



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2024

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Geography (4GE1)
Paper 2 Human Geography

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General Comments

There was a small entry for this exam series compared to the summer.

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.

The paper provides question choice in each section, allowing candidates to select which areas of the specification they wish to respond to. The question on urban environments (Q3) was more popular than economic activity and energy (Q1) and rural environments (Q2). In the fieldwork section again urban environments (Q6) was the most popular choice followed by economic activity and energy (Q4) then rural environments (Q5). In Section C the majority of candidates chose fragile environments and climate change (Q7) with fewer choosing globalisation and migration (Q8) and very few answering the development and human welfare question (Q9). This follows the pattern of responses seen in previous series.

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

- The breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding demonstrated by candidates was varied, but often quite limited. Many candidates struggled to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding across the paper.
- In the level response questions where candidates are required to use resources to inform their answers, many candidates were able to describe the information shown in the resources, or make relevant basic statements but often provided limited 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.
- Candidates were often able to identify information from a range of resources correctly.
- Many candidates were able to successfully complete some of the short response familiar fieldwork questions. There is space in the exam paper to write the title of the geographical enquiry. Where a suitable title is provided this often led to more clear and relevant responses to the familiar fieldwork questions with candidates demonstrating they understood various aspects of their fieldwork. Where no title or a vague title such as 'urban study' was provided, this was usually accompanied by vague answers on the familiar fieldwork.

- For some short response questions that required only description of data, candidates would focus more on explaining the data rather than simply describing it.
- For the longer extended response questions, candidates would often refer to the correct resources, but the responses were often very short, and lacked development to demonstrate clear knowledge and understanding.
- Most candidates seem to recognise the different command words in the extended response questions, and would make basic judgements, but often these were not clearly supported, and were followed by basic statements rather than developed explanations.
- There were very few rubric infringements which is encouraging, as where candidates attempt too many questions this would often be detrimental to their ability to complete questions effectively.

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 'describe' and 'explain', 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 demonstrate their own knowledge and understanding. It is important that candidates understand that for the 12 mark questions in section C that the split of marks across the assessment objectives is across AO2, AO3 and AO4, therefore they need to demonstrate their own knowledge and understanding on the issues as well as be able to demonstrate their ability to understand the resources.
- 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. Candidates should ensure they can interpret

patterns from graphs and maps, and identify trends in data. There is a list of geographical skills students are required to cover in Appendix 4 of the specification.

- 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. Most candidates make clear reference to the resources in the extended response questions, but in the shorter responses linked to the resources the references to the specific aspects of the resource required were sometimes missing.

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 question provided an accessible introduction to the paper. Candidates were usually able to successfully identify the source of renewable energy.

1 (a) (ii) Many candidates were able to successfully provide an advantage of using renewable energy. The most common correct responses related to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and increased energy security.

1 (b) The multiple-choice questions were designed to provide an accessible introduction to the paper. Candidates were usually able to successfully the disadvantage of using shale gas as an energy source. If candidates were incorrect, they tended to select fracking is cheap.

1 (c) Candidates were usually able to provide a suitable way the factories shown in the resource booklet could become more sustainable. This is a question that does require reference to the resource, the most common way was through reference to the reduced air pollution that was shown in the photograph. Candidates that were able to suggest a way factories could reduce the emissions tended to achieve both marks.

1(d)(ii) Many candidates were able to state what a suitable factor that has increased global demand for energy. There were a variety of responses including increased use of electronics/transport or consumer goods as well as increase in population more generally. As this is a state questions a short answer with a simple phrase is sufficient. There is no need to provide a full description of the factor.

1(e) Most candidates scored some marks in this question demonstrating some knowledge of human and physical factors that can affect the location of primary sector activities. Although many candidates were not able to clearly develop their responses to explain how it would affect the location. There was some confusion between primary and secondary sector activities. The most common correct responses were related to supply of labour and fertility of the soil.

1(f) For this question candidates were required to use a resource which showed the percentage of working women in informal employment and GDP for selected regions. Candidates were often able to recognise the pattern of difference shown in the resource and sometimes suggest a basic reason for this. Sometimes candidates would get the different regions mixed up, or incorrectly interpret the information arguing that Europe and Central Asia had higher rates of informal employment. Although many candidates were able to provide a suitable comment about the distribution shown and provide a suitable reason. As this is a question that has an allocated AO3 mark, it is important that candidates make clear use of the resource in their answer to achieve full marks.

1(g) Most candidates scored marks on this question recognising that ideas from Malthus were around population becoming higher than the supply of resources and the consequences of that for populations. Very few candidates demonstrated any confusion with alternative theories such as Boserup. A common approach was to provide a point about the rates at which population and resources grow, and a point about the implications of this around points of crisis or positive checks.

1(h) Responses to this question were very variable. The question required candidates to analyse possible reasons for the differences in employment structures using the resource provided. Candidates were often able to correctly interpret the graph but would rarely provide developed reasons for the differences in employment structure. A typical approach was to list the employment structure for a few of the countries shown and make a general statement about how this was affected by development, without further clarification. This led to quite a few responses that only achieved Level 1 as a result. Stronger responses would start their response by stating there were three reasons for the differences and then provide a developed explanation for these reasons, supported by the evidence from the data. The level 3 descriptor for these 8-mark questions is:

- Applies understanding to deconstruct information and provide logical connections between concepts throughout. A balanced, well-developed argument that synthesises relevant understanding coherently leading to judgements that are supported by evidence throughout. (AO3)
- Uses geographical skills to obtain accurate information that supports all aspects of the argument. (AO4)

While some of the stronger responses would provide a well-developed argument this did not always lead to a clear judgement.

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 characteristics of intensive farming, although quite a few chose 'low yields' which is clearly incorrect.

2(a)(ii) Candidates were usually able to provide a benefit of using genetically modified (GM) crops. The most common answers related to increased yields and increased pest/disease resistance. There were a few vague responses such as 'improved modifications' and 'better production' which couldn't be credited as they were too vague.

2(b) The multiple-choice question appeared accessible. For those who chose this option most candidates recognised the type of farm diversification.

2(c) For this question candidates were required to describe the characteristics of a rural environment. Candidates were usually able to provide two clear points about the rural environment shown to obtain the marks. Many responses focused on the flat land, low population/limited buildings.

2(d) Many candidates were able to suggest a suitable strategy that can be used to make water supplies more sustainable in rural areas. Rainwater harvesting and improved methods of irrigation were common responses.

2(e) Candidates were usually able to score some marks in this question to explain two ways tourism can have a negative impact on rural areas. Common responses focused on air/noise/visual pollution from tourist activities, although a range of economic, social and environmental impacts were covered in the responses.

2(f) For this question candidates were required to use a figure from the resource booklet which showed annual precipitation and mean annual temperature of key biomes to explain how either temperature or precipitation can affect the characteristics of biomes. Candidates were often able to provide relevant comments but would tend to write about both temperature and precipitation which often prevented them from developing their ideas in enough detail to obtain all the marks. Effective responses would explain why temperature or precipitation could affect vegetation and then develop this by providing a contrast for example between tropical rainforest and desert. This approach meant responses made clear reference to the resource, which is required for this question, and provided sufficient development of their answers to achieve full marks.

2(g) Candidates usually were able to provide suitable ways ecosystems provide goods for people, often providing clear examples. There were strong responses about the production of timber and medicinal plants, with explanations of how these could be used. Although there

were quite a few responses that demonstrated confusion between ecosystem goods and services.

2 (h) 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 importance of the negative multiplier effect on the population structure of the rural area using the resource provided. Many candidates would describe the negative multiplier effect or would describe the population structure shown but would not tend to provide clear explanations of either or link the two together. Most candidates made clear reference to the evidence from the resource, but were not able to provide clear explanations of how this linked to the positive multiplier effect. Many responses remained in level 1 for this question. Stronger responses tended to focus on a couple of age groups in the younger and older populations and then link this to how the negative multiplier effect may have had an effect on the structure shown.

Question 3

3 (a) (i) This multiple-choice question provided an accessible introduction to the question. Candidates were usually able to identify the factor that has slowed down the rate of urbanisation for some areas.

3(a)(ii) Most candidates were able to provide a suitable cause of megacity growth. Common responses related to rural-urban migration, urbanisation and high birthrates. There were a few candidates who provided a definition of a megacity, which was not the focus of the question.

3 (b) Candidates were usually able to identify the region of the world which had the highest rate of urbanisation in the 2020s. Although quite a few did choose North America.

3 (c) For this question candidates were required to suggest a reason why transport is a challenge for the area shown in a resource. The resource was a photograph of a street in Mumbai, India. Candidates were usually able to suggest a suitable reason around traffic congestion. Reference to the traffic congestion/traffic jam/high volume of traffic demonstrated clear use of the resource. Candidates tended to either linked this increased air pollution or increased travel times for commuters.

3 (d) Many candidates were able to state a food-related challenge for people living in cities. The most common response was the high cost of food, although many also commented on the limited availability of land to grow food. The latter tended to write several lines of text which was unnecessary for a state question where a short phrase is sufficient.

3 (e) For this question candidates were required to explain one two advantages of building on greenfield sites. Many candidates would score some marks for basic ideas but would often not develop them to obtain full marks. Common responses focused around not needed to clear existing infrastructure, and potential for greater accessibility. Although some responses demonstrated confusion with brownfield sites.

3(f) This question required candidates to use a resource which changes in waste management for a city in the USA. Candidates needed to suggest how a change shown could improve quality of life in cities. Most responses would include a relevant comment about a change shown the trend shown, such as the reduction in landfilling or the increase in recycling/composting. Weaker responses tended to struggled to link this to improvements in quality of life other than having less litter around. Stronger responses tended to focus on less land/visual/air pollution created by landfill sites, or the potential for reduced demand for goods if there was increased recycling, which would lead to less carbon emissions.

3 (g) For this question candidates were required to explain one way planners and one way property developers manage social challenges in cities. Responses to this question were variable. Responses tended to provide clear points about how particular social challenges were managed. There were a lot of vague responses about creating plans for cities, and developing new areas. Stronger responses would identify a challenge such as lack of affordable housing and explain how planners and property developers would try and address this. There were a few excellent responses about how these groups work to address social cohesion in cities but in general the responses to this question were very vague.

3(h) As with other level response questions in this paper, candidates were very descriptive and tended to describe what was shown in the resource. The question required candidates to analyse the reasons why there are land use changes in cities. There were many level 1 responses as candidates did not provide clear explanations about any relevant reasons. Stronger responses would identify the reasons (such as land value and accessibility) that were going to be explored in the response and then provide developed points about these using evidence from the resource.

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. This series there were short answer questions about familiar fieldwork, and the extended question focused on unfamiliar fieldwork.

In (a)(i) and (ii) Candidates were required to identify a type of graph that was used and then explain one reason for their choice of graph. Many candidates were able to identify a suitable type of graph with the most common being a bar chart or line graph. The reasons for use often tended to be quite vague such as 'easy to read' which could only obtain one mark. Stronger responses tended to focus on the suitability based on the data being displayed, and the ability to then be able to compare to other data sets. Candidates should be prepared to clearly justify choices made during their geographical enquiry.

(b) This question required candidates to explain one qualitative primary data collection technique used in their enquiry. The responses for this were variable suggesting candidates did not necessarily recognise which techniques were qualitative. Stronger responses tended to focus on the use of photographs or open-ended questions in surveys.

(c) This question required candidates to explain two ways secondary data was used in their enquiry. The responses to this question were variable. There were some very vague responses which did not clearly identify any particular types of secondary data. Although on occasion there were some more developed responses which showed how older photographs were used to identify changes, and different government data sets used to be able to identify trends to provide a basic understanding of various issues before data collection. Candidates should be encouraged to recognise specific types of secondary data that are used as part of the enquiry.

(c) Responses to this question which require candidates to suggest one improvement that could have been made to data analysis. Many candidates did not write explicitly about data analysis, tending to write more about the data collection stage. Some of these responses would have an implicit link to how their data analysis could have been improved, but these responses tended not to reach full marks. Stronger responses tended to write directly about something they had done in the data analysis stage which could have been improved.

(d) For this extended response question candidates were provided with the student's aim as well as some information about the methodology, part of the data presentation and some conclusions. Candidates were required to evaluate the student's data presentation method and conclusions. Responses tended to be quite successful at providing critique of the data presentation method, but were less effective at evaluating the conclusions. Many would simply repeat the conclusions rather than providing clear evaluative comments. Stronger responses would take a balanced approach developing an argument about the overall weaknesses of the enquiry as demonstrated through the limited data presentation and basic conclusions.

Section C

Question 7

7 (a)(i) Most candidates were able to provide a suitable definition for the term fragile environment. Many responses focused on the nature of the environment being vulnerable to changes.

7(a)(ii) and (iii) The multiple-choice questions were accessible to candidates who were usually able to identify the factor that affects the distribution of coral reefs and one feature of a coral reef.

7(b)(i) and (ii) Many candidates were able to successfully identify the two cities at greatest risk of desertification. For (iii) usually candidates would usually attempt to provide relevant reason related to pattern shown, with the most basic responses being about reduced rainfall and increased temperatures. Stronger responses would identify a pattern on the resource and then link this to potential changes in environmental conditions such as rainfall and temperature, or link this to human activities which could affect soil erosion, or sometimes the capacity of countries to combat desertification. The command word for this question is 'suggest' so any plausible reason for the pattern shown would be credited.

7(c) Generally candidates demonstrated good understanding of the difference approaches to reducing water shortages. Most candidates would provide basic approaches such as building dams, desalination plants and many would develop these responses to provide an explanation. Weaker responses would provide very basic ideas such as 'water recycling' and 'water storage tanks' which were both creditable but lacked the development to gain and further markers.

7(d)(i) Many candidates provided the correct method and answer for this question, demonstrating their ability to calculate the mean. On occasion candidates did not seem to understand what to do with the numbers and would provide a simple addition, or they would provide the range. It is important candidates recognise the different requirements of calculation questions for the different measures of central tendency as listed in the statistical skills section of the specification in Appendix 4; this includes median, mean, range, quartiles and interquartile range, mode and modal class). In (d)(ii) this question required candidates to describe one difference shown in the data. Most candidates focused on the differences for Brazil or Indonesia. As there were different types of data (deforestation and reforestation) candidates could describe a difference between these rates or focus on the differences between countries for one of these rates. The questions requires description which could be with words, or include use of the data to support (providing the difference between highest and lowest deforestation rate for example). The question does not require reasons for the

difference, which mean candidates provided. It is important that candidates understand the requirements of the different command words.

7(e) For this question candidates were required to assess the importance of the causes of climate change shown. Candidates were usually able to score some marks on this question. Weaker responses tended to list the different factors and provide a description of how they were linked to climate change. There were however stronger responses which demonstrated a clear understanding of the causes of climate changes, categorising the factors into natural and human. Responses that included a clear judgement about which of these (or groups of these) factors were the most important were able to more effectively demonstrate they had responded to the command word. There is no requirement to cover all aspects of the resources in these questions. Some candidates were able to affectively assess the important of just a few of these but would provide developed explanations as to why these were the most/least important.

7(f) For this question candidates were required to discuss 'countries which have contributed the most to climate change should be responsible for leading the actions to combat climate change' making reference to the two resources provided in this question. In general answers were quite weak and there was very little explanation of ideas provided. Weaker responses tended to focus more on describing aspects of the resources, such as rates of deforestation (Figure 7b), or emissions of greenhouse gases from industry and vehicles (Figure 7c). These responses were relevant but provided little more than basic statements. Although even the weaker responses tended to provide a clear judgement on the statement. There were stronger responses provided that tended to make a clear judgement and then provide at least one developed idea on either side of the argument. The assessment objectives for this question cover AO1 (4 marks), AO2 (4 marks) and AO3 (4 marks). This means candidates do need to demonstrate their own understanding as well as their ability to interpret resources. Stronger responses would make reference to some the actions being taken to combat climate change such as in international climate agreements, or demonstrate their understanding of countries that are considered to contribute the most to climate change. This moved beyond what was provided in the resources which accompanied with developed explanations and a clear supported judgement allowed them to access the marks in higher levels.

Question 8

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

8 (a)(i) and (ii) The multiple-choice questions were accessible to candidates who were usually able to identify the feature of transnational corporations (TNCs) and the benefit a country can gain from hosting a TNC.

8(b)(i) Most candidates were able to provide a suitable positive impact of migration on host (destination) countries. The most common response was around the provision of skilled labour. Occasionally vague responses would be provided with ideas related to changes in quality of life without any clarification of what this meant, or they would provide a general push factor for migration.

8(b)(ii) and (iii) Most candidates were able to identify the two labelled provinces with the highest internal migration between provinces. For (iii) usually candidates would usually attempt to provide relevant reason related to the development of the cities on the coast, or availability of jobs, but less candidates would provide details of the pattern shown. Stronger responses would identify a pattern on the resource, there were a broad range of acceptable responses due to the nature of the data shown, and then link this to differences in availability of employment, development or industrial sector. The command word for this question is 'suggest' so any plausible reason for the pattern shown would be credited.

8(c) Candidates would usually provide relevant statements about how geopolitical relationships between countries can affect trade. As the command word for this question is 'explain' the responses needed to do more than identify issues such as conflict, trade agreements or tariffs to explain how this would affect traded. Stronger responses would make a basic statement about each way and then provide a clear explanation as to why trade could be increased or more limited.

8(d)(i) Candidates were usually able to correctly calculate the mean. Nearly all would provide the workings that led to these answers which is necessary to obtain both marks. On occasion candidates would add the four correct figures or would not then provide the correct division.

8(d)(ii) This question required candidates to describe a trend shown in figure 8b. Some candidates would provide an explanation for a trend identified which is not what the question is asking for. A description can be words or the use of data but does not need to provide an explanation for the trend. It is important that candidates identify which part of the data they are referring to. There were quite a few general statements about increases which could only be credited if they identified which part of the table was being referred to, as there were increases and decreases shown in the table. There were some very vague statements about how the data showed 'changes in air' or 'changes in transport'. These did not provide any clear trend or data to support their points. The most effective responses would identify there was a general increase shown for air and provide the differences in growth for international and/or domestic. Some candidates focused on identification of the increase in emissions overall, and then provide details to support this, or provide exceptions where increases did not occur. As they had identified 'overall' it was clear which part of the data was being referred to.

8(e) For this question candidates were required to assess the factors that have led to increased tourism, using the resource provided. Candidates were usually able to score some marks on this question, but the responses were often in level 1. Weaker responses tended to list the different factors and provide a basic relevant statement for each trying to explain how the factors linked to increased tourism. Stronger responses tended to make a clear judgement at the outset or in the concluding lines about which was the most important factor. This demonstrated their ability to address the command word in the question. Some responses tried to link the factors together such as expansion of budget air lines and increased paid leave, which could have been really effective if they had been supported by explanations. Often the links were logical, but were not clearly explained. There is no requirement to discuss every factor on the resource. The candidates need to demonstrate clear use of the resource to support response but this could be done effectively with just a few of the factors if the explanations and assessment are developed.

8(f) For this question candidates were required to discuss 'the positive impacts of tourism outweigh the impacts on the environment' making reference to the two resources provided in this question. In general answers were quite weak and there was very little explanation of ideas or discussion. Candidates were quite effective at using the resource to demonstrate a negative impact (increased carbon emissions) and would often provide various basic positive impacts related to jobs and income), but were not often able to develop these ideas for a clear discussion, or provide a range of impacts. Very few responses went beyond what was provided in the resources for environmental impacts. Responses did tend to be quite balanced providing something positive and negative, and would often make a judgement but they responses often lacked detailed explanations. This is a 12-mark response which has an assessment objective split of AO2 (4 marks), AO3 (4 marks) and AO4 (4 marks), so while use of the resources is very important, it is just as important that candidates demonstrate their own knowledge and understanding about the issue, in this case the impacts of tourism. Stronger responses would provide explanations of two positive impacts and two negative impacts providing a balance, leading to a clear judgement. These explanations would not only draw on the resource but bring in their own knowledge and understanding, about soil erosion or deforestation created by developments needed for tourism, for example.

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 correct indicator of development and the top-down way of supporting development.

9 (a)iii) Often candidates would provide a suitable disadvantage of top-down development projects. Common responses were that they tend to be expensive and often don't focus on the need of local people.

9 (b)(i) and (ii) Most candidates were able to identify the two labelled regions with the lowest-subnational Human Development Index. For (ii) usually candidates would usually attempt to provide relevant reason, but less candidates would provide details of the pattern shown. Stronger responses would identify a pattern on the resource, there were a broad range of acceptable responses due to the nature of the data shown, and then link this to differences in employment, wealth or infrastructure.

9 (c) Candidates often provided quite vague answers about increased trade or how agreements could be linked to aid. There were very few answers that identified intergovernmental organisations, specific countries. Stronger responses tended to start with an intergovernmental organisation like the World Bank and then explain how this could lead to various forms of financial assistance and how this could be targeted to reduce uneven development.

9(d)(i) Most candidates were able to calculate the mean infant mortality rate. On occasion candidates would just calculate the total infant mortality rate rather than then dividing it to find the mean.

9(d)(ii) This question required candidates to describe a pattern shown in the data in Figure 9b. There are two marks for this question with the most effectively responses identifying a pattern (higher infant mortality rate and maternal mortality rate) and would then qualify this with the use of the data to support their point. As with the equivalent questions on Q8 and Q9 candidates would often give a relevant descriptive statement but then provide an reason for this pattern, which is not what the question requires.

9(e) Candidates were usually able to score some marks some marks on this question demonstrating some knowledge and understanding of factors that have contributed to the development gap. Weaker responses tended to list the different factors and provide a basic relevant statement for each. Stronger responses would either categorise the factors (economic/social/political) or make a judgement about which was the most important. This demonstrated their ability to address the command word in the question. There is no requirement to discuss every factor on the resource. The candidates need to demonstrate clear use of the resource to support response but this could be done effectively with just a few of the factors if the explanations and assessment are developed.

9(g) For this question candidates were required to discuss 'Food and water security are essential for ensuring greater human welfare', using the two resources provided for this question. Usually candidates would make clear reference to the resources and use them as a

starting point for their ideas, but often the associated discussion was very weak with limited statements about why food and water security were important. Some would miss this focus completely and provide descriptions of the resources. Stronger responses would start with a clear judgement and work towards supporting this to lead to a clear conclusion.

