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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level
In Geography (WGE01)
Paper 1: Global Challenges

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Introduction

Most candidates managed to answer all questions on the examination paper and few ‘blanks’ were encountered. As might be expected there was variation in the quality of answers but there were many interesting and informed responses.

Global Challenges contains a choice of World at Risk or Going Global longer essay questions. There was a balance between candidates selecting the World at Risk question and the Going Global option. The quality of responses from one option to another was not significantly different for the 20 marker responses but candidates tended to score more highly on the 10mark Going Global question.

Centres may wish to consider some general points going forward:

- Compulsory topic 1 World at Risk does contain detailed physical process content that demands an understanding of physical feedback mechanisms- this was often lacking in responses to Question 2b.
- When tackling ‘**compare**’ questions, students are expected to make a comparative statement between two aspects, in this case the trends in tourism for Asia and Europe.
- Many questions use the command word ‘**assess**’ this is defined in the Specification on page 77. This requires higher-order thinking skills that involve candidates looking at several sides of an argument or question, weighing up issues, considering which factors / explanations are the most important and making supported judgements. Failure to demonstrate these cognitive skills limits available credit.
- Mark schemes refer to ‘**evidence**’ : this can come in the form of examples, case studies, data, facts, detailed reference to places, concepts and geographical theory.

Q1(a)(ii)

Most candidates could correctly identify a type of plate boundary, however, did not identify the direction of movement. For example, they stated that Haiti was located on a conservative plate boundary without explaining that the plates slide past each other. This meant the students were not fully explaining as the command word required. A common error for candidates was to state 'it causes an earthquake' which was too general to pick up the second mark. Candidate needed to identify that there was friction resulting in a release of energy/seismic waves in order to gain maximum marks.

Q1(a)(iii)

This question was best answered by students who focused on excessive rainfall leading to saturated ground resulting in reduced stability of the slope. Candidates that opted to use earthquakes, tended to just state that earthquakes caused landslides, without fully explaining why. Candidates needed to link this to shaking of the ground/vibrations in order to gain credit,

Q1(b)

Candidates found it difficult to go beyond the fact that higher density population meant more people would be affected, this gained them one mark. The extension mark for population density needed to link it to impact i.e. widespread loss of basic services or houses being destroyed. For the second part on governance, many candidates lacked understanding of what this word meant and therefore struggled to pick up marks here. The best candidates spoke about implications of weak governance leading to lack of preparation and as such limited measures taken to mitigate the hazard.

Q1(c)

Most candidates could give an effective account of economic impacts of disasters and a significant number were able to apply this to a specific example/case study which was pleasing to see. Candidates overall however failed to grasp the mega-disaster element and therefore were unable to explain how the economic impacts differed from other disasters. The best responses focused on specific examples such as the Asian Tsunami and discussed how the severity of the impacts were linked to the magnitude and geographical scale of the disaster.

Q2(a)(ii)

The question was well answered by candidates with the majority scoring the full two marks available. Candidates could correctly interpret the resource with the majority highlighting the increasing trend in emissions, combined with a fluctuating pattern. A small number of candidates did not focus on the USA and therefore gained no credit.

Q2(a)(iii)

Generally, this question was answered well with most candidates scoring at least one of the marks available. The second mark was given for an extension of the initial idea and some candidates missed this as they lacked an effect of the reason initially given. For example, candidates spoken about countries signing up to global agreements such as the Kyoto protocol, this gained 1 mark. For the 2nd, candidates needed to explain what effect this had on the CO₂ output i.e. overall reduction as countries were required to meet specific targets.

Q2(b)

This question was answered less well by candidates who focused on the tipping point rather than the feedback mechanisms. Many candidates had been taught the Albedo cycle but candidates tended to miss out of the last loop of the cycle, for example, they identified that ice melting resulting in a lower albedo, more absorption of heat energy led to rising temperatures but did not add the final link that this therefore resulted in more ice melting. The best candidates spoke about a range of feedback mechanisms such as melting permafrost and forest dieback which allowed them to gain the full range of marks available.

Q2(c)

The majority of candidates were able to discuss a how a change in climate could impact farmers and many were able to use examples. A limited number of answers were explicitly linked to the shift in climate belts and instead candidates focused on global warming as a whole. The best responses looked at the change in the ITCZ and the impact of this movement on farmers. These answers were successful as they were also able to identify that the changing climate belts would bring both winners and losers.

Q3(a)(ii)

On the whole this was well answered by students. Some candidates were not able to pick up marks as they had described the trends when the command word was 'compare'. It is important that centres teach candidates the importance of comparative language in these types of questions to ensure that candidates pick up the full range of marks available to them.

Q3(b)

Candidates generally has a good understanding of the question and the majority could pick up 2 marks. Many students failed to access the final mark as they had not fully extended their response. The best candidates tended to focus on the role of containerisation and picked up the fully range of marks available.

Q3(c)

Candidates showed a good understanding of the concept and they were fully aware of the applications of mobile technology. Marks were lost however when candidates drifted into generic points about the internet as a whole and how this can be used by TNCs.

Q3(d)

This question was answered well by candidates as they were able to confidentially discuss the implications of deindustrialisation on developed countries. Many candidates used examples to support and Detroit and Sheffield were well applied to the question. Fewer candidates were able to explore a clear range of impacts such as lifestyle changes and impacts on family, home or the community. Instead many focused purely on loss of jobs and increase in crime and as a result had a narrow range of ideas.

Q4(a)(ii)

Candidates demonstrated good understanding here with many commenting on slow growth rates in developed countries and in some cases the role of counter-urbanisation. With regards to developing countries the best responses focused on the role of rural urban migration or natural increase.

Q4(b)

An encouraging number of candidates are aware of a range of consequences of globalisation and this enabled them to score well for this question. A few candidates drifted into economic impacts when the question stem asked for environmental consequences. The best responses linked air pollution to the rise in car ownership or focused on the sprawl of the urban area and subsequent deforestation.

Q4(c)

This question was answered well by the majority of candidates with many being able to clearly articulate the social costs and benefits of globalisation to Asia. However, some tended to write about environmental issues without linking them explicitly to social impacts. The best responses applied specific details to support their response and had a clear balance between the positives and negatives.

Q5(a)

There was a tendency for some candidates to write out a prompt from the source material and then add a number of basic comments. Answers like this tended to lack depth of explanation and it is important that use the resource as a springboard to fully explain their ideas. Most students were able to discuss all four factors in the resource booklet, but the majority focused on deforestation and global warming in terms of further development of their responses. The ENSO cycles were rarely covered in depth and this is an area that centres should look to review for future

series. The best responses had a clear understanding of the four factors and could explicitly explain how these contributed to drought. As the command word was ‘**suggest**’ a few candidates used supporting case study detail from Ethiopia to exemplify their responses and often these candidates scored level 3.

Q5(b)

The majority of candidates had a clear understanding of how to manage global warming with many discussing strategies such as the Kyoto Protocol with reasons why this had not been successful. Many candidates were, however, less certain on how the attitudes affected the success of the management as the question asked. These responses tended to therefore be a description of a variety of strategies and therefore were self-limiting to level 2. The best responses had a clear assessment of a range of strategies that had been used to manage global warming and clearly explained how the attitudes of the relevant players were an important part of the success of the strategy.

Q6(a)

On the whole this question was well answered by many candidates through effective use of the resource to provide a structured response. Most addressed the question through the individual migrant groups shown on the resource and were able to give clear impacts of such flows. The weakest answers over generalised the impacts of migration, often lumping the identified groups as ‘**migrants**’ rather than commenting on the value or drawbacks. The best responses were able to provide a balanced commentary of the positive and negative impacts of the migrant flows for Germany, with some providing additional own knowledge.

Q6(b) Candidates took a broad interpretation of the word ‘**resources**’ in this question with comments around food, water, as well as housing. Many candidates contrasted the different views of Malthus and Boserup and used this as a clear framework for their response. However, often candidates ended up just describing the two opposing theories without clear assessment. The best responses covered a range of resources, particularly food and water were done well and used examples to explore the current pressures on these resources. This enabled them to carefully assess the implications of continued population growth on these resources and the likelihood of us tackling these future pressures through with a Boserupian approach.