GCE AS Examiners' Report

Geology

AS Level

Summer 2026

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Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each component.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.[1]

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	Eduqas offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each component that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results and Grade Boundaries and PRS (eduqas.co.uk)

[1] ***Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.***

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Exam Results Analysis	Eduqas provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page.
Become an examiner with WJEC.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with valuable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Become an Examiner | Eduqas

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Executive Summary

The mean marks of both components in AS Geology were slightly lower than in 2025. As usual, a range of skills were tested including mapwork, the analysis of geological specimens, the interpretation of data and images, and graphical and mathematical skills. In addition, both components assessed the ability to describe, explain and evaluate and longer written communication.

Overall, candidates tended to lose marks due to a lack of clarity and candidates need to ensure they use key terminology and standard scientific terms to ensure they can fully answer a question. This was particularly relevant in Component 1 when candidates were expected to explain or provide detail for environmental conditions of rock formation i.e. the different pressure conditions for regional metamorphism compared to contact metamorphism, the reasons for transportation and erosion impacting grain size or how crystal size and cooling time can be related. In Component 2 candidates, on the whole, demonstrated a wide range and accurate use of geological terminology in their responses. In Component 2 Q4a there was evidence of a few candidates using contradictory terms such as equicrystalline and porphyritic in the same response - the latter negating the mark that would have been awarded for equicrystalline.

There were still many candidates who did not maximise their marks because of a lack of attention to command words or the wording of other aspects of questions. ‘Describing’ when asked to ‘explain’ was common issue for many candidates. This was particularly evident in Component 1 Q6. In Component 2, candidates needed to ‘Explain’ in some part of every question. Those candidates that were able to give reasons for the points they made in ‘Explain’ responses had access to the full range of the marks available. Similarly, with the command word ‘Evaluate’, those candidates who had a ‘however’ (or equivalent) comment demonstrated the best critical thinking and therefore the best marks. Candidates who applied phrases such as - most likely, could possibly, a general trend - were able to expand upon the points they had made, offering alternative suggestion(s) without negating their previous statement(s). This applied to all ‘Evaluate’ questions, not just those in QERs.

As with last year there remained too much inference rather than fully answering questions. There was also a tendency to repeat and reword the question rather than giving geological evidence to describe, explain or evaluate. This was particularly the case with the QER in Component 1 where a small minority of candidates rewrote the words of the question and agreed with the statements rather than using the evidence to explain why this was the case.

The best QER responses used the bullet points within the questions to structure their answers, logically and clearly presenting ideas. It is most pleasing to note that many candidates used the bullet points effectively.

Candidates often displayed significant attention in the mapwork and drawing questions, though scale did provide a challenge for many candidates this year. This was particularly apparent in Component 1 Q3 and the drawing of the ammonite.

In both components, mathematical questions were answered well as in previous years. It is clear the candidates possessed good mathematical understanding and graphical interpretation. In Component 2, nearly all candidates were accurate in their plotting of earthquake foci in Q3a(i) and the metamorphic aureole in Q5b(i), showing care and precision in their responses. However, explaining error and anomalies in Component 1 was less well understood.

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Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
Writing answers that respond to all the key information given in the stem of the question	Online exam review	Annotated samples of candidate responses which can be used to show good practice.
Writing answers that respond to all the key information in the stem of the question	GEOLOGY EXAM WALK THROUGHS	Presentations taking candidates step-by-step through exam papers, highlighting the requirements of exam questions
Recall of more complex topic areas	KNOWLEDGE ORGANISERS	A collection of knowledge organisers to support the learning of AS Geology.

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Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.
Tel: 029 2240 4253
Email: geology@eduqas.co.uk
Qualification webpage: AS and A Level Geology | Eduqas

See other useful contacts here: Useful Contacts | Eduqas

CPD Training / Professional Learning

Access our popular, free online CPD/PL courses to receive exam feedback and put questions to our subject team, and attend one of our face-to-face events, focused on enhancing teaching and learning, providing practical classroom ideas and developing understanding of marking and assessment.

Please find details for all our courses here: https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/

Regional Rep Team

Our regional team covers all areas of England and can provide face-to-face and online advice at a time which is convenient to you.

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We support our education communities by providing trusted qualifications and specialist support, to allow our students the opportunity to reach their full potential.

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