



GCSE

Geography B

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

9035
June 2015

Version: v0.1

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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 clearly 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, while 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) – The majority of candidates were able to address the idea of “multi-use”, either by offering a clear definition or implying a range of activities and supporting this by using different examples. A small number of candidates suggested that the coast is exclusively used for tourism and showed only limited understanding of the question.

1(a)(ii) – 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) – This question was generally not very effectively completed. The majority of candidates clearly understood the idea of environmental management, bringing in observations about the development of nature reserves and introducing the concept of zoning as a management policy. Unfortunately most candidates did not really get beyond this and failed to develop these ideas to fully address the question about how they actually work in order to protect areas from economic development. A small number of candidates did make this step, mentioning planning restrictions and regulations and bringing in points about how protection zones work in order to restrict the development of industry.

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) – It was clear that the majority of candidates had a sound understanding of the idea expressed in this question. Virtually all candidates identified rock type or structure as a fundamental influence on rates of erosion, in most cases identifying softer/harder rocks in order to develop the point. The second reason presented more of a challenge for some candidates. There were a number of suggestions, the more common being the influence of the strength of waves, the orientation of the coast and the extent to which the coast is protected against erosion.

1(d) – This question appeared to create no real difficulty to the majority of candidates. It was clear that the overwhelming majority of candidates had a good understanding of longshore drift and were able to use technical language to express their understanding.

1(e) – Candidates generally found this question challenging and did not always show a very clear understanding about the formation of the characteristics of the spit identified in Figure 3. Those that selected the “recurved end” usually showed some awareness of the formation, although a significant number simply described longshore drift with no reference to the change in direction of the spit. The formation of the mudflats and salt marsh were generally not explained with any real depth of understanding. Very few candidates brought in points about sheltered water, deposition or an understanding of the importance of tides.

1(f) – There were some excellent responses to this question. Virtually all candidates were able to name a wide range of hard engineering techniques and many went on to explain how they protect areas from the effects of storm waves. The quality of responses was largely dictated by the extent to which candidates were able to address the command “explain”. Those candidates who were able to name hard engineering methods and explain how they reduce wave energy comfortably achieved a Level two. Those candidates who took this a stage further by offering more detail, such as “curved sea walls throw the wave back towards the sea which reduces the energy of the next wave and also reduces overtopping of the sea wall”, moved into Level three.

1(g) – The majority of candidates used Figure 5 effectively to express an understanding of how managed retreat created areas of salt marsh, and how earth bunds were created in order to reduce risks of inland flooding. From that point responses varied. A small number developed the idea by considering how salt marsh created a natural barrier, but they did not always explain why. Consequently, many answers tended to reach Level two quite comfortably but did not offer sufficient detail in order to reach Level three. A small number of candidates became distracted by the idea of salt marsh and moved into a discussion about how salt marsh provides an excellent opportunity for the development of nature reserves.

Question 2: The Urban Environment

2(a)(i) – The majority of candidates used Figure 6 effectively to identify the relative population growth of Tokyo and Kolkata.

2(a)(ii) – 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) – Candidates appeared to be confused by the focus of the question which required them to consider why regeneration was required rather than what was actually done. A significant number of candidates made observation about “creating jobs” or “improving run down areas”. While these

ideas implied a need for regeneration, they did not fully address the question about how that need came about. Those candidates who started by considering points about industrial decline and the cycle of decline and then went on to identify evidence of decline such as rising unemployment and growing urban dereliction generally produced sound answers.

2(c)(iii) – The majority of candidates showed a good understanding of how urban regeneration schemes can create a range of opportunities. In most cases the major focus of responses was on economic development, with most candidates identifying business development and employment as a significant opportunity. A number of candidates went on to mention social and environmental opportunities created by regeneration. Those candidates who gave a clear indication that they understood the holistic nature of regeneration by considering a wide range of opportunities generally produced very effective answers.

2(d)(i)(ii) – Basic map reading skills were variable, with a significant number of candidates either making basic errors or failing to attempt one or both of these questions. The use of an Ordnance Survey map extract is a common feature of this examination paper so map reading and interpretation skills should be an integral part of any revision programme.

2(e)(i) – The idea of “location” was clearly not understood by a significant number of candidates. The question demanded use of map reading skills such as distance and direction to locate Rackheath in relation to other key features on the map. Those candidates who did appreciate what was required generally used Norwich (or Norwich airport) as a starting point and located Rackheath relative to it.

2(e)(ii) – The majority of candidates were able to identify two reasons why Rackheath was a good location for a new settlement. A number of candidates addressed the question from the perspective of a developer, considering availability of space and relatively flat land as key points. Other candidates addressed the question from the perspective of a house buyer, offering a range of reasons why Rackheath would be a good place to live. The key to answering this question successfully was the extent to which candidates turned a one mark answer into a two mark answer. Simply identifying an appropriate factor was generally worth one mark. In order to achieve the second mark some development or basic explanation was required.

2(f) – 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. At the highest level candidates offered sophisticated ideas about reducing the need for fossil fuels and moving towards an increasingly self-sufficient situation, which, in itself would move the area towards the idea of sustainability. The use of examples was variable and did not always offer very much development in relation to what had already been said. 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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