Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2020

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced
Level in Geography (WGE01_01)
Unit 1: Global Challenges

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 10-mark 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.

Question 1ai
This question asked candidates to define the term 'risk'. Most candidates were able to correctly define risk as the likelihood of loss of life, injury or destruction, with some choosing to approach the definition through the risk equation. Either approach was acceptable.

Question 1aii
This question was best answered by students who focused on the impacts of the situation that was depicted into the photo provided. Many candidates suggested the risk was injuries from the falling buildings etc, but in the image the building have already collapsed and therefore this risk was no longer an issue. Candidates had to identify a risk linked to the post-hazard situation, not a risk from the original hurricane.

Question 1aiii

The majority of candidates scored one mark on this question for identifying how hazard resistant designs could reduce the chance of buildings collapsing for example. The second mark would have been gained by explaining how this therefore meant that risk could have been reduced i.e. results in fewer injuries or deaths.

Question 1b
The majority of students scored well in this question gaining the four marks that were available. Candidates tended to do this via one of two ways. Firstly, through a detailed explanation of a destructive plate boundary and the subsequent volcanoes that result. Or secondly, through a combination of both constructive and destructive plate boundaries and how these result in differing volcanoes.

Question 1c
There was variability in terms of quality of response for this question. The best responses were able to articulate that type of hazard had a key role to play in the how prediction could reduce impacts. Some students could exemplify this through applied examples of natural hazards that had occurred in recent years. The weakest responses tended to be generic sighting that prediction was easy for tropical storms but not for earthquakes, but lacked explanation as to why. Finally, the best responses, understood the overall role that development played in the ability to predict and respond to the hazards faced.

Question 2aii
Generally, this question was answered well with most candidates scoring both marks available. Most students scored by identified that both livestock and maize were showing a percentage decline, but livestock was declining at a faster rate.

Question 2aiii
This question was answered well with most candidates focusing on shifting to renewable energies and public transport schemes. Candidates often only

gained two out of the available four marks, as although they correct explained a national strategy, they didn't link this back to explain how it could have reduced carbon emissions. A small number of students, spoke about global strategies such as Kyoto, but didn't then suggest how this could be implemented at a national scale.

Question 2c
The majority of candidates were able to discuss why sea level predictions were uncertain. At the lower end, these explanations were superficial and tended to focus on generic statements about glaciers melting and natural climate change. At the top end, candidates had a clear understanding of the implications of feedback loops and thermal expansion mechanisms and how these could lead to variations in the sea level rise.

Question 3ai
On the whole this was not answered well by candidates. A significant number of candidates just listed the countries by KOF category. The question asks for a description of the distribution. The best responses noticed that many had a coast and that the medium-very high KOF countries were located in close proximity to each other.

Question 3aii
Candidates performed better on this question that 3ai. With many able to suggest a plausible reason for the pattern shown. Most spoke about the countries being part of the EU and therefore the trading/ migration benefits that this had brought the respective countries.

Question 3b
Candidates showed a good understanding of the concept of outsourcing, with a high majority of students scoring at least three marks on this question. Candidates, must however ensure that they are fully explaining their original idea for the second mark. A small minority, drifted into providing numerous advantages of outsourcing, without developing a single idea, this therefore meant they could only gain one mark for the first concept.

Question 3c
This question was answered well with candidates able to discuss how national governments had encouraged globalisation. Many spoke about China and its SEZs and open door policy. Others discussed the role of trading blocks and how this encouraged globalisation. A few students however, misunderstood the question and instead focused on intergovernmental organisations such as the WTO and World Bank.

Question 4aiii
Candidates demonstrated good understanding here candidates able to explain the negative consequences of an ageing population. Candidates need to ensure that they are extending their first initial idea in order to gain the second mark available for each explanation, as the question is marked as 2+2.

Question 4b
This question was answered well by the majority of candidates, with the best responses clearly explaining one key benefit for the three marks available. Candidates for example were awarded three marks for explaining how a youthful population could lead to a greater pool of workers and therefore more foreign direct investment, resulting in economic growth.

Question 4c
This question was answered well by the majority of candidates with many being able to clearly articulate the costs and benefits of migration for source countries. A small minority gained zero marks if there spoke about the implications for host countries. The best responses, covered both positive and negative implications for source countries as the question had requested, whereas the weaker ones tended to give only the negative issues associated migration.

Question 5a
There was considerable variability in the level of responses that candidates wrote in response to this question. At the top end, candidates used the resource as a springboard to explain why California was considered to be a hotspot. This was underpinned through their own study of this as a hazard hotspot case study. A small minority, extended this further by contrasting their response with the Philippines. Pleasingly a significant number of students applied the ENSO cycles correctly to explain the pattern of flooding and droughts. At the bottom end, candidates used the resource to describe the pattern of earthquake, wildfire risk, but didn't apply their geographical knowledge to explain why these patterns existed. There were a number of misconceptions i.e. the San Andreas Fault being incorrected described as a destructive plate boundary.

Question 5b
The majority of candidates had a clear understanding of what global warming is and why on the whole there are differing views on this. At the top end candidates were explicit about different groups of people and clearly explained why these groups held their set view on global warming. Groups covered included Donald Trump, environmentalists and oil companies. At the bottom end, the views were less discrete and instead a number of candidates described what they knew about global warming without focusing on the question that had been set. The best responses also addressed the command word i.e. 'to what extent' and this moved them into level three and four.

Question 6a
On the whole this question was well answered by many candidates through effective use of the resource to provide a structured response. Most used the resource to identify particular countries which had a high agreement that migration was positive and suggested plausible reasons for this level of agreement. The best responses had clearly developed own geographical knowledge which enabled them to discuss a range of countries and their view on migration. At the weaker end, a small minority of candidates

described what the resource showed but made no attempt to suggest reasons why. This meant they were limited at the level one band of marks.

Question 6b
On the whole this question was answered well by candidates and responses demonstrated a range of ways that globalisation had brought benefits to some but not others across the world. The best responses had clear examples to support and extend their responses. These candidates also identified that globalisation led to both benefits and negatives within the same country and in most places China was used to exemplify this idea. In the weakest responses, candidates tended to focus on generic benefits that had been brought by globalisation, without really considering place or to a certain extent the people that benefited.