GCSE Examiners' Report

Geography B

GCSE

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 unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and component level. 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 examination papers in GCSE Eduqas B Geography were generally of a similar standard to the previous examination series. As is always the case, some questions were seen as more demanding in some topics and less demanding in others.

The Component 1 paper performed effectively overall, and some very encouraging answers were seen during the marking period. Two areas to improve that have been identified in previous series are still relevant here, however. Candidates must still develop their understanding of physical processes and landform formation, as demonstrated by this year's question on longshore drift. Many candidates are only able to describe the human impacts rather than demonstrate a knowledge of the processes themselves. They would benefit from practising drawing detailed labelled diagrams. There is also still a noticeable weakness in candidates' knowledge and understanding of small scale UK ecosystems, both in being able to name one correctly and then to be specific about the species that make up the ecosystem and how they fit into it. Both points for improvement have been noted in these reports before and are areas for centres and candidates to focus on in the future.

The Component 2 paper performed well in comparison to previous years, and many very well answered questions were seen, showing evidence that candidates have been practicing how to answers the style of questions encountered on this paper. It was expected however that candidates would welcome the opportunity to answer an AO1 question about the formation of a well-known landform, namely Aaii covering waterfall formation. The answers to this generally poor however and candidates should be reminded that questions like this can be asked in the Component 2 paper, alongside questions covering other AOs that demand the use of the resources in the folder. In Part C, there is an encouraging trend away from copying out resources verbatim from the Resource Folder and towards answers with more recall, application of knowledge and careful use of the resources to back up key arguments. This has been a focus of improvement highlighted in previous reports and it is very good to see candidates writing excellent answers, covering all aspects of sustainability and using the resources to their full advantage, to access the higher bands and marks on the final key 12-mark question in the paper.

The Component 3 paper was well answered overall and students scored well on many of the AO4 skills questions for example. There are still weaknesses in the fieldwork questions, however, and as outlined in previous years, candidates must refer specifically to their own fieldwork when answering these questions. Linked specifically to this paper, misconceptions over qualitative and quantitative data and sampling techniques and data collection methods are still being seen and are areas for candidates to focus on in future.

After their successful introduction last Autumn, Eduqas will again be publishing a booklet of annotated exemplars for each of the Eduqas B GCSE Geography Components, showing a range of example questions with strong and weak points and where marks were gained and lost clearly highlighted on each one. This will complement the online exam feedback CPD session in October 2026 and are a much easier and more user-friendly way of finding and using good quality exam questions for classroom practice and revision than the previous Online Exam Review (OER) system that has now been discontinued. Centres are also referred to the Eduqas Geography B website (GCSE B Geography | Eduqas) where fieldwork topics and guidance documents are now available for all topics up to 2030, Geog Shot revision documents aimed at each AO can be found and past papers & mark schemes, blended learning resources, previous examiners reports and more are all available to download.

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GEOGRAPHY

GCSE

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COMPONENT 1: INVESTIGATING GEOGRAPHICAL ISSUES.

Overview of the Component

Component 1 assesses all four Assessment Objectives, with equal weighting for each AO in all three compulsory questions.

The demand of the paper was comparable to those of previous years, and the overall performance indicates that there were few issues with time management.

Question 1 was based on Key Ideas 1.2 and 1.3, covering the topics of major sporting events, UK trade patterns and finally long and short-term development aid.

Question 2 had a focus on Key Ideas 2.1 and 2.3, exploring UK climate, the impacts of tropical storms and coastal processes and landforms, concluding with an analysis of coastal management plans.

Question 3 examined Key Ideas 3.2 and 3.4, through items on desertification and human activities, and sustainability issues. The last section focussed on UK small-scale ecosystems and conservation projects.

The following areas were answered well:

- Definitions of key terms to do with trade
- Interpretation of maps and diagrams
- Calculation of percentages
- A marked improvement in the use of linked points as chains of reasoning in extended writing questions, although some are still at a basic level of detail
- Connections between the UK and other countries

The following areas need to be improved:

- Understanding of factors affecting UK climate
- Detailed and specific knowledge of chosen examples, especially with reference to LIC countries
- Appreciating the difference between short term and long-term aid
- Indicating how a diagram could be improved, rather than suggesting an alternative type
- Only referring to the information given on maps/diagrams and not prior knowledge

Comments on individual questions/sections

Q.1 (a) (i) Most candidates were able to identify two locational points about the venues for the Women's Rugby World Cup. Although some merely listed the cities rather than look for patterns.

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(a) (ii) There were some very good reasons given, such as increased traffic or the amount of litter, but many failed to elaborate on how that would influence the area. 'Overcrowding' was a popular reason, but it had to be made relevant to the local area e.g. overcrowding on public transport could make travelling to work more difficult for locals. There were also many generic references to 'pollution', without being specific as to whether they were referring to air, noise or litter pollution.

(b) (i) A high scoring item which required the completion of a diagram showing terms to do with trade.

(ii) This straightforward question required the identification of three correct statements about the diagram showing the Top 20 UK Export Markets. A large number achieved full marks, although a few incorrectly thought that half as many goods and services were exported to Switzerland than to Italy.

(iii) This was one of the worst performing questions on the paper. A very high percentage did not answer it correctly and just suggested an alternative form of diagram, with pie chart and bar graph being the most popular. Neither of these are ways to improve Fig 1.2 and scored zero marks. For one mark, it only required a simple suggestion such as adding a key, or a scale for the circles. Some correct responses also suggested using a colour coded system for each continent to improve clarity.

(iv) The calculation of the imports to the UK from three named countries was high scoring. The correct figures had to be shown for the working mark to be awarded.

(v) The concept of the value of connections between the UK and other countries was quite well understood. The four mark AO2 question produced some good responses, exhibiting sound geographical reasoning. Unsurprisingly, the most popular answer referred to the importance of having allies in times of conflict or natural disaster. There were also very good references to the idea of increasing cultural diversity which promoted better understanding and integration into local communities. Others referred to the importance of keeping up to date with technology and the value of shared ideas and research.

(c) (i) A very high percentage of candidates were able to correctly identify the definition of the term NGO.

(ii) Some excellent responses showed detailed and specific knowledge of short-term emergency aid provided in such situations as Typhoon Haiyan/Cyclone Idai, the Ebola outbreak and Bangladesh floods. However, many candidates just described the aid given, which although specific, did not focus enough on the advantages that aid brought. This could be helicopters being used to rescue people trapped by floods, or the Red Cross providing sanitation stations and vaccines to contain a cholera outbreak, which prevented further deaths.

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Disappointingly, there were still far too many generic and simplistic responses such as 'they sent food and water'. To reach Band 2, specific information was required, such as names of organisations and figures. There were also many descriptions of housing projects in Mumbai and Water Aid projects providing wells – these could not be credited as they are long-term development aid.

(d) In general, this eight mark AO3 question was answered quite well, and many candidates were able to access the higher bands of the mark scheme. The resources provided showed examples of local (bottom up) and government (top down) development aid projects in LIC's. Responses needed to discuss the relative merits of both types of projects in order to decide their level of agreement or disagreement with the statement in the question. It also provided the opportunity for candidates to use other examples they had studied. To reach Band 3, there needed to be elaboration of key points through chains of reasoning which link together a series of elaborations. Although there has been a very positive improvement in the use of chains, many are still at a very basic level and were little more than simple elaborated statements, without a discussion of higher level implications. Some candidates tried to discuss all the examples given in detail, which resulted in a lengthy response which merely repeated the same points multiple times. Taking one or two of each type as illustrative examples and then developing these would have produced a higher-level response.

Q.2 (a) (i) A high proportion of responses scored well on this AO4 skills question requiring the description of changing rainfall patterns along an X-Y line west to east across Britain. Most were able to use figures accurately from the key, and identify changes. However, a significant number did not respond in terms of the X-Y line and used the names of areas they knew such as Wales and East Anglia. This could not be given credit and the command words of the question clearly required only the use of information on Fig 2.1, A minority described the pattern of rainfall of the whole of the UK and consequently scored very few, if any, marks.

(ii) The completion of the diagram showing how altitude affects rainfall patterns using letter from a box, was generally high scoring, with few making errors.

(iii) There was considerable lack of understanding about the effect the sea has on winter temperatures in the UK. Most incorrectly thought that it would be colder by the sea because cold winds affect the coast more in winter. Some discussed rainfall/wind/altitude rather than temperature. Consequently, this question was very low scoring and only a small number correctly said that in winter temperatures at the coast were warmer than inland because the sea takes longer to cool down than the land.

(iv) A very high scoring simple question identifying the mode of a data set.

(v) Most candidates were able to correctly identify 'the middle value' as the definition of the term 'median'.

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(b) (i) This question about why temperatures are hotter at the Equator than the Poles was very poorly answered, and many candidates achieved zero marks. Very few understood the concept that it is the curvature of the earth that causes the suns rays to be more concentrated at the Equator.

(ii) The analysis of a graph showing the seasonal frequency of hurricanes was answered quite well. Some chose to refer to specific months such as 'none between December and May', while others used more generalised references to seasons such as 'most occur in late summer and autumn'. Both approaches were perfectly acceptable, although no credit was given for just listing months and number of hurricanes. Several candidates tried to explain reasons for this pattern, which was not required, but it was pleasing to see the improvement in the analysis of graphs.

(iii) Many candidates referred to the fact that for a hurricane/cyclone to form, the sea temperature needs to be at least 26.5°C/27°C. A reference to just 'low pressure' was not allowed and needed to be qualified with the word 'extreme'. Although high scoring there were many generic references to such features as 'warm air', 'strong winds' and 'heavy rain', which could not be given credit. This was an AO1 question and required specific factual content.

(iv) There were some very good responses to this question about long term impacts of a hurricane/cyclone. It was an AO2 question, so did not require factual knowledge of a specific example. To gain the full four marks, responses needed to refer to two different impacts, each with an elaboration. References to just 'buildings collapse' were only allowed once and there were many references to people losing homes and damage to infrastructure, with elaborations mostly quoting the high costs of repair. Some of the best answers referred to the need to improve flood defences in order to protect people in the future. As with Q1cii, there were some candidates who did not understand the difference between short-term and long-term impacts and wrote about the immediate difficulties of getting to work/school, or needing emergency food and water supplies.

(c) A very mixed response to this AO1 question requiring candidates to describe the process of longshore drift. There were some really excellent attempts at labelled diagrams to show the process, which could achieve full marks on their own. Essentially, credit was given for the understanding that the waves are influenced by the prevailing wind direction, and that swash carries sediment up the beach at an oblique angle, while the returning backwash carries it back down the beach at a 90-degree angle, by gravity, thus moving sediment along the coast in a zig zag pattern. Common mistakes were to get swash and backwash the wrong way round, or put arrows showing a zig zag movement of sediment in the sea, rather than on the land/beach. Some did not put any labels at all on a diagram and there were many confused descriptions of types of erosion process and even how caves and stacks form. Sadly, a high percentage did not even attempt this question.

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(d) The final AO3 section of this question involved the use of a set of resources about the Walton-on-the-Naze area of the Essex coast. The command words of the question required candidates to analyse the reasons for the different management policies with reference to the resources. A high percentage of candidates were able to achieve at least Band 2 through simply taking each of the three strategies in turn, discussing the reasons for the differences. Generally, candidates were able to discuss 'hold the line' better than the other two policies. To get into the top band, there needed to be clear references to specific features from the resources to support their chains of reasoning, such as named features like the sewage works, housing, pier and holiday park. Sadly, some of the resources were underused, with many just focussing on the different rates of erosion, although these were quoted to good effect in many responses. A few of the weaker responses just copied the policy descriptions from Fig 2.8 which could not be given credit. The importance of reading the question carefully needs to be emphasised, as some candidates wrote detailed descriptions of coastal management policies in other parts of the UK and even the different types of hard and soft engineering, which were not required in this question, where the focus was entirely on this one stretch of coastline,

Q.3 (a) (i) A straightforward AO1 question, requiring the correct definition of the term desertification, and was high scoring.

(ii) Many candidates were able to name a physical factor affecting evapotranspiration rates. The most common answers were temperature, humidity and type of vegetation. A common misconception was 'rainfall' and there were several incorrect examples of human factors such as deforestation and burning fossil fuels or vague references to climate change.

(iii) Another high scoring AO4 question which required the identification of true/false statements from a graph showing global average temperature changes.

(b) (i) This AO2 question was designed to enable candidates to demonstrate their understanding of how human activities are a cause of desertification. It was a six-mark banded question, and therefore required a detailed response. More than one activity needed to be discussed in order to reach Band 3, with at least one chain of reasoning. An example would be 'Cutting down trees leads to increased soil erosion as more splash erosion from heavy rain removes organic matter from the soil'. Candidates' knowledge of this topic was generally good, and many achieved Band 2 through excellent descriptions of overgrazing and deforestation, although they did not transfer simple statements into more detailed chains in order to reach the top band. However, a substantial number discussed greenhouse gases/climate change in a generic way, which not link specifically to desertification in hot semi-arid areas, and therefore could not be credited. There is still a common misconception that global warming is a human activity in itself, instead of the result of named activities.

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(ii) Linked to the previous question, candidates were required to describe one local strategy used to reduce desertification. It was an AO1 question, requiring specific descriptive statements. Responses were of varying quality, with some excellent descriptions of drip irrigation, magic stones and sand dams, but also some vague points such as 'plant more crops' or 'use less water' which were too generic to be awarded marks.

(c) (i) The ability to correctly abstract information from a map was demonstrated by many candidates in this question about the location of the Great Green Wall. Again, candidates need to be reminded to only use the information shown on the map, and not their own knowledge, such as references to the Sahel region. A few restricted themselves to a single mark by just listing the countries it goes through instead of identifying a more geographical pattern, such as 'It extends from west to east across northern Africa', which would have gained full marks.

(ii) The completion of the pie chart was high performing, although candidates need to be aware that their shading needs to match that of the key i.e. the diagonal lines need to be in the correct direction. The number of non-attempt instances was lower for this type of question than in previous years.

(iii) Candidates did not perform well in this AO2 question requiring one reason why projects like the Great Green Wall are sustainable. Although they seem to have a good understanding of the concept of sustainability, a very large number simply wrote a definition of the term, or make generic statements such as 'it will last a long time' or 'does not damage the environment'. These did not relate specifically to a project. The best responses referred to the planting of trees means habitats are increased and therefore biodiversity, or that trees capture carbon and therefore reduce the impact of climate change.

(d) (i) As in previous years, the topic of a small-scale UK ecosystem proved challenging to many candidates, and there was a high percentage of non-attempts. Considerable flexibility was allowed in terms of a name – it could be a small forest such as Epping Forest, or sand dunes like Ynyslas, or even quite generic such as a pond. However, no name or an incorrect name such as tropical rainforest or a National Park such as the Lake District were not given credit. There had to be a reasonable attempt to actually identify something that was specific to that ecosystem, such as marram grass or oak tree for the producer, and a rabbit, deer, owl, fox, squirrel etc for the consumer. Vague references to just 'plant' or 'bird' were not acceptable responses.

(ii) The final AO3 application section was broken down into two parts this year. The first four-mark question related to the benefits of small-scale ecosystems to local communities. They did not have to name examples, and many made excellent reference to the given resources which showed sand dunes and a park. The emphasis needed to be on benefits such as opportunities for recreation, health or educating people about the environment. Economic benefits such as tourism leading to local jobs, were also a popular response.

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(iii) The second AO3 banded four-mark question asked candidates to assess the value of conservation projects such as the Gorilla Programme shown in a photo. Although the majority utilised this resource, there were also some interesting examples of other projects they had studied, such as rhinos or coral reefs. Many candidates were able to achieve at least half marks through references to the value of maintaining biodiversity and protecting endangered species.

Summary of Key Points

- As reported previously, there is still a need for candidates to develop their understanding of physical processes and landform formation, as demonstrated by this year's question on longshore drift. Many candidates are only able to describe the human impacts rather than demonstrate a knowledge of the processes themselves. They would benefit from practising drawing detailed labelled diagrams.
- There will always be AO1 questions, asked across all three themes, which require detailed and specific knowledge. When learning case studies/ examples, even just a few relevant facts such as named schemes, statistics or even specific locations, would enable a much greater proportion of candidates to access higher bands of the mark scheme.
- Although it is really encouraging to see that candidates are understanding the need to extend their analytical skills through chains of reasoning in higher tariff questions, these need to be more than a basic link. These simple points need to be developed in order to show a high level of understanding of the topic being discussed.
- In AO3 questions, the resources provided are designed to give initial guidance as to the nature of the issue. These resources are often underused, and many weaker candidates simply copy the information in them, which will never generate marks unless they are able to use it to develop a key point. This was particularly evident in Q2d this year, where the entire question was resource based. Although candidates made oblique references to having looked at the map, the use of grid references, or named features would have been better. Quoting figures from the rates of erosion diagram and relating them to the different SMP sections resulted in candidates immediately accessing higher marks.
- This Component 1 paper was of comparable standard to previous examinations and was generally accessible to the full range of candidates. Effective differentiation was achieved through a balance of short and extended writing questions.

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COMPONENT 2: PROBLEM SOLVING GEOGRAPHY

Overview of the Component

This paper explored the demands and consequences of development around Victoria Falls in Zambia, a Low Income Country. The paper asked candidates to interpret the context and respond to several of the issues and some of their potential solutions.

After establishing some basic features of the Falls and its river, the questions turned to the level of development around the Falls and in Zambia more widely. Section B focused on the use of the Zambezi River and its immediate area, its level of development and potential pathways to raise that level. Part C asked candidates to provide a piece of extended writing, which was marked for geographical understanding and spelling, punctuation, and grammar, to justify their choice of three schemes to benefit the people of Zambia.

The paper performed to offer access to all while offering candidates access to the full range of marks. It assessed Assessment Objectives in line with the Specification (i.e. 5% AO1, 10% AO2, 10% AO3, 5% AO4).

Performance was broadly consistent with the previous series, though candidates demonstrated stronger proficiency in AO1 and AO4 skills compared to 2025.

Candidates generally did well on almost all questions and particularly well on skills (AO4) tasks. In particular, candidates excelled on climate change, ecosystems, and development knowledge and skills based questions. The least well answered questions tended to be longer answers that addressed more abstract concepts such as uneven development or the use of key statistics. Candidates had enough time to answer the paper in full.

Comments on individual questions/sections

A (a) (i) Many candidates were very able to describe the location of Victoria Falls despite the relative complexity of it being on a border. A small number did not access all the marks because their answers confused direction or offered too vague a location e.g. north of the Tropic of Capricorn or Southwest of Tanzania.

(ii) It was anticipated that candidates would find a question about well-known processes relatively accessible. Although many candidates were able to describe the formation of a waterfall in detail there was a large variation between centres and candidates. Indeed, by some measures it was the least well answered question. The very best combined detailed prose with diagrams that explained where specific processes were occurring. The weakest candidates were particularly unable to describe the start of the process or to use technical terms to extend their demonstration of understanding. A noticeable minority wrote of headlands, bays, stacks, and the like.

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(iii) A surprising number of candidates confused the direction of the river, having it flowing from sea to land. Otherwise, many could demonstrate that they understood the concept of a river's course and so they described the source, the mouth, and the route it took to good effect.

(b) Several students were unable to access the marks available from "Use figures in your answer" because of their use of the terms nearly, about, and around. The mark scheme offered wide tolerances on all the figures but did not recognise the validity of over 6000 m3/s, for example. Students were often unable to communicate that there were two peaks in 2023 compared to one in 1977. A striking omission from many was a description of the overall trend: i.e. "it has gone down". Many candidates took time to describe similarities rather than the differences requested. Some, however, relied too much on a prepared structure of how to describe a graph, perhaps this is why so many spent time on the similarities when the differences were asked for.

(c) (i) Most candidates were able to access most of the marks in the question that required an understanding of number relative to others.

(ii) There was a wide range of understanding of why development data can be used to understand variation. Weaker candidates tended to suggest how it could be used to target aid or similar. Better candidates knew that the data's empirical nature allowed it to be compared from place to place and that data could be used to infer other aspects of the complex concept of development. Candidates who framed their discussion using a definition of development did particularly well.

(d) (i) The challenge of producing a ratio proved beyond some students who were either unable to read the pie chart accurately or misunderstood the concept of ratio.

(ii) Most candidates were able to recount the problems associated with MNC involvement in low income countries.

B (a) (i) Almost every candidate was able to access at least some of the credit available by demonstrating their knowledge of the consequences of climate change.

(ii) Many candidates could reason as to why abstraction can have positive effects on a variety of distinct groups of people.

(b) Candidates found it difficult to communicate why being downstream on a transnational river could be a disadvantage. The very best responses were a credit to their centre. They were characterised by extended reasoning over several phases and, in some cases, high quality recall of examples that has been learnt during the past two years. This was a question that allowed the most able to demonstrate their high level understanding of a concept and its use in a relation to a place.

(c) (i) Most candidates were able to describe how biodiversity was the variety of species in an area although some did get muddled with ecosystems. Some confused amount with variety and a few others tried to bring biomass into their answer.

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(ii) This question was well answered. Candidates offered several reasons why producers are vital and generally proffered explanations that demonstrated their understanding.

(iii) The responses for this question were generally well done. The majority identified key concepts such as balance in the ecosystem. Some candidates attempted to describe a boom bust cycle, but few were successful in this.

(d) A lot of candidates were able to write at length to apply their knowledge of trade to this particular aspect of development. Some did not focus their answer on the implications for the poorest people instead getting distracted by the effects of government. A few candidates were able to use their knowledge of Fair Trade in their answer to good effect. Weaker candidates misunderstood the concept of trade and focused on barter style advantages. The ability of candidates to fit their knowledge to a particular group of people in a specific context was impressive.

(e) (i) The most common hurdle for candidates was a misunderstanding of the term factor in the question. Many candidates wrote about the consequences of honeypot sites or defined the concept of honey pots e.g. it attracts lots of tourists.

(ii) A question that asked for an extended answer to explain the consequences of tourism was well answered with candidates scoring well. Candidates who were able to offer extended chains of reason did particularly well.

(iii) Candidates often failed to clearly articulate their understanding of the interdependence between economic and environmental issues in a honey pot site. Candidates who relied on quoting the Resource Folder tended to do less well than those who wrote elaborated and balanced reasonings about the perils of placing either economic or environmental sensitivity over the other. The best responses were characterised by candidates identifying that people needed economic benefits but if they came at too high an environmental cost then any prospect of development would be lost. It was pleasing to see centres had taken on some of the advice from last year's feedback and had taught their candidates a simple definition of development.

Several candidates took the time to rewrite the question in the first three lines of their answer. While this can be seen as a way to kickstart the writing process it contributed nothing to the answer's mark and in some cases appeared to limit the time the candidate had to write creditable statements.

(f) (i) The opportunity to demonstrate knowledge of the consequences of uneven development worked well to differentiate candidates with most scoring well.

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(ii) This question polarised candidates' responses. Many were able to write at length about the problems that might occur because of uneven development. Although some did confuse the city of Livingstone with a rural area, a great many candidates explained impacts such as migration, brain drains, urbanisation, and informal housing.

However, a significant number of candidates did not address the question, instead they simply compared the two data sets. Candidates should take the relatively high tariff as a signal that more would be required.

Part C

Candidates were asked to choose three schemes, from seven potential choices, to offer a holistic plan to improve the lives of the people living around Victoria Falls. The format of the decision making exercise changes a little each cycle to keep the examination novel and unpredictable.

The policy of slimming down the Resources has allowed candidates to be less tempted to lift verbatim from the Folder and instead encouraged more recall and application of their knowledge. Candidates generally answered well with the average score higher than previous years.

Many candidates submitted answers that covered all three categories of geography (Social, Economic and Environmental) with simple justifications. Less common was the ability to demonstrate how the chosen schemes worked together. Candidates frequently restricted their mark by not referencing the time frame of their solution and so missing out on the inference of sustainability.

As ever there were candidates who dazzled with their ability to weave all these complex strands together into a coherent argument that cogently discussed the interdependence between, as well as the drawbacks of, their solution.

Summary of Key Points

- Candidates generally did well on almost all questions and particularly well on skills (AO4) tasks. In particular, candidates excelled on climate change, ecosystems, and development knowledge and skills based questions.
- The least well answered questions tended to be longer answers that addressed more abstract concepts such as uneven development or the use of key statistics.
- Answers to Question Aaii were the most surprising on the paper as it was expected that candidates would welcome the opportunity to write in an AO1 question about the formation of a well known landform. The answers were generally poor however and candidates should be reminded that questions like this can be asked in the Component 2 paper, alongside questions that demand the use of the resources in the folder.
- It has been noted that in some answers, many candidates take time to rewrite the question in the first few lines of their answer. While this can be seen to kickstart the writing process it contributes nothing to the answer's mark and in some cases limits the time the candidates have to write creditable statements.
- In Part C, there is an encouraging trend away from copying out resources verbatim from the Resource Folder and towards answers with more recall, application of knowledge and careful use of the resources to back up key arguments.

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COMPONENT 3: APPLIED FIELDWORK ENQUIRY

Overview of the Component

In Part A candidates were asked to investigate the use of qualitative surveys in fieldwork. In Part B candidates were asked to investigate cycles and flows in fieldwork. In Part C candidates were asked to apply their understanding of UK geography to issues surrounding water stress in the UK.

The Assessment Objectives are as outlined in the specification.

The content assessed in Part A consisted of AO3 & AO4 fieldwork questions on urban land use changes and redevelopment in Kelham island, an area in central Sheffield. Part B assessed AO3 & AO4 fieldwork questions on visitor cycles and flows in the Lake District. Part C assessed all assessment objectives with questions focused on water supply and demand in the UK.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Part A: Investigating the use of qualitative surveys in fieldwork

Q.1 (a) The first question asked candidates to describe the location of an area in the centre of Sheffield using an OS map extract. It was answered well in the main although candidates should be encouraged to use a variety of methods (e.g. grid reference, distance and/or direction from another location) when describing location if more than 1 mark is on offer.

(b) (i) Candidates were asked to compare two street maps and identify two changes. Most gave accurate although relatively generic changes. When given two sources, candidates would do well to identify which source, in this case Map 1.2 or Map 1.3, they are referring to when making comparisons.

(ii) This question was answered well by most candidates with all three areas being correctly identified on the photograph.

(iii) Another question answered well by candidates with many achieving both marks by giving both a reason and why that might make a photo like the one in the paper unreliable as evidence. Most answers revolved around the idea of photographs being a ‘snapshot’ in time, focussing in on only a small area or being in some way biased.

(c) (i) Many candidates found this question quite challenging and often made the same point twice so only achieved 1 mark. Others failed to focus on the advantage of asking local people specifically.

(ii) This was attempted by most candidates, and most were able to give a disadvantage of this method of data presentation. Many focussed on lack of information relevant to the context of the data presented.

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(d) Although most candidates attempted this question many gave very descriptive answers which simply described what they did rather than evaluating their success thus limiting the marks awarded to them. Relatively few failed to refer to qualitative surveys and instead wrote about quantitative data. The best candidates were able to share their strength and weaknesses with specific reference to their own examples such as advantages of specific open and closed questions on their questionnaires or references to specific bias on environmental surveys. The mean mark of 1.9/6 shows that there is still a lot of improvement to be made in the dedicated fieldwork answers, and that specific reference to the candidates' own fieldwork is still vital to achieving high marks in these answers.

Part B: Investigating Cycles and Flows

Q.2 (a) Most candidates were able to tick the correct two statements in the table.

(b) (i) This question was answered very well with most candidates able to extract the correct data from the information sheet.

(ii) Successful candidates referred to the dates as the table contained fluctuating data. Unfortunately, some candidates failed to realise the table contained different data ranges and so gave generic statements that were not correct for the table overall.

(iii) Candidates were given a photograph and asked to suggest advantages and disadvantages of choosing this area to collect data. The highest scoring candidates referred to what they could see in the photograph and elaborated on the strengths and weaknesses of that area and how it would impact on data collection.

(c) (i) This question asked candidates to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of sampling techniques they used in their own fieldwork. Many candidates failed to refer to any sampling technique and instead gave a description of their data collection method. Other candidates are still confusing random sampling with opportunistic or giving generic strengths and weaknesses such as 'we could cover the whole area' or 'we might miss significant data' which, whilst creditworthy, need more specific reference to their own fieldwork for the higher marks. The mean mark of 0.9/4 reflects this and mirrors the comments for Q1d.

(ii) Many candidates were able to explain why flows needed to be measured more than once giving clear explanations and elaborating for the second mark. Answers tended to refer to flows changing by time or place or to increased number of measurements making data more reliable and therefore valid conclusions could be drawn.

Part C: The wider UK dimension

Q.3 (a) (i) Candidates were asked to identify choropleth shading, but few candidates successfully managed this. The facility factor for this question was 27.2 and the mean mark 0.3/1.

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(ii) The second part of Q3a asked candidates to use the same choropleth map and decide whether 3 statements were true or false. Most candidates were able to read data from the choropleth map successfully, with a facility factor of 92.7 and a mean mark of 2.8/3 this suggests many more candidates can successfully read a choropleth map without knowing exactly what to call it.

(b) Whilst many candidates were able to link a HIC's wealth to water consumption, some candidates referred to population size rather than wealth and levels of development.

(c) Candidates who answered this question well were able to link together chains of reasoning showing how high levels of water consumption leads to more abstraction, resulting in fewer stores and an inability to recover sufficiently. Thus, creating water stress where supply cannot meet demand.

(d) (i) Whilst most candidates completed this question some failed to correctly shade the segments using the key.

(ii) Successful candidates could refer to either continuous or discrete data depending on whether they were referring to what a line graph was or wasn't used for.

(iii) Alternative graphs that could be used for this data were identified accurately by most candidates.

(e) Relatively few candidates managed full marks on this question. Some focussed wholly on describing specific locations whilst others repeated ideas or used locational skills inaccurately.

(f) Whilst most candidates scored on this question, many were kept in the lower band due to basic or one-sided points, giving a mean mark of 3/6 overall. The most successful candidates gave conflicting views and elaborated by referring to the reasons behind this conflict using specific viewpoints.

(g) The same attempt rate of 91.7% and a very similar facility factor (just under 50%) than in 2025 suggest that candidates, although answering the final question, still find it challenging to do well on.

This year candidates were given two 'solutions' to water security in the UK; these were water conservation and water transfer schemes.

Many candidates were able to talk about both strategies, and some could give both strengths and weaknesses of them. The most successful candidates compared these strengths and weaknesses and were able to evaluate which was better with reference to sustainability. Many candidates who referred to sustainability talked about different aspects such as economic sustainability as well as environmental. This is a pleasing link to the 12 mark question in Eduqas B2, where similar trends have been noticed.

There were a pleasing number of candidates referring to and quoting information from both the paper and resource folder although some used the information to back up their evaluations better than others.

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Summary of Key Points

- Candidates should use a variety of map skills in skills questions worth more than one mark.
- Candidates should refer to specifically to resources e.g. dates, figures, when using them to come to conclusions or describing differences.
- For fieldwork questions, candidates should not simply describe ‘what we did’ but evaluate successes and/or weaknesses. Candidates should always refer to their specific experiences of their fieldwork day(s).
- Candidates should still aim to cover both sides of any argument given and consider reasons for viewpoints from all perspectives when asked to do so. Q3f asked for an explanation of conflicting views over reservoir building in the UK, which saw answers that were too often one-sided and not a balanced explanation of all views.
- Although 3g shows more candidates referring to the resource folder, this information needs to be used in a way that enriches the candidates answer rather than simply being lifted and stated in the text.

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