



GCSE Examiners' Report

Geography A
GCSE
Summer 2024

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.edugas.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 (edugas.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.

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.edugas.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

Contents

	Page
Executive summary	5
Component 1: Changing physical and human landscapes	7
Component 2: Environmental and Development Issues	12
C111U30-1 and C112U30-1 – Applied Fieldwork Enquiry	20
Supporting you – useful contacts and links	25

Executive Summary

The examination papers in Eduqas A GCSE 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 12-mark answers in Components 2 and 3 proved good differentiators in performance, as did the longer answer questions in Component 1.

Some very strong AO1 knowledge was demonstrated across the Components, however there are still areas of the specification that are still not well understood, and these are addressed in the improvements table below. Success in many of the AO3 high tariff questions relies on good evaluative skills when considering arguments, but key subject knowledge is required as well e.g. of knowing how sustainable rural communities can be created in the UK, if high quality evaluation of these schemes is to be seen. There is advice on how to ensure enough emphasis is put on the evaluation command word in the Component 2 section of this report.

AO4 skills questions were generally done well, although the use of OS maps, a common factor in Eduqas GCSE papers, is still a weakness for some candidates, for example a weakness in the use of 6-figure grid references was seen on Components 1 and 3 this year. AO2 questions with banded 4 or 6-mark answers are still proving challenging for some candidates where fully developed and detailed chains of reasoning are needed to gain the highest marks. Candidates are still inclined to lift material directly from paper resources and insert it into their answer, rather than use this information to develop the chains of reasoning that are so important for the top band answers.

In terms of options, in Component 1 Optional Theme 3 Tectonics was more popular, and in Component 2 Option Theme 7 Social Development was more popular, both by close to a 3:2 answer ratio overall.

A key point to note from Component 3 is that candidates are still struggling to write specifically about their own fieldwork and many still do not reference it at all in their answers in Parts A and B. General answers here do not give the required detail on aspects of fieldwork like accuracy, identifying the difference between primary and secondary data and specific data presentation and analysis methods that may have been used. This makes evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of candidates own fieldwork very difficult and leads to continued low performance in the four specific fieldwork questions.

Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
AO1 knowledge of certain areas of the specification e.g. factors affecting birth rates, water cycles in rainforests, microclimates and regional inequality in the UK.	Eduqas Digital Educational Resources	Blended learning resources and knowledge organisers aimed at the whole Eduqas A specification, covering these topics and more.

Ensuring high quality answers to AO2 questions, especially those banded at 4 or 6 marks.	https://www.edugas.co.uk/media/pdmjlxfi/geogshots-ao2.pptx	Geog Shot slides outlining how to write high quality AO2 answers. All Geog Shots produced by Fiona Rennie, GCSE Geography Subject Adviser.
Specific reference to, and discussion of, candidates' own fieldwork in Component 3 Parts A and B fieldwork questions.	GCSE A Geography Edugas Edugas Digital Educational Resources	Key Documents Fieldwork Guidance section on the Edugas A GCSE Geography website has specific presentations on fieldwork topics for current Year 11 (Geographical Flows & Sustainability, 2025) and incoming Year 10 (Qualitative Surveys & Cycles & Flows, 2026). Three blended learning resources also cover accuracy, reliability and validity in fieldwork, approaching fieldwork in the classroom and developing more effective fieldwork investigations.
Map skills, where the interpretation of OS and other maps is required e.g. grid references, scale, direction & specific information from maps.	Resource (edugas.co.uk) https://www.edugas.co.uk/media/1wlbrct2/geogshots-map-skills.pptx	Edugas digital resource covering interactive mapping, mathematical & statistical skills questions across the whole of Spec A. Links to other specific maths resources also found here. Map skills Geog Shot has specific examples and a link to the digital resource above.
How to answer high tariff AO3 questions, where evaluation is required, and judgements must be made (e.g. how far do you agree?)	https://www.edugas.co.uk/media/cjhnn0jy/geogshots-ao3.pptx https://www.edugas.co.uk/media/5vvjif0m/geogshots-edugas-discuss-assess-to-what-extent.pptx	Two focussed Geog Shots with general advice on AO3 answers and a separate focus on 'discuss, assess & to what extent' answers.
All above points covered by previous Online Exam Review (OER) resources.	Home Page EDUQAS OER Website	Specific annotated answers showing good practice from previous series papers.

GEOGRAPHY

GCSE

Summer 2024

COMPONENT 1: CHANGING PHYSICAL AND HUMAN LANDSCAPES

Overview of the Component

It was encouraging to see that most of the questions were accessible to candidates across the whole ability range. The wide range of marks indicates that differentiation was achieved within individual questions and in all sections of the paper. The time available for completion was also appropriate and evidence was seen of a range of high-quality scripts from several different centres.

As in previous years the last question in Core Theme 2 was used to assess spelling, punctuation and the accurate use of grammar and specialist terms (SPaG). Most of the candidates are again achieving at least the Intermediate Band (2/3 marks).

The illegible handwriting of some candidates, however, remains a concern. This can adversely affect candidate performance in the examination.

Most of the following questions were well answered overall:

- The AO1 knowledge focused questions including 1(c)(i), 1(c)(ii), 2(a)(ii), 2(a)(iii) 3(a)(ii) and 4(a)(ii). Two exceptions were questions 2 (a)(iii) and 2(b)(iii).
- The AO4 skills-based questions except for 1(b)(ii) and 1b(iii) and 2(b)(ii).
- Question 2(a)(ii).

Some of the candidates found certain questions more challenging:

- AO2 questions which had banded mark schemes and allocated 4 or 6 marks. These included 1(a)(iii), 1(b)(iv), 2(c)(iv) and 4(b).
- The 8-mark AO3 question which focused on strategies to create more sustainable rural communities.
- Two of the AO4 skills questions. In 1(b)(ii) some candidates did not cope with a six-figure grid reference. In 1(b)(iii) candidates had to look very carefully at the map to glean the necessary evidence.

On the other hand:

- Many candidates seemed to cope much better with the other three AO3 8-mark questions which were 1(e), 3(c) and 4(c).

Comments on individual questions/sections

Core Theme 1: Landscapes and Physical Processes

- Q.1**
- (a)**
- (i)** Most candidates were able to correctly name one store of water shown on the diagram.
 - (ii)** Unfortunately, a fair proportion of candidates failed to complete the diagram whilst others simply circled two of the processes in the list provided which resulted in zero marks.
 - (iii)** Responses to this question were encouraging as many candidates understood the relationship between infiltration and overland flow (surface runoff). They correctly noted that high rates of infiltration results in less overland flow (or vice versa). However, the best Band 2 answers offered an elaborated explanation with reference to specific drainage basin characteristics. Unfortunately, some candidates simply defined the two processes and thus failed to gain any marks. Example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (b)**
- (i)** This skills question worked well. Most candidates interpreted the OS map and cross-section correctly, matching the given features to the correct locations.
 - (ii)** This question only proved challenging to those candidates who had not fully grasped the skill of locating a specific point using six-figure grid references on an OS map.
 - (iii)** Generally, this skills question was not well answered. Many candidates, however, realised that the source of the river was in the higher land, close to the waterfall in the north-west part of the OS map.
 - (iv)** A higher number of candidates than expected were unable to explain why waterfalls and gorges sometimes form together in the same location. However, some excellent responses were seen reflecting thorough and elaborated understanding of the inter-relationships between geology, erosion processes and the two landforms. Example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (c)**
- (i)** A well answered question with most candidates being able to recognise two coastal landforms from the photograph.
 - (ii)** This was a reasonably high scoring question reflecting good understanding of the process of hydraulic action.
- (d)**
- (i)** This question was the first that required the use of a mathematical skill. The range was well understood by most candidates who also clearly showed their working.
 - (ii)** The majority of candidates correctly identified a line graph as the correct alternative graphical technique.

- (e) This was the first of the 8-mark AO3 questions which gave the candidates the opportunity to develop lines of argument about the future management of visitor numbers in distinctive UK landscapes. Most candidates responded well to the task and presented arguments for and against the statement given. The best answers also made use of wider geographical understanding of other UK locations such as named National Parks to justify their viewpoint.

Core Theme 2: Rural-Urban Links

- Q.2**
- (a)
- (i) Most candidates were able to describe the trend on the graph. It was pleasing to see that they focused on the overall decrease and the fluctuations within the time given.
 - (ii) The majority of candidates realised that the word technology in the question equated to online retailing or internet shopping. In these AO2 understanding questions which are worth 2 marks it is always important that the initial statement is followed by a development point.
 - (iii) Generally, this AO1 question was well answered with correct references made to changes such as pedestrianised streets, park and ride schemes and wayfinding information. Some candidates gave relevant facts about high streets that they had studied in class.
- (b)
- (i) Unfortunately, many candidates were not aware of the choropleth mapping technique. It was also rare to see the correct spelling of the term which was mostly written as 'chloropleth'. Knowing the correct terms is always important at this level.
 - (ii) The better responses in this skills question focused on improvements that could be made to the key. Examples included increasing the number of percentage change categories or stating that the 15.0 and over category was not needed.
 - (iii) This question proved to be a challenge for many of the candidates. Some of the answers did not focus on the UK and others focused on local rather than national economic/social factors that affect birth rates and death rates in the UK. Example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (c)
- (i) As with1 (a) (ii) several candidates did not attempt this question. They presumably did not realise that a bar for urban percentage population had to be added to complete the population pyramid.
 - (ii) Responses to this question were very good overall. Most candidates interpreted the graph correctly identifying the relevant age groups and then noting the difference in population structure between urban and rural areas.
 - (iii) Candidates either focused on the older age groups that retire to coastal or rural areas in pursuit of a better lifestyle or on the younger age groups that migrate to urban areas in search of jobs. Unfortunately, some candidates referred to the inward migration of people into the UK rather than migration within the UK.

- (iv) In this question candidates had the opportunity to explain the negatives or positives or both of an ageing population for the UK. Very few did both with most concentrating on the negatives. Unfortunately, many lacked secure understanding of the issue. The more focused answers concentrated on future pressures on the NHS and the rising costs of providing more state pensions. Example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (d) Many candidates found this 8-mark AO3 question difficult. Unfortunately, some of them focused their answer on environmental sustainability only whilst others simply described the components of Egan's Wheel in the context of urban areas. However, others did make a good effort to discuss the pros and cons of the strategies presented to them in the Resource Box. In the best answers though candidates were aware that many rural areas are still affected by a significant number of ongoing challenges including a lack of services, jobs and depopulation. They also made the point that strategies to solve these problems would be only partially successful. Example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.

Option Theme 3: Tectonic Landscapes and Hazards

- Q.3**
- (a)
 - (i) Most of the candidates calculated the correct distance of 240km between Santa Cruz de Tenerife and Arrecife (Lanzarote). However, not all of them showed their working clearly using the scale of 1cm to 30km.
 - (ii) Responses to this question were mostly correct. Candidates had good knowledge of stratovolcano features.
 - (b) It was pleasing to see that most candidates could access at least a Band 1 mark on this question. The better answers referred to specific earthquake events, health risks associated with a lack of basic resources and the impact on people's mental health. In these 4-mark questions the Band 2 descriptor states that 'understanding is demonstrated through elaborated explanation'.
 - (c) In this question candidates had to consider the advantages and disadvantages of two different strategies that are used to reduce the risks associated with earthquakes. Many candidates were able to reach a reasoned conclusion that was worthy of Band 3 or Band 4 marks. They also applied their wider geographical understanding by referring to countries other than Japan and noting how they coped with the earthquake threat.

Option Theme 4: Coastal Hazards and their Management

- Q.4**
- (a)
 - (i) Most of the candidates calculated the correct distance of 240km between Santa Cruz de Tenerife and Arrecife (Lanzarote). However, not all of them showed their working clearly using the scale of 1cm to 30km.
 - (ii) Responses to this question were mostly correct. Candidates had good knowledge of the challenges facing some small islands because of future sea level rise.

- (b) Unfortunately, many candidates misinterpreted this question by focusing their answers on human factors that are linked to climate change. Climate change is not a topic within Component 1. As a result, their answers were limited to Band 1 marks. The best answers recognised that poverty is the main human factor in increasing vulnerability to coastal flooding. Example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (c) In this question candidates had to consider the advantages and disadvantages of two different strategies that are used to reduce the risk of coastal flooding. Many candidates were able to reach a reasoned conclusion that was worthy of Band 3 or Band 4 marks. They also applied their wider geographical understanding by referring to other places in the UK and noting why they chose different options usually based on the concept of cost-benefit.

Summary of Key Points

1. Focus on 4 and 6-mark banded AO2 answers is needed for many candidates, as this was a noted weakness in the responses seen this year. Understanding of topics as diverse as the ageing population of the UK, vulnerability to coastal flooding and the formation of waterfalls and gorges were all addressed by these types of questions this year and require knowledge and understanding of landforms and processes (e.g. what waterfalls and gorges are and why they form together) to access the highest bands and marks.
2. In general, the 8-mark AO3 questions were answered very well in this paper and very good examples were seen of good developments of arguments and evaluative skills. The specific weakness was Question 2, covering strategies for creating sustainable rural communities, suggesting this is a weakness in subject knowledge rather than a pointer towards a weakness in answering these types of questions.
3. Map skills are an integral part of questions in this specification and can cover a wide range of different aspects of OS and other maps. Questions 1 (b) (i), (ii) and (iii) on this paper will be good ones to use to practice using an OS map to gain evidence to back up a statement, and to practice the use of specific map features such as contour lines, specific symbols, 6-figure grid references and scale.
4. Illegible handwriting is still causing a concern and may have contributed to some candidates gaining lower marks than expected across this, and the other papers in the specification.
5. Overall performance in this Component was sound, and evidence of high-quality scripts from several centres was seen during the marking process.

GEOGRAPHY

GCSE

Summer 2024

Component 2 – Environmental and Development Issues

Overview of the Component

All 4 assessment objectives were assessed in this component. Theme 5 assessed content on climate change, microclimates, and the characteristics, processes and impacts of human activity in tropical rainforests. Within this there were questions which assessed statistical skills and the description and interpretation of maps and graphs. Theme 6 assessed content on development indicators, regional inequality in the UK, the globalisation of tourism and the sustainable management of water resources. Within this unit spelling, punctuation and grammar was assessed in the 8-mark AO3 question, as well as mathematical skills and the interpretation of graphs. In the options section in Themes 7 and 8, both questions required candidates to complete a line graph. Theme 7 also assessed ideas on development indicators, specifically birth rates, and health issues in sub-Saharan Africa. Theme 8 focused on the impact of agribusiness and climate change and the strategies to address climate change.

There were a range of common misconceptions, and areas of the specification which were not well understood apparent in candidate responses. These were most notable in the microclimates questions, question 1cvii on water cycles in rainforests, question 2bii on the consequences of regional inequality in the UK, and question 3aii on the reasons for declining birth rates in sub-Saharan Africa. In a few questions, some candidates needed to be clearer on the difference between a cause and a consequence. In addition, candidates must read questions carefully; question 2cii for example required responses linked to the globalisation of tourism. Many candidates offered ideas more relevant to Theme 1, Component 1 and tourism in distinctive landscapes of the UK. Question 1cii was about climate of tropical rainforests and many candidates adopted an “all I know about” approach, including ideas on vegetation and nutrient cycles which were not relevant.

Where candidates had the necessary knowledge and understanding, AO1 questions were done well. A point to note is that these responses sometimes need development where more than 1 mark is available. The use of subject specific terminology should be encouraged where possible and this also applies to AO2 and AO3 questions.

AO2 questions require explanation therefore development is always essential. In longer questions explanations must be developed into chains of reasoning for example in 2bii where both depth and breadth were required. Specific examples were not required but in questions such as this they can show understanding effectively and will help candidates to demonstrate this.

The AO3 questions requiring evaluation needed much more emphasis on this command word by most candidates and some advice on this is suggested below in the report. Success in these questions is determined by how the candidates use the resources; evaluation rather than description and explanation is key.

The AO4 questions were attempted with some success with one of the main barriers to achieving marks being not reading instructions in the question such as the need to show working or use data.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Core Theme 5: Weather, Climate and Ecosystems

- Q.1 (a) (i)** This question took the format of multiple choice and asked candidates to identify the correct definition of an ice core assessing knowledge (AO1). This was answered correctly by most candidates although there was some evidence of misunderstanding here with a proportion of incorrect responses.
- (ii)** This was a skills (AO4) question requiring candidates to draw one conclusion from graphs showing temperature and CO₂ changes in Antarctica. The question asked for supporting data. Most candidates who gave a correct answer scored only one of the two available marks as no supporting data was supplied in the answers. Candidates must read questions carefully and in full to avoid losing marks on this type of question. Supporting data is often required on many questions assessing AO4. Example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (iii)** This 2-mark question asked for one reason why volcanic eruptions cause global cooling. This is a common question style which requires a statement of the reason and then development of this idea to explain it. Many candidates who answered correctly gave a reason but were not awarded a second mark as the response lacked explanation. Good responses commonly referred to less solar energy reaching the earth (1 mark) due to ash and dust blocking sunlight (1 mark). Answers such as this were encouraging to see as they demonstrated both an understanding of the topic and how to approach AO2 questions such as this. Example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (b) (i)** This knowledge (AO1) question required a definition of microclimate. Although some candidates answered this correctly, there were many misconceptions here.
- (ii)** This question followed Q1bi in exploring the idea of microclimates further, and required an explanation of two factors which influence microclimates. Responses needed to link the characteristic of the microclimate, such as urban areas being warmer, to the reason for it, such as tarmac absorbing and re radiating heat. Succinct correct responses such as this scored well, although there were many candidates who did not offer development of ideas which linked the characteristic of the microclimate to the explanation. This limited marks. As with bi, there were many misconceptions revealed on this topic. Example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (c) (i)** Part c moved on to the ecosystems aspect of Theme 5 and began with a multiple-choice question to identify the correct definition of a biome. This was answered correctly by most candidates.

- (ii) This AO1 question asked for characteristics of a tropical rainforest climate. There were 4 marks available with 4 characteristics required for 4 marks. Candidates should be encouraged to look at the mark allocation when reading questions; some limited their marks by only offering one or 2 ideas. Many candidates offered good responses here demonstrating clear knowledge, but some misread the question and offered explanations or characteristics of vegetation which were not creditable.
- (iii) Candidates were asked to give one way that tropical rainforests benefit people for this knowledge (AO1) question. It was answered well, with many offering the idea that medicinal plants grow there. Caution is needed on this sort of question to ensure that the context is correct. For example, “tourism” as a response by itself is not valid, as mass tourism would not necessarily be considered a benefit in this environment. However, responses which referred to income generated from small scale ecotourism were accepted. Therefore, the message to candidates is that responses even on 1-mark questions need to be as clear and specific as possible.
- (iv) A map of Brazil was provided here for candidates to describe the location of Manaus. Many candidates answered this well by offering 3 correct descriptors for 3 marks, using a range of skills and reference points from the map. However, many lost marks as responses were vague or inaccurate. The use of compass points should be encouraged, as credit is not given for descriptors such as “above” and “below” when describing location. The use of a ruler is mentioned in the additional materials section on the front of the paper; however, many candidates gave distances which were vastly different from the correct distances which could be estimated using the scale. In this style of question, the use of more than one skill is necessary to have access to all the marks available; responses where only one skill was demonstrated such as compass directions, were limited to 2 out of the 3 available.
- (v) A median value for rainfall data was required in this ‘skills’ (AO4) question, in addition to showing the correct working. Where candidates were familiar with how to perform median calculations, this was done well, however a significant proportion either misunderstood the necessary steps, or confused the median with the mean.
- (vi) A question on how to present median data followed and this was done well with the most common answer here being bar chart.

- (vii) An understanding of water cycles was required for this question (AO2) with an explanation as to why human activity can modify water cycles in rainforests. The question has a banded mark scheme, with elaboration of ideas clearly giving reasons needed to reach Band 2. Successful responses referred to processes and stores in the water cycle such as interception and vegetation storage and there were some excellent responses which explored the idea of reduced rainfall locally and regionally, linked to lower transpiration rates because of deforestation. Others commented on water abstraction for domestic and agricultural reasons linked to reduced availability for vegetation. Many responses revealed misconceptions with answers on flooding, river management and nutrient cycles which were not creditworthy in this question.

With AO2 questions such as this which assess understanding of concepts, producing chains of reasoning linked to the question is essential for access to the top band in the mark scheme. Example answers for this question at 2 and 4 marks are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.

- (b) This first AO3 question of the paper proved challenging for many candidates. The question required an evaluation of the factors responsible for the changes to the area of rainforest near Manaus. Candidates were provided with a range of different activities to consider in the resource box. Many candidates did not achieve a mark above band 2; these answers offered a description and explanation of the impacts without any evaluation of the nature of the changes. There were some effective answers, but these were not common. Candidates who achieved a mark in band 3 and 4 produced responses which evaluated the changes in terms of positive, negative, social, economic and environmental impacts. The best responses also considered which changes would be the most significant and offered comments on how and why the changes might vary within this area of rainforest. At this level, responses were also developed into detailed chains of reasoning which showed clear links between their thought process and the question set. Band 2 and 4 example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.

Core Theme 6: Development and Resource Issues

- Q.2** (a) (i) Zambia was set as the context for some of the questions on Theme 6, and this question asked candidates to describe the percentage changes in GDP using a bar graph. The key to success on this question was accurate use of the y axis quantifying the changes in GDP. Where candidates had attempted to use the key accurately, they scored well. Most identified an overall decrease and fluctuation, but some described the graph using data such as “about 10% in 2010” which was not awarded a mark; the bar is clearly above the line on the graph.

- (ii) Candidates were then asked to give a reason why a bar graph is suitable. This needed a developed answer for 2 marks. Effective answers often referred to comparisons (1 mark) which allowed trends or changes over time to be observed (1 mark). Many candidates are still offering responses such as “easy to read” which is not creditable unless there is a comment as to why. Similar questions and mark schemes indicate this from past papers on a range of components and candidates should be encouraged to use these in preparation for the examination series.
 - (iii) One cause of uneven development on a global scale was required here and there were some good responses given relating to ideas in the mark scheme. However, many lost marks as they offered consequences rather than causes such as “poverty”.
 - (iv) A multiple-choice question followed which required the correct definition of development continuum which was attempted correctly by many candidates.
- (b)
- (i) The focus of the question then moved on to the north south divide in the UK. As with Q2aiii, many offered consequences rather than causes here which were not worthy of credit. There were many effective responses here which offered ideas focused on proximity to Europe and London for investment and trade in the south, or the legacy of deindustrialisation in the north. There were 2 marks available here with one cause required therefore development was needed for full marks, for example, deindustrialisation linked to loss of jobs and income. Example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
 - (ii) Consequences of regional inequality in the UK was the focus of this 6-mark AO2 question which required candidates to demonstrate detailed understanding of the social and economic impacts. Both aspects needed to be addressed in detail for access to band 3 marks. Effective responses were developed into detailed chains of reasoning which focused on positive and / or negative multipliers stemming from lack of investment or lower incomes in some parts of the UK. Some used specific examples well, which were not required but added to the quality of the overall response by demonstrating clear understanding. A range of misconceptions became apparent here with ideas being offered on the impacts of migration, conflict, sometimes dating back centuries, and in some cases some strong political views were expressed which missed the point of the question.
- (c)
- (i) An advantage of MNCs locating in NICs / LICs was required here with development of the point needed for full marks. There were some good responses here with most focusing on the provision of jobs and therefore income and improved standard of living or money for investment into development of education, health or infrastructure. There were however many who misinterpreted the question and gave a response focused on the benefit to MNCs which were not creditworthy.

- (ii) Staying with the theme of globalisation, two causes of the globalisation of tourism were needed for this question, and there were many correct responses. However, some candidates lost marks as answers were too vague to be given credit. For example, “transport” by itself needed clarity such as “improvements in transport”.
 - (iii) This question required some understanding of the impacts on the environment of the globalisation of tourism. There were some very effective responses which explained the impact of construction of large hotels linked to biodiversity loss, or over abstraction of water resources linked to the development of mass tourism. Reasons needed to be developed to say why there was an impact. Some offered basic causes (rather than impacts) such as “litter” or “trampling” which were not credited unless linked to a specific impact based on the globalisation of tourism. There were 4 marks available here and candidates should be mindful of the marks available and ensure answers are developed and linked to the questions set. Example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (d)
- (i) A calculation of the amount of fresh water used in agriculture was required here; candidates should be reminded to show their working here. Many scored the 2 marks available, but some lost marks as they wrote out the answer in full; billion m³ was provided in the box in the question paper so all that was required for the mark was 1.168.
 - (ii) An alternative technique was required here for the stacked bar chart, and most answered this correctly suggesting a bar chart or pie chart.
 - (iii) This AO3 question focused on the sustainable management of water resources in Zambia. Candidates were required to discuss how far they agree that this is a challenge. They were provided with resources and ideas which suggested some challenges and possible strategies to address these. There were some effective responses which provided balance and offered evidence-based discussion which both agreed and disagreed with the statement. The best answers developed ideas into detailed chains of reasoning and discussed that the level of challenge might vary between different locations and groups of people in Zambia. They also discussed the scale of the issue and how this might determine the success of sustainable management. However, some candidates limited their marks to band 1 or 2 at best by offering descriptions and explanations of the impacts of water supply issues or copied out resources without answering the question. Spelling punctuation and grammar was also assessed in this question with 4 marks available. “Control of meaning” is a descriptor in the mark scheme used across all components; therefore, answers must be relevant to the question to be successful in achieving marks in the higher bands. Band 3 and 4 example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.

Option Theme 7: Social Development

- Q.3 (a) (i)** Candidates were asked to give 2 ways to measure social development. Many answered this well, but some confused this with economic development offering answers such as GNI which were not relevant.
- (ii)** Two reasons why birth rates are declining were needed for this question with 4 marks available therefore reasons needed to be developed for full marks. Effective responses often focused on education of women, careers, later marriage and the use and availability of contraception. A very common misconception here was apparent in answers based on poor healthcare, poor maternal health and high rates of infant mortality. This is something which could be addressed with candidates for the future. Example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (iii)** The completion of a graph was required here, and most did this successfully. It was encouraging to see fewer of these questions not attempted than in previous cycles.
- (b)** Evaluation of strategies for tackling health issues on a local scale was required here for this AO3 question. Where this was done well, there was a clear and balanced discussion of the possible relative success and barriers to success of the different strategies. The best responses commented on which might be the most effective strategies mentioned in the resource box and why. Some went as far as to discuss the scale of the issues and how and why success might vary within Mali and over time. However, most candidates limited their access to the higher mark bands as they copied resources, and at best described the impacts of the strategies without any evaluation of their success. A band 2 example answer for this question is included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.

Option Theme 8: Environmental Challenges

- Q.4 (a) (i)** Candidates were asked to give 2 impacts that agribusiness has on the environment. Some answered this well, offering ideas such as reduced biodiversity due to monoculture. However, many offered causes such as “deforestation”; unless the impact of this was given then no mark was awarded.
- (ii)** Two reasons why climate change is having an impact on people were needed for this question with 4 marks available therefore reasons needed to be developed for full marks. Many candidates were able to identify impacts of climate change such as sea level rise and the increased incidence of drought so were able to achieve some marks. However, many did not link these to the impacts in people. Comments on flooded homes or farmland and reduced crop yield or even famine were needed to develop answers into something which could achieve all the marks available on this question. Example answers gaining 2 and 4 marks for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.

- (iii) The completion of a graph was required here, and most did this successfully. It was encouraging to see fewer of these questions not attempted than in previous cycles.
- (b) Evaluation of strategies for tackling climate change on an international scale was required here for this AO3 question. Where this was done well, there was a clear and balanced discussion of the possible relative success and barriers to success of the different strategies. The best responses commented on which might be the most effective strategies mentioned in the resource box and why. Some went as far as to discuss the scale of the issues and how and why success might vary between countries and over time. There was some effective discussion on differing attitudes to the issue of climate change. However, most candidates limited their access to the higher mark bands as they copied resources, and at best described the impacts of the strategies without any evaluation of their success. Band 3 and 4 example answers for this question are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.

Summary of Key Points

1. Candidates and centres need to make sure there is complete coverage and revision of all parts of the specification, as weaknesses in knowledge were seen in this paper in topics such as microclimates, water cycles in rainforests, regional inequality in the UK and declining birth rates in sub-Saharan Africa.
2. As in previous years, developing detailed chains of reasoning linked to the question and in-depth use of resources provided within the paper are key in scoring well on more extended high tariff AO2 and AO3 questions.
3. Candidates must take great care not to simply copy resources and lift information directly from the paper to include in their answers without any evaluation or assessment of their worth in supporting key arguments or elaboration. This limits access to higher bands in higher tariff questions.
4. Advice was given last year to candidates to read all the paper very carefully and to take care not to miss out any shorter questions e.g. completing graphs or calculations. It is positive to see that this has improved this year, and many fewer questions appear to have been omitted as seen during the marking process.
5. This paper did not have an OS map; however, it did have a map of Brazil that was the source of key marks in Question 1. The use of compass directions for direction and a ruler for scale was required in this question, and care should be taken to use specific NESW directions and not terms like 'above', 'below' and 'near to' and to use a ruler to measure correct distances between places to access the highest marks. This shows that map skills like those described in Component 1 from OS maps are just as valid when confronted with different style maps across the specification.

GEOGRAPHY

GCSE

Summer 2024

C111U30-1 and C112U30-1 – Applied Fieldwork Enquiry – Specification A & B

Overview of the Component

In Part A candidates were asked to investigate change over time in fieldwork.

In Part B candidates were asked to investigate mitigating risk.

In Part C candidates were asked to apply their understanding of UK geography to mitigating risk and change over time in the UK.

The Assessment Objectives are as outlined in the specification.

Part A assessed AO3 & AO4 fieldwork questions on changing weather within the UK.

Part B assessed AO3 & AO4 fieldwork questions on flood risk in areas in the UK.

Part C assessed all assessment objectives with questions focussed on causes and management of river flooding in the UK.

The following areas were answered well:

- Candidates' interpretation and analysis of geographical information
- Candidates' understanding of different types of graphs
- Drawing conclusions from given data
- Calculating the median and range from given data
- Completing projection of trend lines with the use of given data

The following areas are needed to improve:

- Calculating percentage increase
- Identify limitations and improvements in selected statistical data presentation
- The use of 6 figure grid references
- Own fieldwork – candidates still struggle to give valid reasons for accuracy of own fieldwork. Identifying the difference between primary and secondary data. Evaluating strengths and weaknesses of their own fieldwork. This is ongoing every year.
- Explaining the interrelationships between urbanisation and river flood risk
- Explaining limitations of hard engineering in the UK
- Detailed justification of a given strategy to reduce river flood risk in the context of UK.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Part A: Investigating change over time.

- Q.1 (a)** Nearly all candidates attempted this question and of mostly all of those that answered got full marks. Candidates were able to successfully able to interpret the correct responses from the choropleth map.

- (b) Candidates that answered this question well identified the strengths of the recording sheet identifying valid answers. The least successful answers consisted of statements such as 'easy to read' or 'you can work out the mean temperature', despite there being no temperatures written in the recording sheet. An example answer worth 2 marks is included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (c) Nearly all candidates attempted this question and most interpreted the data accurately from the given graphs.
- (d) Candidates need to improve on calculating temperature increase. Many candidates who completed this question accurately used the traditional method of $\text{difference/original} \times 100$. However, some candidates used a different approach and the scripts saw variety of methods to calculate the percentage increase which were interesting to see and all given credit if correct. An example answer worth 2 marks is included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (e) Nearly all candidates answered this question, and the better responses identified the overall increase of UK summer temperatures. Least successful responses did not include the data from the graph and only gave a general overall response stating that there had been 'an increase in temperature'. An example answer worth 2 marks is included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (f) (i) Candidates' own fieldwork: This question was not attempted by some candidates. For candidates who did complete the question the mean mark was below 1. For an improvement for future performance candidates need to ensure the understanding of what accuracy is and consider accuracy in terms of:
- Validation of primary data against trusted sources
 - Consistency checks when collecting primary data
 - Consideration of the most appropriate sampling technique
- An example answer worth 2 marks is included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (ii) Candidates' own fieldwork: This question was not attempted by some candidates. For those who did complete the question the mean mark was below half marks. Candidates who answered the question well explained the usefulness of secondary data to their investigation with good links to their findings and collection of primary data/or background information. An area where marks can be improved is by making links to their investigations. Many candidates responded giving general answers with responses such as 'it allowed us to compare our findings with our primary sources' or 'it saved us time by researching'. These basic responses limited candidates getting a Band 2 mark as there was no reference to their own investigation or fieldwork of change over time. For improved future performance, candidates need to be able to confidently write about their investigation when answering the question using examples of their own fieldwork. An example answer worth Band 2, 4 marks is included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.

Part B: Investigating Mitigating Risk

Q.2 (a) Many candidates answered this question correctly, identifying suitable enquiry questions linked to the investigation of mitigating risk in Great Yarmouth.

- (b) (i) Candidates need to improve their performance estimating size of an area. To improve performance, it would be useful to practice this using a scale and local OS maps.
- (b) (ii) Candidates need to improve performance on giving 6 figure grid-references of given places on OS maps with accuracy. Some responses by candidates gave accurate 4-figure grid references, however these were not creditworthy as the question asked for a 6-figure grid reference. To improve performance, it would be useful to practice 6-figure grid references using local OS maps.
- (c) Many candidates struggled with this question and were unable to identify strengths of sampling techniques. Candidates in the future would benefit when planning their investigation to think of the most appropriate sampling technique when collecting primary data and ensure that they are aware of the usefulness of each sampling technique.
- (d) (i) Candidates' responses were mainly accurate with successful answers accurately calculating the median and range of the data given.
- (d) (ii) This question was a challenge for many candidates with many responding incorrectly by ticking 'line graph'. Students need to familiarise themselves with the use of dispersion graphs and the value of using these to present multiple sets of data.
- (d) (iii) Many candidates responded incorrectly to this question and tended to answer why the graph chosen was unsuitable to present the data with answers such as 'the data is not in percentages' or 'it will be easy to read'. Linked example answers worth 2, 1 and 0 marks for Q2di, Q2dii and Q2diii are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
- (e) (i) Candidates own fieldwork: Responses that were creditworthy discussed how their enquiry question was testable and made links to theories or context. Other successful responses linked their enquiry question to location off river or flood risk and discussed the evaluation of strategies in place to test this.
- (e) (ii) Candidates own fieldwork: Responses that achieved full marks make linkages to candidates own investigations, highlighting expected or unexpected outcomes. As in previous papers candidates still struggle to answer about their own fieldwork and many answers did not have any reference to candidates own fieldwork. As suggested earlier, candidates need to improve their confidence talking about the whole process of their own fieldwork. Linked example answers worth 2 and 4 marks for Q2ei and Q2eii are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.

Part C: The Wider UK Dimension

- Q.3**
- (a)** Most candidates answered this question correctly, identifying the two correct statements in the table.
 - (b)**
 - (i)** Most candidates answered this question correctly, identifying the one correct trend in the table.
 - (ii)** Most candidates correctly drew the line to end between 70 and 76 million people by 2045.
 - (c)** Successful candidate responses explained the links between urbanisation and the risk of river flooding. Successful responses achieving Band 3 marks demonstrated clear chains of elaboration. Many candidates also had misconceptions and it was commonly written by many candidates that the 'water has nowhere to go'. An example answer worth Band 3, 6 marks is included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
 - (d)** Some candidates limited themselves to Band 1 or 2 and did not move on beyond the reason that hard engineering is expensive and costs to maintain. Improved responses demonstrated chains of elaboration explaining how the effects can be affected other places downstream due to the altering of a river or how harmful hard engineering can be to the environment and aquatic biodiversity. An example answer worth Band 3, 6 marks is included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
 - (e)** **(i)&(ii)** For some candidates there was a mix-up of the questions. For question 3ei some responses suggested adding additional pieces of data rather than giving improvements to the data given. To improve performance, candidates always need to read questions like these very carefully indeed. Linked example answers worth 2 and 1 marks for Q3ei and Q3eii are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.
 - (f)** Most candidates were able to identify the three correct statements from the table concerning flood risk in the town of Marlow.
 - (g)** Many candidates used the resource very well being able to justify why land use zoning is/is not sustainable to manage flood risk in the UK. The refined answers discussed the issue gentrification with this method and gave alternative successful techniques of river management in the UK. Many answers identified that settlements in the UK were already mainly built around rivers and water supply and how this technique would therefore be costly and unsuitable and economically unsustainable. Other successful responses discussed the livelihoods of farmers of the UK being negatively affected by land use zoning as well as the inability to for people to have access to recreational areas in the event of a flood. It was pleasing to see this question attempted by many candidates compared to the past and the use and analysis of the resource. Candidates are improving their chains of reasoning, however on occasions they can end up being a little far-fetched, when candidates suggest that many people would die in the event of a flood, yet in the UK numbers of deaths are significantly lower in comparison to other countries. Extracts from answers to this question that demonstrate good use of the resource and wider geographical knowledge are included in the online exam feedback CPD slides.

Summary of Key Points

1. The use of specific examples from candidates own fieldwork is the key point to take away from Component 3 this year. Candidates must be able to show that they have conducted fieldwork in two named locations and be able to provide evidence of this in terms of names of locations, specific data collection and presentation methods used and evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of the fieldwork by referring to places visited, for example.
2. The fieldwork questions in Parts A and B can be any length and tariff up to a total of 6 marks and centres should aim to prepare candidates for this, making sure that they always use direct reference to their own fieldwork.
3. The use of chains of reasoning and elaboration of evidence from the Resource Folder is improving annually, especially in the final 12-mark question. Candidates should be prepared to use key information to back up elaborated points and not just simply use it by copying it from the folder and into their answers. This is a relevant point for all Components in Eduqas B GCSE Geography.
4. Practicing questions using OS maps can never be recommended highly enough, so candidates are confident using techniques like 6-figure grid references and the use of the scale in their answers.

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: 02922 404276

Email: GCSEgeographyA@edugas.co.uk

Qualification webpage: [GCSE A Geography](#)

See other useful contacts here: [Useful Contacts | Edugas](#)

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.edugas.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.

Get in contact today and discover how our team can support you and your students.
[Regional Support Team | Edugas](#)

Edugas Qualifications

We are one the largest providers of qualifications for schools, academies, sixth form and further education colleges across England, offering valued qualifications to suit a range of abilities. Each and every one of our qualifications is carefully designed to engage students and to equip them for the next stage of their lives.

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



WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk