many candidates did not develop their responses to obtain the full marks. There was evidence that some candidates were confused between ecosystem goods and services.

2(f) Candidates usually were able to provide a suitable reason for the increased yields shown in the resource, but would not necessarily develop this idea clearly

with use of the resource to obtain full marks. Answers tended to focus on mechanisation, increased use of fertilisers.

2(g) For this question candidates needed to provide two explanations for how non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have tried to manage two challenges within a rural environment. There were some good examples where candidate had written two developed ideas, using specific NGOs and countries and had clearly learnt their case study well. The most successful candidate started by stating the challenge that was being addressed (such as lack of education or lack of consistent water supply). However, there were also a lot of responses that were quite generic focusing on improvement of rural areas (build schools and build hospitals) rather than providing clearly developed ideas.

2 (g) As with many extended response questions in this paper candidates tended to be descriptive in their responses. For this question candidates were required to analyse the factors that may contribute to the negative multiplier effect using the resource provided. Many candidates would describe the stages but would not extend these ideas in terms of what this meant for the rural area or provide any analysis. Occasionally candidates would provide an analytical comment about the nature of it being a cycle that needed to be broken in order to reduce its impact. Many responses remained in level 1 for this question.

Question 3

3 (a) (i) Multiple choice questions clearly provided an accessible introduction to the question. Candidates were usually able to identify the strategy used to make cities more environmentally sustainable.

3(a)(ii) A range of responses provided for this question but candidates generally had a relevant idea of how politicians could manage challenges in a city whether this was influencing local policies or supporting funding for more social housing. This was only a state questions so candidates were not required to develop their answers and so could be awarded marks for relevant simple ideas.

3 (b) Multiple choice questions clearly provided an accessible introduction to the question. Candidates were usually able to identify the factor that can lead to increased urbanisation.

3 (c) For this question candidates were required to suggest a factor that may have affected the land use pattern shown. The resource showed a land use map of an urban area in the USA. A range of suitable ideas were introduced by candidates and often they would make reference to some information shown on the resource to access both marks. Most commonly they would focus on the amount of residential areas shown or the transport access shown either by road or railway.

3 (d) Many candidates were able to successfully demonstrate where in an urban area it would be most likely to find a science park. Although quite a few suggested this should be the CBD rather than the rural-urban fringe.

3 (e) For this question candidates were required to explain one advantage and one disadvantage of building housing estates on the rural-urban fringe. Many candidates would score some marks for basic ideas but would often not develop

them to obtain full marks. Candidates seemed to be more aware of the disadvantages than the advantages.

3(f) This question required candidates to use a resource which showed urban and rural populations from 1790-2010. Candidates needed to suggest one factor that may have caused the trend shown. Nearly all candidates would recognise the trend shown, the increase in the urban population/decline in the rural population. Many would attempt to provide a basic reason but fewer would develop this enough to obtain full marks.

3 (g) For this question candidates were required to explain two challenges caused by rapid urbanisation. Candidates tended to show good knowledge around this issue providing relevant and often developed ideas about these challenges. The most common responses focused on air pollution and congestion, but also pressure on housing.

3(h) As with other level response questions in this paper, candidates were very descriptive and lifted a lot of information from the resource. The question required candidates to analyse the benefits of building on brownfield sites using a resource which provided information on brownfield site developments in an infographic. There was many level 1 responses as candidates did not develop their ideas or make links to their own knowledge and understanding about this topic. Where there was evidence of analysis it tended to be around the nature of building on brownfield vs greenfield sites rather than the benefits and drawbacks of building on brownfield sites.

Section B

Questions 4, 5 and 6

In this section, candidates were required to answer one out of three fieldwork questions available. The questions mirrored each other across the three options, and the strengths and weaknesses of response followed similar patterns across each of these. There was an unfamiliar fieldwork section made up of short response questions, and a familiar fieldwork question with one extended response questions.

Candidates were provided with information about a student's enquiry including the question, the range of primary data collected, and environmental quality survey data in the form of a table with positive and negative indicators.

In (a)(i) Candidates were required to identify a type of secondary data. Many candidates were able to identify suitable types of data. It was encouraging to see some specific data sets mentioned. It is important candidates recognise the importance of secondary data in the enquiries and understand that this is more than simply the internet, but specific reports and data sources.

(a)(ii) Candidates had to explain one advantage of using secondary data. The responses for this were variable suggesting candidates did not necessarily know

what they would do with secondary data. Although many candidates recognised that secondary data could be used to compare to primary data.

(b)(i) For this question candidates had to use information from the resource to complete the radar graph. The large majority of candidates completed this graph correctly plotting the point in the correct position and joining the lines together.

(b)(ii) This question required candidates to look at the data provided in the radar graph to state one observation. This was a state question so basic observations around the positive nature of the data, or the consistently high scores could be credited. Some candidates chose to focus on the indicator that had a lower score. Either approach was awarded marks which meant that many candidates scored marks here for valid observations from the data.

(b)(iii) For this question candidates were required to identify one advantage of using this type of graph to present data. While there were a lot of generic answers about it being easy to understand, there were lots of who provided answers related to the idea of being able to see various data points on one graph and how this could be used to compare several indicators at once.

(b) (iv) Candidates were required to calculate the modal score for the data shown in the resource booklet. While many candidates could do this and provided clear workings to demonstrate how they got to the correct answer, many were confused by this and provided additions, as well as attempts to provide a mean.

(c) Candidates responded to this question well, recognising how photographs could be used mainly as a visual record of the fieldwork site, to be used later in analysis. Many candidates could not fully develop their ideas or provide a range of ideas to be able to access the three marks.

(d) The familiar fieldwork 8-mark question was by far the weakest of this section. Candidates were required to evaluate how the conclusion they had made demonstrated they had answered their enquiry questions. Many candidates did not provide a relevant enquiry question or relevant conclusions. Many candidates attempted to provide a conclusion based on the unfamiliar fieldwork sections or on data provided in the resource booklet from earlier sections. This suggests they had not yet completed their own fieldwork or had not fully understood the fieldwork activities they had completed. It is important that candidates have a clear understanding of their own enquiries in order to be able to write about it in the examination. Where there were potentially relevant answers candidates tended to provide a generic fieldwork evaluation rather than focusing on how they reached their conclusions or how these linked to the enquiry question. It is important that candidates are able to recognise the different aspects of the geographical enquiry and be able to reflect on the different stages.

Section B

Question 7

7(a) and (b) The multiple-choice questions were accessible to candidates who were usually able to identify the natural cause of climate change and the statement which best explains how volcanoes can affect climate change.

7(c) Candidates were usually able to provide relevant human causes of climate change. The most common responses were burning fossil fuels and deforestation.

7(d) (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) Candidates were often able to successfully identify the correct country with the highest reduction in CO₂ emissions per capita. A few candidates would miss the negative idea and choose Cambodia instead which has a significantly high positive change and therefore incorrect. For (ii) candidates tended to provide a basic comparison of the two continents which was enough to score one mark. This was usually around the idea of greater variation in Africa rather than the actual levels of positive and negative change. In (iii) candidates were usually able to score some marks here with a lot of general ideas about development and carbon emissions. Some candidates would recognise the decline in some countries due to policy changes and carbon emission targets. For (iv) candidates could not always provide a relevant type of data which could be used. Where they did score marks, it tended to be for ideas around carbon emissions over time rather than changes in carbon emissions.

7(e) Candidates were usually able to score both marks for this question providing a range of characteristics of desert environments, with the most common responses around the lack of rainfall and high temperatures.

7(f) For this question candidates had to explain two causes of desertification. Most candidates would score some marks here, although would often not develop the ideas. The most common responses were around the impact of farming and soil erosion.

7(g) Candidates were required to use the resource from the Resource Booklet to assess the strategies that could be used to try and resolve water resource shortages. The resource provided six different strategies. The responses to all the level response questions in section C were very weak with most responses in Level 1 for basic descriptive points about some of the strategies shown. Candidates that reached Level 2 developed some of their ideas about what the implications of particular strategies were. There was very little assessment evident in any of the responses.

7(h) For this question candidates are required to use two resources from the Resource booklet. Again a lot of response were in Level 1 as candidates did not appear to know how to discuss the statement. Candidates should have discussed 'the most effective way to protect fragile environments is through international agreements'. Very few candidates mentioned any specific international agreements, although there were some who talks about carbon reductions linked to Figure 7a. Candidates would often make a vague statement and then describe a few points from the resources but would not demonstrate any clear knowledge and understanding or apply any knowledge and understanding to the resources.

Question 8

8(a) (i) and (ii) The multiple-choice questions were accessible to candidates who were usually able to identify the reason for the growth of mass tourism, and the strategy designed to make tourism more sustainable.

8 (b) Candidates usually scored some marks in this question. There were a range of factors provided although the most common responses focused on war and conflict.

8 (c) (i), (ii) (iii) and (iv) Most candidates were able to successfully identify the country with the highest value of trade as a percentage of GDP. For (ii) candidates were often able to make a basic comparison of the pattern but would not necessarily develop this to obtain both marks. In (iii) candidates tended to provide general ideas about development which were valid but did not tend to develop these any further. In (iv) candidates recognised how globalisation involved an interconnectedness between countries and would often score marks on this idea to explain why the data shown would be useful for understanding globalisation.

8(d) Candidates often provided valid responses to this question to state two push factors for migration.

8 (e) For this question candidates were required to explain two approaches to managing migration. This was interpreted both in terms of managing the number of people that enter or leave a country, but also how countries manage migrants who do arrive in different circumstances (such as providing for refugees). Some candidates would try to provide an answer to reduce the number of people entering a country (such as limits on numbers or visas), and an answer for trying to get countries to stop people leaving (e.g. improving employment opportunities in the home countries). In general candidates often provided basic statements but would not necessarily develop them further to obtain full marks.

8(f) As with the 'assess' question in Q7 and Q9 responses were very weak. Many candidates would copy information from the resource and provide little further comment on these international institutions. Very few candidates provided any form of assessment either in terms of whether these institutions had a positive role, or which of these was more important. In general candidates did not seem to understand the role of these institutions beyond what was provided in the resource.

8(g) For this question candidates were required to discuss 'one of the greatest benefits of globalisation is economic growth' making reference to the two resources provided in this question. Some candidates would list some benefits or try to describe parts of the resources to link to this idea of globalisation. But in general answers were very weak and there was very little explanation of ideas or discussion. Where candidates tended to get out of level 1 this was usually for providing a range of ideas with some development, rather than just basic point.

Question 9

It should be noted that there were very few responses for this question so comments are based on a very limited range of responses.

9 (a)(i) and (ii) The multiple-choice questions were accessible to candidates who were usually able to identify the social indicator of development, and the reason for a fall in death rates.

9 (b) Often candidates would provide at least one correct indicator usually per capita income but would sometimes get more than 1 mark.

9 (c)(i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) Most candidates were able to identify country labelled with the highest levels of inequality. For (ii) usually candidates would usually attempt to provide a comparative statement but very few would support this with details from the resource or development. For (iii) a lot of answers focused on broad ideas about development but would not expand on these ideas to score both marks. For (iv) few candidates were able to explain why this data was useful.

9 (d) Candidates usually provided some relevant answers for top-down development projects and were able to score some marks in this question. It is encouraging that candidates did not seem to mix this up with bottom-up development projects.

9(e) Candidates were usually able to score some marks on this question demonstrating some knowledge and understanding of factors that can affect uneven development with a country. Ideas were often linked to transport, jobs and wealth but as with many of the questions in this section little development was usually provide for ideas which prevented candidates from scoring higher marks.

9(f) For this question candidates were required to use the Figure in the Resource Booklet to assess the role of international aid in reducing the development gap. As with other extended response questions in this paper, candidates tended to provide very basic statements which meant they were usually in Level 1. Some candidates would try to describe features from the resource which were relevant but did not go beyond this to provide any explanation of ideas or assessment as required by the question.

9(g) For this question candidates were required to discuss 'Continuing uneven global development is caused by economic factors', using the two resources provided for this question. Candidates tended not to draw on the resources for this question but would provide very basic ideas about uneven global development. There was little development of ideas or explanation which meant that most responses were in Level 1. Where there were some candidates who has more balanced answers, they tended to bring in ideas around social factors rather than just economic.

