



GCSE

Geography B

90351F Managing places in the 21st century
Report on the Examination

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General

- Very few candidates failed to complete the paper, suggesting that the timing of the paper was not an issue.
- Reports suggested that centres had found the examination a sound reflection of the specification, and a good test of the knowledge and understanding embodied within the specification.
- It was evident that the majority of centres had prepared their candidates effectively. Teachers are to be congratulated on their efforts towards ensuring that candidates had a sound grasp of the concepts that underpin the course.
- The use of resources was generally good. A significant proportion of candidates used clear and appropriately quoted evidence from resources in their answers. However, the use of the Ordnance Survey map extract in Question 2 was variable. It was evident that a number of candidates did not really understand the demands of map reading and interpretation skills. Consequently, what might be considered fairly easily gained marks, were lost.
- The use of examples was variable. In many cases, candidates brought in well-developed, appropriate case studies, whilst in others, the instruction to include 'examples' or 'own knowledge' was largely ignored. (The instruction to include 'own knowledge' can be development of the ideas expressed in the question **or** locational knowledge (examples)).
- **Key point** – remember the key instruction at the beginning of every examination paper. 'Use case studies to support your answers where appropriate.' Encourage candidates to do this – it is often one of the ways that the higher level marks can be accessed.
- The majority of candidates responded to the question comments effectively.
- The use of the mark allocations and writing spaces was generally good; the majority of candidates taking the opportunity of using the 'extra space'. A small number of candidates used a 'listing' approach to some of the longer questions. This was often self-limiting and should be discouraged unless time is an issue.
- It was evident that a small number of candidates were not properly equipped. The lack of a ruler can affect levels of accuracy when completing graphs or measuring distances. At this level, basic skills demand a high level of accuracy.

Question 1: The Coastal Environment

1(a)(i) – Virtually all of the candidates used Figure 1 effectively to identify the correct country.

1(a)(ii) – The majority of candidates completed the graph accurately. A small number of candidates made an error with the first (2010) point and a small number of candidates failed to attempt the question.

1(a)(iii) – Virtually all of the candidates used Figure 1 effectively to identify two appropriate export products. A small number of candidates considered tourist receipts as an “export product”, which was clearly an acceptable answer.

1(a)(iv) – The majority of candidates showed a sound general understanding of the question and showed an awareness that coastal areas are “multi-use” economic areas. In most cases candidates simply identified activities found in coastal areas or copied ideas from Figure 1 with little or no development. The question demanded an understanding of the reasons why coastal areas provide opportunities for economic activities so there was a clear need to offer some level of locational analysis. Those candidates that offered some development beyond simply describing activities found in coastal areas and responded to the “Explain” command generally produced good answers. Use of “own knowledge” was variable, in many cases simply offering some basic locational reasoning or naming a coastal area but offering very little specific detail. The most successful answers used Figure 1 and offered a clear example with some detail of the specific economic activities found there.

1(b) – Candidates generally showed some awareness of how coastal areas are protected, often bringing in observations about nature reserves or other designated protection measures. While this showed an understanding of the idea identified in the question it did not fully address the “protected from economic developed” point expressed in the question which demanded a level of development beyond simply identifying environmental protection measures. A number of candidates did take this basic descriptive idea further by introducing the idea of zonal management. When used effectively, this provided a useful vehicle to express points about environmental protection and the managed restriction of development in sensitive coastal areas.

1(c)(i) – The majority of candidates used Figure 2 effectively to identify the two correct features from the list provided. A small number of candidates put the answers in an incorrect order or identified point Z as a bar. A small number of candidates failed to attempt the question.

1(c)(ii) – There were a significant number of impressive responses to this question and it was evident that the majority of candidates had a good understanding about the distinction between soft and hard coastlines and the relative effect of physical processes on clay and chalk landscapes. A significant number of candidates used Figure 2 effectively to express their reasoning, in many cases referencing the scale on the map and observing quite sophisticated ideas about the relative rates of erosion. A small number of candidates failed to use Figure 2 (as instructed in the question), often simply describing a soft coastline in relation to slumping with no real relative reference to the chalk and limestone expressed in the question. While this was worthy of some credit it was often self-limiting in relation to the question.

1(d)(i) – It was evident that the majority of candidates had a good level of knowledge about the characteristics of a coastal spit. Virtually all of the candidates were able to identify the prevailing wind and the re-curved end accurately. A number of candidates were not clear about the salt marsh and mudflats, putting each in the incorrect box.

1(d)(ii) – This question was answered correctly by virtually all of the candidates. It was clearly evident that the great majority of candidates had a sound descriptive understanding about depositional processes.

1(d)(iii) – It was pleasing to see the use of diagrams in expressing an answer to this question. Many of these diagrams were used very effectively to express the processes involved in the formation of a coastal spit. The majority of candidates used some technical language to describe the movement of sediment and were confident in their understanding of the relationship between prevailing winds and the general drift of beach material. Understanding of deposition was slightly more variable, with a significant number of candidates showing no real appreciation of why sediment is deposited to form a spit. Since the question was essentially a “describe” based question this was not a major factor, although it did tend to limit some answers.

1(e)(i) – This question presented no real difficulties, virtually all candidates were able to identify the correct three examples of hard engineering. A small number of candidates appeared to not be aware of the word “gabion”, consequently selecting an incorrect choice for the third option.

1(e)(ii) – There were a significant number of very good responses to this question. The majority of candidates used Figure 4 effectively to identify and describe the hard engineering methods being used and went on to offer some understanding about how these measures will offer this area of coast some protection against flooding. At one level candidates made basic points about the sea wall creating a “barrier” which will stop water moving inland, while a significant number of candidates developed this theme, bringing in ideas about reducing wave energy and making clearly points about both the stepped sequence in front of the sea wall and the sea wall itself. A small number of candidates took this further by offering detailed observations about the significance of the curve in the sea wall, producing answers that would have been appropriate for the Higher tier examination paper. A very small number of candidates clearly did not reference Figure 4 at all or had only limited understanding of the question, suggesting that the methods were other types of hard engineering or, in a limited number of cases soft engineering.

1(f)(i) – The majority of candidates identified the two correct responses from the list given. In most cases candidates tended to get either two or zero marks.

1(f)(ii) – A – The majority of candidates were able to identify the earth bund or the salt marsh as features of managed retreat that have the potential to reduce the flood risk. A number of candidates went on to suggest how these features might actually reduce the flood risk.

B – It was clear that a number of candidates were not totally clear about the idea of “environmental opportunities” and consequently did not address the question effectively. Those candidates that did understand the terminology were able to identify the development of the nature reserve as a positive benefit of managed retreat. A significant number of candidates went on to develop this theme by making observations about the development of new habitats and subsequent wildlife.

Question 2: The Urban Environment

2(a)(i) – The majority of candidates were able to identify the four correct terms from the list given in order to complete the paragraph accurately.

2(a)(ii) – The majority of candidates used Figure 6 effectively in order to complete the graph accurately. A small number of candidates made elementary errors or failed to complete one or both parts of the graph.

2(a)(iii) – This question presented no real difficulties, virtually all candidates were able to identify the correct city from Figure 6.

2(a)(iv) – The majority of candidates showed a good general understanding about how urban areas provided socio-economic opportunities in less developed countries. The more commonly used ideas focused on the availability of employment and social opportunities such as healthcare, education and basic services, especially water supply. Answers tended to be differentiated by the extent to which candidates offered development beyond simply identifying factors. Those candidates who developed points or linked ideas (“improved educational opportunities will mean people have a better chance of getting a higher paid job and improving their living standards”) often produced thoughtful and effectively considered answers.

2(b) – Relatively few candidates were able to fully address the idea of “challenge” in relation to urban growth in less developed countries. In most cases candidates tended to interpret “challenge” as “problem” and often went on to identify a wide range of problems frequently associated with cities in less developed countries. While this approach offered some understanding of the pressures that these cities face, it did not fully consider the idea of why this is a challenge for their management. Those candidates who did reflect on the idea of “challenge” generally made thoughtful and perceptive observations, including points about a lack of resources, the difficulty of managing squatter areas and general points about the difficulty of how keeping up with service demands (water/sanitation/energy supply/waste collection) is a real challenge where an urban area is growing rapidly.

2(c)(i) – The majority of candidates clearly understood the concept of “mixed use” in relation to regeneration projects and expressed their understanding either by offering a definition which included examples of different types of development or by simply listing a number of different types of development, implying that the area had a wide range of potential uses.

2(c)(ii) – A number of candidates appeared to be slightly confused between the idea of “why” areas might need a regeneration project, as expressed in the question, and what was actually done. While expressing what was actually done implies a clear need, considering the question in this way did not always fully address the key idea. Those candidates that did consider “why” regeneration was needed generally identified two appropriate reasons, the more popular being a lack of employment opportunities and urban dereliction.

2(c)(iii) – The majority of candidates were able to identify an educational opportunity created by the Birmingham Eastside regeneration project and also appreciate the project will create a number of new homes. Having identified these factors from the resource a significant number of candidates then failed to develop their ideas by suggesting how they might improve conditions for local people. Those candidates that did offer some development generally made the point that the improvements would give an opportunity to learn more about science and consequently give an

opportunity for career opportunities and that some people might be able to move into a new home which would have up to date, modern facilities.

2(c)(iv) – It was clear that a significant number of candidates did not fully understand what was meant by the “physical environment” and consequently simply mentioned random parts of the regeneration project. Those candidates that did have an appreciation of what was meant by “physical environment” generally identified the parks and walkways as an environmental improvement. A significant number developed this point further by suggesting that the improvement to the “green environment” would create an opportunity for habitats to develop and encourage wildlife back into the area. A small number of candidates addressed the question by considering improvements to the built environment, often making thoughtful and perceptive points which brought in observations about the physical- human interface in relation to urban areas.

2(d)(i)(ii)(iii) – Ordnance Survey map reading skills were variable, with a significant number of candidates either making elementary mistakes or failing to attempt some, or all of these questions.

2(d)(iv) – The majority of candidates were able to offer reasonable suggestions about why people might want to live at Rackheath. In many cases candidates identified the advantages of either living in a semi-rural environment or made the point that Rackheath had the advantage of being in a semi-rural environment while also having good access to Norwich for employment. A small number of candidates simply identified random points from the map extract which may or may not have had any real relevance to the question.

2(e) – The majority of candidates used Figure 10 effectively to identify features that might be considered to be important if an urban area is going to become increasingly sustainable. The thrust of most responses tended to focus on environmental factors and did not always consider social factors. The main observations centred around the use of renewable energy, recycling and the public transport system. All of these were generally seen in relation to reducing air pollution rather than managing resources. A small number of candidates developed this theme by making observations about the long lasting nature of renewable energy or how reducing waste would reduce the future demand for raw materials. A number of candidates drifted into discussion about how the development of eco-towns would reduce the threat of climate change. This was clearly inappropriate in relation to the scale of the question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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